

FROM ARMAGEDDON TO THE NEW EARTH! : PART ONE

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Second Coming, Resurrection And The Rapture, Marriage Supper Of The Lamb, Battle Of Armageddon, The Arab-Israeli War And Captivity Of East Jerusalem, Titus's Invasion In 70 A.D., Winepress Of God's Wrath, Jordanian River Of Blood, Beast And False Prophet Destroyed, Feast of The Vultures, Satan In The Bottomless Pit, Judgment In This Life, Persecution And Faithfulness To Death, Will Christians Literally Be Beheaded?

Some time ago, someone inquired of me concerning the purpose of the Millennium, that is, the coming one thousand year reign of Jesus Christ on Earth when He will rule with a rod of iron. In order to properly answer this question, I feel that it is important for me to first provide you with some background information concerning this event. Prior to the beginning of the Millennium, it is my understanding that the world will experience the Second Coming of the Lord, and the Resurrection and/or Rapture of both the dead and the living Saints. This event will transpire immediately following the Great Tribulation, that is, a period of great persecution which will occur during the final three and a half years of wicked man's rule of the Earth. The Lord Himself spoke of these events in the following verses:

"Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other."

Matthew 24:29-31, KJV

The Apostle Paul and John, the beloved Disciple of the Lord, also wrote about these most inspiring events for which every Christian awaits with eager anticipation:

"Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."

1 Corinthians 15:51-53, KJV

"For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of

the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."
1 Thessalonians 4:15-18, KJV

"For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."
Philippians 3:20-21, KJV

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."
1 John 3:2, KJV

"Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen."
Revelation 1:7, KJV

Following the Lord's glorious and triumphant Second Coming, and the long-awaited Rapture of the Saints, among other things, the Apostle John describes the Marriage of the Lamb, Jesus Christ Himself, to His spiritual Bride, that is, we the Believers, in the Courts of Heaven:

"Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God."
Revelation 19:7-9, KJV

Jesus made a veiled reference to this very same wonderful event in the parable of the marriage feast found in the twenty-second chapter of the Gospel of Matthew:

"And Jesus answered and spake unto them again by parables, and said, The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son, And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come. Again, he sent forth other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage. But they made light of it, and went their ways, one to his farm, another to his merchandise: And the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them. But when the king heard thereof, he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. Then saith he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but they which were bidden were not worthy. Go ye therefore into the highways, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage. So those servants went out into the highways, and

gathered together all as many as they found, both bad and good: and the wedding was furnished with guests. And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment: And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. For many are called, but few are chosen."
Matthew 22:1-14, KJV

Following the Marriage of the Lamb in Revelation chapter nineteen, only a few short verses later, the Apostle John describes the Lord's Return to Earth with His raptured Saints and the Heavenly Host for the Battle of Armageddon in the country of Israel. While I currently believe that the Second Coming will only be aerial in nature, that is, that we will ascend to meet the Lord in the air, as I explain in "The Triumphant Touchdown of Jesus Christ!", this Third Coming will be quite different. It is in the ancient battle plain of Esdraelon, the valley of Jezreel, near the hill or city of Megiddo, located to the northwest of Jerusalem and not far from Mount Gilboa, that the Lord will confront the armies of the demonic leader referred to by both the Prophet Daniel and John as the Beast. It was in this same place that both Barak and Gideon wrought great victories against their enemies. It is also here where kings Saul and Josiah both met their deaths, and where the evil Queen Jezebel was eaten by dogs as had been prophesied by the Prophet Elijah. The Scriptures plainly tell us that once again, it will be the site of the Ultimate Battle between Good and Evil:

"And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon."
Revelation 16:16, KJV

"And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war . . . And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army."
Revelation 19:11, 14, 19, KJV

Enoch, the seventh from Adam, whom Jude quotes in his epistle, also wrote about this coming Ultimate Battle between the forces of Good and Evil when he said:

". . . Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him."
Jude 1:14b-15, KJV

If my understanding of these events is correct, this Great Battle will occur sometime after Arab and Muslim military forces have surrounded Israel and have captured the eastern half of the city of Jerusalem. As I point out in some of my other Endtime articles, notice that in these verses, the

Prophet Zechariah specifically tells us that half of the city shall go into captivity:

"For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue of the people shall not be cut off from the city."
Zechariah 14:2, KJV

Even as I write this, hostilities continues to grow between the Palestinians and the Jews, while at the same time, patience continues to shorten due to Jewish belligerence and their insistence on populating Arab East Jerusalem, which Yasser Arafat has openly said he will declare the capital of the Palestinian State in less than a year from now. The fact that even the government of the United States was unable to broker new peace talks between the two parties after many attempts at doing so, is a clear sign of how deteriorated the situation has become. Unless the government of Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu backs down and offers a larger percentage of the West Bank to the Palestinians, and soon at that, war is inevitable, and everyone knows it. In the Gospel of Luke, the Lord also pronounced some interesting statements concerning Jerusalem:

"And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh . . . And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled."
Luke 21:20, 24, KJV

It is possible that the above verses from Luke may have had a partial fulfillment when Jerusalem was destroyed in approximately 70 A.D. by the Roman General Titus, the son of Roman Emperor Vespasian, and his legions. From the material I have read, it is said that the destruction was so complete that the Second Temple of Solomon was burned with fire after the Jews had run into it hoping that God would protect them from the Roman forces. So intense was the heat of the flames that all of the gold inside the Temple melted down between the blocks which formed the Temple. Titus and his men then tore down the Temple one stone at a time in order to recover the melted gold. This event was in direct fulfillment of Jesus' own words some forty years before when He said:

". . . See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down."
Matthew 24:2, KJV

Following this event, it is reported that possibly as many as one million Jews lost their lives due to this exercise of Roman justice on a rebellious nation. It was only a few years later that Titus became the next Emperor of Rome. What is so amazing about this is that we may see a repeat of these events in coming years when the Jewish dream of a Third Temple is finally realized; only to be crushed some three and a half years later when Jerusalem is once again invaded by foreign forces. When the Beast and the False Prophet have gained confidence by securing Jerusalem, and

have begun to spread their political and military power throughout the Middle East, it is my understanding that it is at this time that the Lord will return to meet them for the Final Showdown at Armageddon. In the book of Isaiah, we find the following prophecy describing the wrath of the Lord against the wicked as He destroys their military power:

"Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat? I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come. And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me. And I will tread down the people in mine anger, and make them drunk in my fury, and I will bring down their strength to the earth."
Isaiah 63:1-6, KJV

This prophecy appears to be repeated in slightly different words in the fourteenth and the nineteenth chapters of the Book of Revelation where we are given additional clues concerning exactly how terrible the Lord's revenge will be in the day that He pours out His Wrath upon the wicked:

