

Revelation's events unfold according to a seven-sealed scroll. These events unfold in a similar manner and sequence as to what happened to the Old Testament Jews. Thus, the events unfold in a Pattern Sequence. I call my prophetic view the Pattern View.

# **GOD'S PLAN AND THE MILLENNIAL DOCTRINES**

**(Chapter Three of my book: *Watchman Warning*;)**

**by  
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1994**

**Christ- Centered**



**Biblical Training**

This chapter presents God's Plan for history to