"And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs."
Revelation 14:20, KJV

"And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God."
Revelation 19:13, KJV

If all of the above is meant to be taken literally, that is a lot of blood from a lot of people! In fact, it is a river of blood about two hundred miles long by modern standards of measurement! Is such a thing really possible? Well, consider these facts: Edom literally means "red" in Hebrew and refers to the descendants of Esau. Today this land area forms a part of the country of Jordan. Bozrah comes from a Hebrew word meaning "sheepfold" or "fortress" and is a city in the same land area. The Jordan River, the primary river of Israel and Jordan, finds its origin in northern Israel in an area once known as Anti-Lebanon. This river is just over two hundred miles in length and flows southwest through the Sea of Galilee, and finds its head, or termination, at the Dead Sea! The Lord made the Dead Sea extremely salty for a reason. Could it be that the blood from the Battle of Armageddon will flow, or will be washed by rain into the Jordan River, thus literally turning it into a river of blood two hundred miles long as it flows down the valley towards the Dead Sea? It would certainly seem to fulfill this ancient prophecy. Time will surely tell. For more on what is in store for Jordan, please refer to my series "Satan: King of Tyrus, King of Empires!".

As a result of their sound defeat at the Battle of Armageddon, the political/military leader known as the Beast, and his fellow cohort in rebellion, the false religious leader known as the False Prophet, will be cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone:

"And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone."

Revelation 19:20, KJV

Concerning all of the armies who foolishly follow the Beast and the False Prophet into battle against the Lord and His Heavenly Army, they will be slain by the Word of the Lord, which is symbolized by a two-edged sword proceeding out of His mouth. These people are the totally incorrigibles, the hardened criminals in God's eyes. Just as we believe in the Sword of the Lord, that is, in the Words of Truth which proceed out of His mouth, these worldly armies will be totally deluded by the lies of the Beast and the False Prophet. Notice the contrast between the following two verses:

"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

Hebrews 4:12, KJV

"Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it."

John 8:44, KJV

Within certain circles, there are those who speculate that this satanic duo will be able to accomplish this delusion by claiming that the Lord's Return is really an invasion from outer space by evil space aliens. If you read my articles on aliens, UFO's and New Age thought, you will see that this is not such a far-fetched possibility. For many years now, public opinion of, and belief in, aliens and UFO's has been shaped by those in power as they carry out their agenda for world domination. Somehow, either through demonic delusion, or possibly through Islamic religious fervor, this satanic pair is going to convince these armies that they can defeat these invading forces from "Outer Space". What they don't realize now, is that they are going to be invited to a special dinner; not to the Marriage Feast of the Lamb reserved for the Lord's spiritual Bride; but rather to a dinner for the buzzards of the air who will devour their dead bodies once the Lord utters His Word against them:

"And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and

the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great . . . And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh."
Revelation 19:17-18, 21, KJV

It is immediately following the above event, or possibly during the height of the Battle of Armageddon, that we are informed by John that that old serpent Satan will be thrown into the Bottomless Pit for one thousand years. This time period just so happens to correspond to the length of the Millennium, which seems to indicate that during Christ's Rule on the present Earth, demonic influence will be completely removed. In this manner, no one will have anyone to blame but themselves for their rebellion against God:

"And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, 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."
Revelation 20:1-3, KJV

Exactly what is this Bottomless Pit? It doesn't seem likely that it is the same thing as the lake burning with fire and brimstone. According to the Greek lexicon, this term is derived from the Greek word "abussos". It is used nine times in the Authorized King James Version of the Bible. Of those nine times, in five instances it is translated as "bottomless pit", in two cases as "deep", and in the final two usages it is translated as "bottomless". Following are the definitions provided by the lexicon:

----- Begin Quote -----

- 1) bottomless
- 2) unbounded
- 3) the abyss
- 3a) the pit
- 3b) the immeasurable depth
- 3c) of Orcus, a very deep gulf or chasm in the lowest parts of the earth used as the common receptacle of the dead and especially as the abode of demons

----- End Of Quote -----

If you are interested in a more in-depth study of this topic, I encourage you to read my eight-part companion series called "Hell, the Lake of Fire and Universalism", and the series "The Seven Heads", specifically part five of the latter. With Satan temporarily out of the way, and the evil armies of the Beast destroyed, John next tells us that the Millennial Rule of Jesus Christ and the Saints will finally begin:

"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 . . . 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."
Revelation 20:4, 6, KJV

For many years I was under the impression that the above verses describe the judgment of the Saints, followed by the Millennial Rule; however, I now realize that this may not necessarily be the case. According to what we read here, the Saints will have apparently already been judged and found worthy of Salvation, Resurrection and a position of authority in God's Millennial Government. If this is true, then when were they judged? The following verse from the first Epistle of Peter may provide us with an important clue:

"For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?"
1 Peter 4:17, KJV

If my understanding is correct, our judgment as Christian Believers is an ongoing process which occurs in this life. From Peter's words above, I am given the impression that this judgment of the Believers began the minute Jesus returned to His Throne of Glory as the Firstfruits of the Resurrection. In other words, we are judged on a daily basis by our actions as Christians. After all, we already know what the Truth is and have accepted it. To add further support for this idea, consider what Jesus said regarding the Rapture of the Saints:

"I tell you, in that night there shall be two men in one bed; the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left. Two women shall be grinding together; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two men shall be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left."
Luke 17:34-36, KJV

As can be seen by these verses, a decision, a determination, a judgment will have already been made regarding the worthiness of the Believers at the time of the Resurrection. Those who are raptured will have already been judged, and will have passed the final grade. They will have been found to be faithful witnesses in this current life. As the above verse from the twentieth chapter of the Book of Revelation states, these are they who will not have loved their lives unto the death. They won't worship the Beast, or the Image of the Beast, or receive the Mark of the Beast; but will rather choose to die for the Lord as their final testimony to an unbelieving world. Despite all obstacles, ridicule and verbal and physical persecution, just like the heroes of faith mentioned in the eleventh chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews, these brave souls won't be ashamed of the Lord or His Word. Here are some additional verses which lend weight to this idea:

"And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the

word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death."

Revelation 12:11, KJV

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it."

Luke 9:23-24, KJV

"Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."

Mark 8:38, KJV

"And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name."

Acts 5:41, KJV

"Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God."

Hebrews 12:2, KJV

If you are interested in reading more on the topic of Christian persecution, I encourage you to read the article "Civil Disobedience and Christian Persecution". It is my most thorough article on this topic to date. What I also find rather interesting regarding the First Resurrection scenario, is that John specifically tells us that these Saints are beheaded because they will refuse to deny their Christian faith; and they will continue to faithfully witness right up to the very end of their Earthly lives. As Jesus said in the Gospel of Matthew:

"And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved."

Matthew 10:22, KJV

As I point out in other of my Endtime articles, I believe that this word "beheaded" is meant to be taken literally. It is translated from the Greek word "pelekizo" which means to cut off with an axe, or to behead someone. Based upon my current understanding, there are only two possibilities that I can envision: either the demonic forces of the Endtime Government are going to be setting up guillotines in order to execute the Saints of the Most High; or else this ties in directly with my own speculations concerning the Beast, the False Prophet, the Ten Horns, and the invasion of Israel all being Arab, and more specifically, Muslim related. This is covered more fully in other of my Endtime articles such as the series "Satan: King of Tyrus, King of Empires!", "The Kings of the North and the South", "The Seven Heads", etc.

Despite Muslim attempts to downplay this, it is a fact that the Qur'an clearly states that it is an honorable act to defend and kill for the faith. A study of Islamic history will clearly demonstrate that this is true. If you are

interested in reading some direct quotes from the Qur'an which clearly reveal the Islamic attitude towards Judaism and Christianity, please refer to my highly-controversial article, "Holy Qur'an and Islam: A Doctrine of Devils?".

Exactly how might this "honorable killing" be accomplished? Once you have read the aforementioned article, it won't be difficult for you to envision the Muslim faithful being stirred up by the rantings of their mad False Prophet, who will encourage them to raise their swords against the Christian and Jewish "infidels" to behead them. When Israel is surrounded, and East Jerusalem invaded, it will truly be a time of Great Tribulation. Consider Jesus' own words concerning the urgency of this time of upheaval and immense human suffering:

"When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains: Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house: Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes. And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! But pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day: For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be. And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened."

Matthew 24:15-22, KJV

Please go to part two for the continuation of this series.

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FROM ARMAGEDDON TO THE NEW EARTH! : PART TWO

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Will Christians Literally Be Beheaded?, The Two Swords, Our Millennial Rule, First And Second Resurrections, Millennial Training, Righteous Judgment, Rod Of Iron, The Lord's Summer School, Seeing Is Believing, The Satanic Influence Shall Be Removed, Denial Of Sin, Voice Of Conscience, Man's Evilness, Sin Of Rebellion, Final Test, True Submission Or Lip Service, God's Fast Fiery Judgment, Heart-felt Obedience, Incurable Wicked, Forsaking God's Mercy, The Lord's Righteous Judgments

Continuing our discussion from part one regarding the faith

of the Muslims -- that is, Islam -- taking into consideration the fact that the Saints will be beheaded for their faith, is it merely a coincidence that in the Book of Revelation we also find the following verse?:

"He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints."
Revelation 13:10, KJV

In the series "The Seven Heads", I point out that the term "wounded by a sword" is often used in the Bible to refer to military defeat. While we can speculate that this is what John means by the above verse, from my previous comments in this series, in this particular case, it may be that John meant exactly what he wrote. Just as these enemies of Christ may literally be killing God's children with the sword by beheading them, the Lord will destroy them with His symbolic sword, the Words of His mouth; for He is in fact the very Word of God as I have amply demonstrated in other articles. Consider the following two examples:

"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth."
John 1:14, KJV

"And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God."
Revelation 19:13, KJV

As I mentioned earlier, and as I explain in articles such as "The Kings of the North and the South", the lies and doubts of Satan and his demonic horde are also a spiritual sword which brings spiritual death to those who choose to believe in them, instead of in the Truth found in God's Holy Word. This is precisely what happened to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden, and it has been happening ever since. Thus, in both a symbolic and a literal sense, we see a fulfillment of this prophecy.

To continue then, the above scenario described in Revelation chapter twenty is not of thrones being set up for others to sit upon and judge us. The word "they" is referring to us, the Resurrected Saints, sitting upon those thrones! The authority to pass judgment is being given to us so that we can determine the fate of those who remain on the Earth following Armageddon and all of the other events I have already described in this article. To add further weight to this view, consider that the original word used in the Greek text where we find this word "given", is the Greek word "didomi", which means to give something to someone, to grant or bestow, to deliver, to supply or furnish, to give over to one's care, to intrust or to commit. So what is actually happening in these verses is that thrones are being set up for us the, Saints, to sit upon and rule the Earth with the Lord as His royal high priests for one thousand years. With this new understanding, let's read those verses again:

"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 . . . 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."
Revelation 20:4, 6, KJV

As I point out in other articles, the Apostle Peter and others also emphasized the fact that we the Believers will one day soon be the Lord's royal priesthood in a very literal sense. Consider the following example taken from Peter's first Epistle:

"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:"
1 Peter 2:9, KJV

I will be sharing additional verses on this topic of our personal future in the final part of the article. It is very important that you realize that this First Resurrection of the dead, and the Rapture of the Saints, is only for those who have already accepted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour. It is not for the unbelievers. Those who did not participate directly in the Battle of Armageddon will continue to live on the Earth in normal human bodies living normal human life spans. After all, we are going to have to have someone over whom to rule. The unsaved dead will not be resurrected for their final judgment until one thousand years later after the Millennium has been completed. This is exactly what John tells us in the following verse:

"But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection."
Revelation 20:5, KJV

Just so you don't become confused, John is not saying that this resurrection of all of the dead following the Millennium is the First Resurrection. He is simply referring back to what he said in verse four regarding the Saints who are resurrected at the Lord's Coming. In order for you to see this clearly, here are all three verses together:

"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. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. 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."
Revelation 20:4-6, KJV

Thus, we again see that the First Resurrection of the saved occurs at Christ's Second Coming, and that the Second

Resurrection of all of the remaining dead does not occur until one thousand years later after the Millennium has been completed. It is those who participate in this First Resurrection at Christ's Coming who will rule with Him during the Millennium. Having now covered the events which occur prior to this time, we have now arrived at the main question which inspired this article; and that is, what is the purpose of the Millennium?

While the Bible does not spell it out for us directly, I believe that we can make a few fairly safe assumptions concerning the purpose of the Millennium. To begin with, I believe that it may be a training period for we the Saints of the Most High God. Without the influence of Satan, who will be bound in the Bottomless Pit, and due to the fact that we will no longer be in our sinful flesh, it will be easier for us to learn and to grow into wise and just spiritual leaders who are fit to rule the Earth; and the Lord knows that this is something which many of us sorely need at the moment. At this current time, we are so in the flesh, that our personal pride, prejudices and preconceived ideas cause us to argue about such things as proper Biblical interpretation, beliefs and doctrines. We also tend to make erroneous character judgments about each other. During the Millennium, we will be under the direct tutelage of Jesus Christ Himself, the very Word of God, as He teaches us all about wisdom, patience, love, mercy and righteous judgment. During that time, we will truly learn to follow the Lord's admonition when He said:

"Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment."
John 7:24, KJV

This topic of judgment is covered more fully in some of my other articles such as "Exposing the Judge Not Fallacy", and "Are Personal Tragedies Due to Sin?", as well as in some of the Apocryphal articles. The idea of righteous judgment in itself could be another reason for the Millennium. This makes perfect sense if you stop to consider the fact that, during the initial years of the Millennium, we will be ruling over those who currently reject our message of Salvation; and sadly, the number of these hard-hearted unbelievers is growing daily at an alarming rate! During the Millennium, we will probably be able to meet some of these very same people face to face and say to them, "You see, it is all true; every word of it. You didn't have the faith to believe it then, but here is the physical proof." In that day, we will be in charge, and not them. They are going to have to submit to us or else pay the consequences for their rebellion. Consider what John wrote to the Church at Thyatira:

"And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father."
Revelation 2:26-27, KJV

As I point out in such articles as the series "Is Jesus the Only Begotten Son of God?", the above promise goes hand in hand with the prophecy found in Daniel chapter two regarding the coming Kingdom of God on Earth, and the destruction of

the worldly governments of man:

"And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever."

Daniel 2:44, KJV

Thus we see that the coming Millennium will be a time for our personal spiritual growth as the Holy Priesthood of the Lord, as well as a time of righteous rule and judgment against those who currently reject our witness. This rule with a rod of iron will be further discussed later on in this article. One thing is absolutely certain; under the Lord's and our direct reign of the inhabitants of the Earth, absolutely no one will be without excuse. No one will be able to say "know the Lord", for all will know Him, just as the people of ancient Israel knew Him when He walked the Earth two thousand years ago:

"And they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest."

Hebrews 8:11, KJV

At this current time, we believe in the Lord by faith, and it is counted to us for righteousness; however, during the Millennium, those who haven't believed by faith, as well as those who are born during the Millennium, will have the full physical witness of the Truth of God's Word, as they see Jesus Christ, and we His Resurrected Saints, ruling in our glorified bodies. This period will be God's final chance for humanity as He puts the people of the world into "summer school" for one thousand years. Because they have flunked for the past six thousand years, the Lord is going to give them a one-thousand-year crash course. They are going to see a clear example of how things were originally meant to be done under the Lord's direct Leadership. As I discuss in the article "The Children of God and Politics", it was ancient Israel's rejection of the Lord as their King and only Leader, and their choosing of a human king, rebellious King Saul, which accelerated their decline into sin and unbelief.

As I mentioned earlier, what is interesting about this Millennial Period, is that with Satan bound, it appears that there will be no evil spiritual influence to affect the people of the world; after all, if Satan is bound, it would seem likely that his demons will likewise be bound. In this current age of the Apostasy, because of their pride and arrogance, many not only deny the existence of God, His Son, and the Spiritual Realm, but they also deny the existence of sin. In the callous heart of the atheistic unbeliever, sin is viewed as nothing more than a concept concocted by organized religion for the sole purpose of controlling the masses. Because of this dangerous denial of our sinful nature, which is due to passive rebellion on their part which results in strong delusion, personal accountability and responsibility are being discarded by many. These Endtime mockers of the Truth of the Word of God feel that anything is permissible; as long as they aren't caught. As I have pointed out a number of times before, Jesus said that

one sign of the Endtime would be that the love of many would
was, or grow, cold. Paul also added that many would become
past feeling and darkened in their understanding:

"And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall
wax cold."

Matthew 24:12, KJV

"Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the
life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because
of the blindness of their heart: Who being past feeling have
given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all
uncleanness with greediness."

Ephesians 4:18-19, KJV

To give you a shocking example of exactly how evil some
people have become, consider the following very graphic
incident taken from a June 14, 1998 Cable News Network,
(CNN), news report. How can the Lord not judge the United
States of America?:

----- Begin Quote -----

POLICE: PARENTS PUT INFANT'S BODY IN BATTERY ACID

"A Chicago couple has been charged with killing their
16-month-old daughter, then putting her remains in a pot of
battery acid and hiding her body parts that did not
disintegrate. The crime is so heinous even police are
calling it one of the most "horrific" they've ever come
across. "No one can recall parents inflicting such horrific,
unspeakable acts on their child," one policeman said. Joan
Tribblet, 27, and Everett Johnson, 29, were charged with
first-degree murder and concealing homicide in the December
murder."

----- End Of Quote -----

For me personally, it is extremely difficult to accept that
some people don't realize when they are doing wrong. As I
have stated in other articles, I believe that we all know
when we are doing wrong or committing evil, because God has
put it in us to know. The Apostle Paul tells us that His
laws are written in our conscience, that is, on the tables
of our heart. It is that still small voice which leads and
guides us wherever we go, and in whatever we do. It is an
inescapable voice which no one can deny:

"Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts,
their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts
the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;)"

Romans 2:15, KJV

To add to this tragedy, when some people are caught doing
wrong, even though they don't believe in anything spiritual,
sometimes they are smart enough to use Satan or his demons
as an excuse for their shameful actions. Some of these
deluded people will even go so far as to claim that "God"
told them to do something. Of course, neither God, nor
Satan, nor the spiritual realm, are recognized as motivating
factors in some Earthly courts of law; so these people are
simply deemed mentally unstable and not held accountable for

their actions. These workers of iniquity are sometimes given a much lighter sentence and locked away in some mental institution for a time, where they are administered one kind of drug or another to keep them in a constant mental stupor. Of course, this isn't always the case, and we can thank the Lord that some people are being forced to receive their just reward for their evil deeds, even in this life. Consider the following example, also taken from a June 1998 CNN news clip:

----- Begin Quote -----

ACCUSED SCHOOL SHOOTER INVOLVED IN SATANISM

"A teen-ager accused in a Mississippi school shooting rampage testified on Thursday that he opened fire on his classmates at Pearl High School after becoming involved in satanism, which he said bestowed "power over many things." Luke Woodham, 17, took the stand against his lawyers' advice after a defense psychologist told jurors the boy was legally insane when two students, including a girl he dated, were shot to death. Seven others were wounded in the attack."

TEEN FOUND GUILTY IN MISSISSIPPI SCHOOL SHOOTING

"Rejecting an insanity defense, a Mississippi jury has found 17-year-old Luke Woodham guilty of two counts of murder and seven counts of aggravated assault for a shooting spree last October at Pearl High School. "I am sorry for the people I killed and hurt," Woodham told the court after being sentenced to two life sentences for murder and seven 20-year terms for the aggravated assault convictions. "If they could have given the death penalty in this case, I deserve it." Woodham was accused of killing two classmates and wounding seven others during the attack, the first of a series of deadly school shootings."

----- End Of Quote -----

Incidents such as the previous two are clear examples of why the Lord is going to have to rule the world with a Rod of Iron during the Millennium. Some people are so hardened of heart that they will simply not learn to fear Him any other way. While the Millennial Rule will be strict, it is my belief that it will still involve personal choice; and this is the crux of the matter. I believe that there is going to be an important lesson that the Lord will be trying to teach everyone during that time; and that is that despite the fact that Satan and his evil minions will no longer be affecting people's decisions, some are still going to choose to rebel against Him. And why is this? The answer is very clear in the Scriptures. Consider the words of the Lord through the mouths of some of His vessels of the past:

"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?"
Jeremiah 17:9, KJV

"They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one."
Psalms 14:3, KJV

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;"

Romans 3:23, KJV

During His Earthly Ministry, the Lord also emphasized that the real problem could be found by looking in the heart of man when He said the following:

"And he said, That which cometh out of the man, that defileth the man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, Thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness: All these evil things come from within, and defile the man."

Mark 7:20-23, KJV

Thus we see that the basic problem is not just negative spiritual influence from without, but rather it is the sin and rebellion within the very heart of man himself. As I mention in "The Children of God and Politics" and other articles, the Prophet Samuel uttered some very serious words against King Saul regarding this matter after the king had rebelled against the Lord by leaning to his own understanding regarding a certain matter:

"For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king."

1 Samuel 15:23, KJV

In short, in the Lord's eyes, rebellion is akin to satanic worship, and it is for this very same reason that the Beast will be able to lead the armies of the Earth against Jesus Christ and the Heavenly Host during the coming Battle of Armageddon; because they will be in rebellion against God Himself! However, as we have already seen, during the Millennium, people will have absolutely no one to blame for their rebellion against the Lord, not even Satan, since he will be bound in the Bottomless Pit. These rebellious souls are going to have to face up to the fact that the sin lies within themselves and nowhere else. They are going to have to either admit their guilt and their wrongdoing, and thus their need for a Saviour, or else they will have no choice but to face the consequences for their actions.

By the end of the Millennium, one would think that most of the doubt and unbelief will have been purged out through successive generations of humans witnessing the direct presence of the Lord and His Resurrected Saints. As a final sifting of the grain, the Book of Revelation tells us that the Lord will loose Satan upon the world one more time in order to see who has truly accepted the Lord's rule over them:

"And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison,"
Revelation 20:7, KJV

In other words, this final test will not be a matter of belief, for it seems to me that all will believe in Jesus, Christ and will know exactly who He is as I explained previously. How could anyone possibly deny the Lord's sovereignty at that time? After all, both He, and we, will

be in our supernatural resurrected bodies. What we all need to realize is that believing in the Lord, and knowing who He is, is not exactly the same as accepting His authority over our lives. As James tells us, even Satan and the demons are fully aware of the Divine Status of Jesus Christ. Consider the following verse:

"Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble."
James 2:19, KJV

You see, part of the Salvation Plan is not just knowing and believing in Jesus Christ; but rather it is also accepting and submitting to His Divine Authority. For we Christians to say that we believe in the Lord, but then not submit to His Will for our lives, makes us hypocrites and liars just like the unbelieving people of the world. Just like them, we are offering the Lord nothing but lip service; and we know what Jesus said about that. Allow me to remind you:

"Ye hypocrites, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying, This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men."
Matthew 15:7-9, KJV

If it were just a matter of knowing and believing, then even the devils would be saved, but they aren't; because they don't submit to the Lord by any means. In fact, their primary goal is to persuade us to not submit ourselves to God either. This is why both Peter and James admonish us to do the following:

"Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:"
1 Peter 5:6, KJV

"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."
James 4:7, KJV

So again, this loosing of Satan from the Bottomless Pit will be a final test of acceptance of Christ's Divine Authority. Those who still reject Jesus' rule over them will of course again be deceived by Satan, and will join the armies which will encompass about the Camp of the Saints:

"And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. 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."
Revelation 20:8-9, KJV

Based upon the above scenario, it appears that during the Millennium, some people will obey, not out of genuine love for the Lord, but only grudgingly because they really have no other choice in the matter. This is not the kind of obedience that the Lord desires. The Apostle Paul makes it

clear exactly what the Lord desires of us in the following Scriptures:

"But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you."

Romans 6:17, KJV

"Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart;"

Ephesians 6:6, KJV

The only obedience that counts is that which comes from the heart. As Jesus said in the six chapter of the Gospel of Matthew, no man can serve two masters; and the minute that Satan is released from his dark prison, many foolish humans are going to allow him to persuade them to once again rebel against the Lord and His Saints. As unbelievable as it may seem to we the Believers, despite the fact that they have witnessed the Lord's direct Righteous Reign, this generation of the future will be totally incorrigible; just like those who will soon perish during the Battle of Armageddon. In fact, in my view, these Millennialists will probably be the most inexcusable people on the face of the Earth in all of history! While the Jews of two thousand years ago also witnessed the miracles of Jesus Christ, and will be held accountable for their actions against Him, they did not witness Him ruling in all of His Power and Glory in His Resurrected Body. Thus, I believe that these Endtime rebels will truly be the worst, and the lowest, that humanity has ever had to offer. While they will witness the greatest amount of Light and Truth the world has ever known, they will also live in the greatest darkness because of their rebellious and unbelieving hearts. In the Book of Isaiah, we find the Prophet saying:

"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."

Isaiah 55:7, KJV

Sadly, in this case, despite the fact that they will witness the Lord's Millennial Rule with His Resurrected Saints, these reprobates of the future won't have learned a single thing; because as the Prophets also tell us:

"They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy."

Jonah 2:8, KJV

"Let favour be shewed to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness: in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the LORD."

Isaiah 26:10, KJV

It is for this very reason, that at this point, the Lord's patience finally runs out; and He just destroys these evildoers without a second thought. Notice that there is no mention here of a battle of any kind. The minute these wicked forces, led by Satan, encompass the Camp of the Saints, we are told that the Lord will simply devour them with fire from above. Thus, if there is one other thing we

will learn from the Millennial Experience, it is that God's Judgments are indeed truly righteous. God wants everyone to know, both in Heaven and on Earth, that He doesn't make mistakes. After a thousand years of the direct rule by the Son of God, no one will be able to point a finger at God and say that He is unfair in His Judgments.

Please go to part three for the continuation of this series.

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FROM ARMAGEDDON TO THE NEW EARTH! : PART THREE

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Mockers Of The Endtime, Survivors Of Magog, Satan's Final Judgment, Great White Throne Judgment, Second Resurrection, Second Death And Lake Of Fire, New Heavens And New Earth, No Survivors, Baptismal Fire, Destroy Not The Earth!, Isaiah's Millennial Prophecies?, A Tough Reign, The Millennium In The Gospels, Millennial Priesthood, The Prophecy Regarding John

This is precisely one criticism which modern atheistic man is constantly using against the Lord. Because of their own haughtiness and deluded state, some people accuse God of being some kind of a blood-thirsty, unfeeling monster. In their folly, they blaspheme Him daily saying that He is nothing but a power-hungry megalomaniac. In my dealings with people across the Internet, and in other message forums, I am constantly confronted with this kind of mentality. These people have absolutely no fear of the Lord whatsoever. It leaves me absolutely dumbfounded when I read how blatant they are in their defiance of the Lord. There are many who say in their hearts, "If I were in control, that isn't how I would run things"; and on and on they go with their crude and unfounded criticisms of the Lord. Either that, or they deny the Lord's existence altogether and put their faith in modern science and technology. Truly, these ignorant souls are fulfilling many ancient prophecies such as the following:

"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."
2 Peter 3:3-4, KJV

From a straight reading of the above Scriptures, it is impossible to tell exactly how many will actually follow

Satan in this final battle between Good and Evil. All we are told is that "the number of whom is as the sand of the sea". This must truly represent a great number; but we must ask ourselves if it actually means everyone living on the Earth at that time. Personally, while I would like to believe that there will be many who will be found worthy of Eternal Life during this one thousand year period, I am not yet convinced that this will be the case. Considering the Lord's direct Rule and Reign on the Earth, we must ask ourselves how could they not accept Him? If we use the Battle of Armageddon as a model, we could assume that not everyone will go to fight against the Lord and His children in this final battle, just as not everyone will go to fight in the coming Battle of Armageddon either. You may recall that in Matthew chapter twenty-four, the Lord said that it will only be His Second Coming which will prevent the destruction of all flesh:

"And except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened."

Matthew 24:22, KJV

It doesn't make sense to me that the Lord would save a part of humanity by His Second Coming, just to destroy them all a short time later during the Battle of Armageddon; so again, I don't believe that everyone is going to be killed during this soon-coming confrontation in the Middle East. Only those who participate directly in the Battle will be destroyed. There will be many other people still left alive in the world following the conclusion of this Battle. But the question still remains; will this final Battle of Magog one thousand years later follow the exact same pattern? This is all directly related to my personal views concerning Salvation. From my personal study of the Holy Scriptures, I am convinced that the Lord won't be satisfied until as many as can be saved, will be saved, for as the Apostle Peter wrote:

"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."

2 Peter 3:9, KJV

However, at the same time, it is important that we keep things in proper balance by comparing Scripture with Scripture; thus, let us also not forget the Lord's own admonition when He said the following in the Gospel of Matthew:

"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

Matthew 7:13-14, KJV

Nevertheless, we must also realize that at some point, just as we parents do with our children, the Lord simply has to draw the line and finally say, "Look folks; this is it. You have had ample opportunity to repent of your unbelief and accept the Truth. Now the time has arrived to punish the

incorrigibles". So will there be survivors from the Battle of Gog and Magog? Keep reading and you will find out what I currently believe. The Apostle John then tells us that following this Post-Millennial battle in which the wicked of the Earth are destroyed by Celestial Fire, Satan finally reaps his judgment as well and is cast into the Lake of Fire:

"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."

Revelation 20:10, KJV

Following Satan's judgment, we are given a view of the Celestial Throne as the Books of Records are opened, along with the Book of Life. It is at this time that the final resurrection of the dead occurs. As you will recall, John earlier described this resurrection of the remaining dead as the Second Resurrection:

"And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works."

Revelation 20:11-13, KJV

Almost two thousand years ago, Jesus spoke of this very same event in the Gospel of John when He said the following:

"Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation."

John 5:28-29, KJV

According to my understanding, this event represents the final judgment of everyone who has ever lived on the Earth since it was first created, except for certain individuals. To be more specific, it includes all of those people who lived during the first four thousand years of Earth's history who were not resurrected at the time of Jesus' own Resurrection -- please refer to Matthew 27:51-53 -- as well as those who will have lived for the two thousand years since Jesus' Resurrection to our current day, who will not have partaken in the First Resurrection of the Saints at the Lord's Second Coming. I believe it will also include all of those who will live during the final one thousand years of the Millennium. In short, the Second Resurrection will be for everyone who hasn't already accepted the Lord and been resurrected or changed previously.

This event is commonly referred to as the Great White Throne Judgment; or as most people know it, Judgment Day. During this event, people will either be deemed worthy of Eternal

Life, or else they will be cast into the lake burning with fire and brimstone. John refers to this as the Second Death. For a more in-depth look at the Second Death and the Lake Of Fire, please refer to the article "Hell, the Lake Of Fire and Universalism":

"And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."
Revelation 20:14-15, KJV

"But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death."
Revelation 21:8, KJV

What is also interesting to note about the Final Judgment scenario is that we are told that "the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them". We find a similar phrase used in the prophecies of Daniel where we read the following:

"Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth."
Daniel 2:35, KJV

Based upon this verse, as well as a few others, this phrase seems to imply total destruction. The Apostle Peter likewise vividly describes the destruction of the current Earth and the atmospheric heavens during the Great White Throne Judgment when he writes:

"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 . . . But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; 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, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."
2 Peter 3:7, 10-13, KJV

It is right after this that the Apostle John launches into the final two chapters of the book of Revelation where he describes the wonderful New Earth and the New Heaven, and the beautiful Heavenly City, New Jerusalem, which will descend upon the pure New Earth:

"And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem,

coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."

Revelation 21:1-2, KJV

This returns us to a question I posed earlier. If the Old Earth and the Old Heaven are destroyed at the time of the Great White Throne Judgment, what happens to those who are still dwelling on the Earth at the end of the Millennium, that is, after the Battle of Gog and Magog when Satan is cast into the Lake of Fire, and the wicked are burned up? As shocking as this may be for you, it appears to me that perhaps there are absolutely no survivors! In other words, it seems that the world will be so evil, and so full of darkness in its final hours, in spite of the Reign of the Lord and His Saints, that everyone will participate in the Battle of Gog and Magog! It is for this reason that the Lord will send down fire to suddenly destroy them all; just as He sent the Flood in Noah's day to destroy the entire Earth:

"Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water."

1 Peter 3:20, KJV

While this may be hard to accept, at this current time, I simply find no other Scriptural way to reconcile the fact that there is no mention of any survivors following the Battle of Gog and Magog. The Lord destroyed them all once before by water; and it appears that He will do it once again by fire.

There are some very deep concepts here concerning baptism. First, we have the Earth being baptized and reborn by water in the days of Noah; next we have John preaching repentance and baptizing with water; and finally we have our physical birth being represented by water in John chapter three. Following a similar parallel, first we find mention of our birth of the Spirit in John chapter three; next we have Jesus baptizing with the fire of the Holy Ghost in Acts chapter two; and finally, we have the Earth being baptized and reborn by fire at the time of the Great White Throne Judgment. Considering these things, it might very well be that Peter's description of the destruction of the Earth and the atmospheric heavens by intense fire is exactly what John is referring to when he says that the Lord will send down fire from Heaven. This destruction by fire will not only destroy the final generation of the wicked during the Battle of Gog and Magog, but it may also be the catalyst which results in the birth of a New Heaven and a New Earth following the Great White Throne Judgment.

This brings us to another possible reason for the Millennium; and that is that it will serve as a very vivid example to all of humankind of how not to do things, and how not to destroy the Earth. Remember, prior to the Lord's Coming, not only will the Earth be ravaged by human warfare, quite possibly nuclear in nature, chemical pollutants, etc., but it will also be the target of the Seven Plagues/Vials of Wrath which include a third of the grass and trees being burned up, great earthquakes, the rivers and oceans being polluted and turned into blood, etc. In short, the Earth

will be a physical wreck as we enter the age of the Millennium; and it may possibly remain that way for some time to come as a grim reminder of the sins and rebellion of mankind against his Creator. In the eleventh chapter of the Book of Revelation, we are told that those who destroy the Earth will also be destroyed by the Lord:

"And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldst give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldst destroy them which destroy the earth."
Revelation 11:18, KJV

While doing some Scriptural research for this series, I discovered that some of the verses which some people have erroneously attributed to the Millennium, may not apply to the Millennium whatsoever, but rather to the New Heavens and the New Earth at the termination of the Millennium. Allow me to pose another interesting question for you: Why would the Lord revitalize the surface of the Millennial Earth just to destroy it a thousand years later? It doesn't make very much sense, does it? Some of the verses commonly used to describe the Millennial Period are taken from Isaiah chapters eleven and sixty-five. Allow me to share a few of them with you:

"The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. 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."
Isaiah 11:6-9, KJV

"The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the LORD."
Isaiah 65:25, KJV

Allow me to bring several points to your attention. First of all, please notice that all of the animals mentioned here are herbivores, and that they don't harm each other or man. What is the only time in the entire history of the world when such a situation has existed? It was only in the very beginning when the Earth was young and new. It was only before the fall of man. During the Millennium, humankind will still be in a fallen state. If this weren't so, then the Lord's Rule with a Rod of Iron would be totally unnecessary, wouldn't it? Following are several more verses from both the Old and the New Testaments which mention this Rod Of Iron:

"Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel."
Psalms 2:9, KJV

"And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all

nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne."

Revelation 12:5, KJV

"And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God."

Revelation 19:15, KJV

The above Scriptures are a clear picture of the Lord smiting the Earth and beating the nations and people into submission to His will. It is not the pretty Millennial picture of nice men, women and children playing with lions and other wild beasts such as we find in the magazines of certain churches, denominations and organizations. Based upon what I have personally discovered through an honest study of the Holy Scriptures, I can only conclude that that is a totally false picture. The Millennium is going to be tough work for we the Saints of the Most High God under our Lord and King, Jesus Christ. We are going to have one thousand years in order to try to undo the damage of the past six thousand years; but sadly we already know exactly how it is going to end; with the Battle of Gog and Magog! Therefore, these people who survive Armageddon are not going to deserve the pretty picture described above. As I will prove without a shadow of a doubt in a minute, the above verses from Isaiah are describing the New Heavens and the New Earth reserved only for the Lord's faithful Believers.

Now let me draw your attention to another point in those verses from the Prophet Isaiah. Notice the mention of the words "my holy mountain". Is this phrase referring to the physical Earthly Mount Zion, that is, to Jerusalem? In my opinion, definitely not! As I have already shown in this article, as well as in my two-part article "Revelation's Babylon The Great", Jerusalem is going to be invaded and destroyed by fire, more than likely by Arab forces. The Scriptures are very clear on this. If this is the case, then in my view, this phrase "my holy mountain" must be referring to something else; and that is to the New Jerusalem which will not descend from Heaven until the Lord has created the New Heavens and a New Earth. The Lord certainly doesn't want His pure Holy City touching down on the current polluted Earth full of evil men.

With the evidence I have presented, are you now convinced that the so-called "lion and the lamb" scenario is not an accurate depiction of the Millennium whatsoever? I must admit that I have been leading you on because I want you to try to come to this conclusion for yourself. If you are not yet convinced that this is so, then allow me to present you with the icing on the cake so-to-speak. In the twenty-first chapter of the Book of Revelation, following the creation of the New Heavens and the New Earth, we read the following verse:

"And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful."

Revelation 21:5, KJV

Do you understand what the Lord is saying here? "Behold, I make all things new! I am going to start all over again!" God is going to make New Heavens, a New Earth, new animals which get along with each other, and new people! I believe that this is the very same thing to which the Prophet Isaiah was referring when he wrote the above lines. He was not talking about the Millennium at all; he was looking beyond it to something much greater than that. Here again is that final verse from Isaiah's prophecy:

"The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the LORD."
Isaiah 65:25, KJV

Now, if we go back only eight verses before this one, we can put the above verse, as well as the other Scriptures from the eleventh chapter, in their proper time frame and context:

"For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy."
Isaiah 65:17-18, KJV

There it is as plain as day! In the above two verses, not only is Isaiah talking about the creation of the New Heavens and the New Earth, but he is also prophesying the creation of the beautiful New Jerusalem as well which shall descend from Heaven, exactly as is described by John in the final two chapters of the Bible! Nowhere is Isaiah talking about these things happening during the Millennium. Despite what some Biblical teachers may say, it simply just isn't true. They need to go back to the drawing board and take a closer look at what is being said in these verses. So again, the idea of man and wild beasts dwelling together in peace and harmony occurs on the New Earth, and not during the actual Millennium.

The person who originally inspired this series was also wondering why Jesus didn't mention the Millennium in His Endtime teachings if it was so important. Upon doing a careful study of the Scriptures, I quickly discovered that the Lord did in fact mention it in quite a few of His parables. The problem seems to lie in the fact that this person did not recognize them as being Millennial in nature. As you will see from the following key verses, Jesus amply described how we will one day be rewarded according to our different levels of faithfulness, and will be permitted to sit down with Him as rulers in His Millennial Kingdom:

"There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the prophets, in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out. And they shall come from the east, and from the west, and from the north, and from the south, and shall sit down in the kingdom of God. And, behold, there are last which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last."
Luke 13:28-30, KJV

"Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods."
Matthew 24:45-47, KJV

"His lord said unto him, Well done, thou good and faithful servant: thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord."
Matthew 25:21, KJV

"And he said unto him, Well, thou good servant: because thou hast been faithful in a very little, have thou authority over ten cities."
Luke 19:17, KJV

Something else we need to remember is that the Gospels do not contain every single thing that Jesus said and did. Consider these words found in the final chapter of the Gospel of John:

"And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen."
John 21:25, KJV

While a lot of the things which Jesus said and did were not recorded in the four Gospels, a few of them were included in some of the Epistles. As an example, consider these verses I shared earlier from the Epistles of Peter where he is specifically referring to us as the Lord's holy and royal priesthood. The fact that we are royal implies that we are also rulers; which in my view seems to be indicating that Peter is referring to the Millennium. The only way Peter could have known this is if the Lord had revealed it to him directly:

"Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."
1 Peter 2:5, KJV

"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:"
1 Peter 2:9, KJV

While he wasn't one of the original Twelve Apostles, in his Epistles, Paul informs us that he learned from no man but rather by direct revelation of Jesus Christ. Exactly what were some of these things which were revealed to him by the Lord? In several of his Epistles, Paul makes the following comments:

"And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."
Romans 8:17, KJV

"If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us:"
2 Timothy 2:12, KJV

It seems to me that Jesus very much wanted to let us know about the Millennium; and this is why that, in addition to His own parables, He used other people and other methods to tell us about it. Consider the following mysterious prophecy that the Lord made right before His Ascension into Heaven. In the final chapter of the Gospel of John, Peter inquires of the Lord concerning the fate of John, and here is what Jesus tells him:

"Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me. Then went this saying abroad among the brethren, that that disciple should not die: yet Jesus said not unto him, He shall not die; but, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee?"
John 21:21-23, KJV

If we try to understand this incident with our human understanding, we might come to the same erroneous conclusion as above; that is, that John would not die until the Lord's Second Coming. In other words, by some miracle of the Lord, John is still alive today waiting like the rest of us for the Return of the Lord. However, this is not what Jesus was saying. We need to remember that Jesus did not always think and speak in terms of human time, because He was not subject to it. Everything Jesus said above came to pass exactly as He said it would. John did in fact tarry, or remain or abide, until He saw the Lord's Second Coming. That is exactly what the Book of Revelation is all about. It is a continuation of the Gospel of John some sixty years later after John, in his old age, is exiled to the isle of Patmos in the Aegean Sea off the coast of Asia Minor, what is today known as Turkey. By a miracle of God, John is lifted up in the Spirit, which might mean that the Lord permitted him to be whisked off through a vortex in the time and space continuum to the distant future, to witness the end of all things, and the beginning of the New Heavens and the New Earth.

Please go to part four for the conclusion of this series.

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FROM ARMAGEDDON TO THE NEW EARTH! : PART FOUR

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Revelation Of Jesus Christ, Millennial Rule As Priests,
Ruling With Jesus Forever, New Heavens And Earth, New
Jerusalem The Heavenly City, Members Of God's Household

What we also need to remember is that the Book of Revelation is not just John speaking; it is the Lord speaking as well. Almost the entire first three chapters are printed in red letters showing that this is the Lord speaking, and not John himself. In chapter twenty-two, after all of the prophecies and visions have been recorded, Jesus again gives His closing words. Consider some of the following Scriptures which show that this is the Lord speaking through His angel to John:

"The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John:"
Revelation 1:1, KJV

"I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty."
Revelation 1:8, KJV

"I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."
Revelation 1:18, KJV

"Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee."
Revelation 3:3, KJV

"Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown."
Revelation 3:11, KJV

"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne."
Revelation 3:21, KJV

"Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book."
Revelation 22:7, KJV

"And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be."
Revelation 22:12, KJV

"I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star."
Revelation 22:16, KJV

All of the above verses clearly demonstrate that the Book of Revelation is indeed Jesus Himself speaking to us directly. So, in addition to the various parables in the Gospels, we

have the Lord speaking in the Epistles, as well as in the Book of Revelation. Clearly then, He wants us to know all about the Millennium, and many other things as well. Besides what we have already covered in chapter twenty, here are a few more verses from the Book of Revelation which demonstrate how we will rule on the Earth as kings and priests of the Lord:

"And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."
Revelation 1:6, KJV

"And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth."
Revelation 5:10, KJV

"And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever."
Revelation 22:4-5, KJV

Thus, with this article, not only have we now discovered the possible purposes of the Millennium, but we have also answered the question concerning what will happen to the Saints after they have ruled with the Lord on the Earth for a thousand years: We will continue to rule with God the Father and Jesus His Son from within the Heavenly City for ever and ever on the New Earth! God is going to make all things new! There is going to be new people on this New Earth! Consider the following verses which confirm this:

"And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."
Revelation 21:24-27, KJV

"In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations."
Revelation 22:2, KJV

These verses clearly reveal that only the saved people of the new nations of the world will be allowed to enter the Heavenly City. The fact that these people will still require healing is a strong indication that they are normal human beings. They are not we the Resurrected and Reigning Saints. We will have already made the grade many years before when we first became the adopted sons and daughters of God. We will be a part of the Household of God who will be permitted to dwell within that City of Golden Light with God our Father, and Jesus Christ our Older Brother. Consider these wonderful verses:

"Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but

fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;"

Ephesians 2:19, KJV

"He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son."

Revelation 21:7, KJV

In that day -- which is hopefully not too far off into the future -- we will finally -- and fully -- understand the significance of what John wrote in the very first chapter of his Gospel when he said:

"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:"

John 1:12, KJV

If you would like a clearer understanding of what it really means to be a son of God, I invite you to read my series "Is Jesus the Only Begotten Son of God?". I believe it will thrill your heart! Have you accepted Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour so that you too can become an adopted son of God? I certainly hope so! Time is certainly growing short with each passing day! I pray that this series has been an inspiration and a blessing in your life. It won't be long!

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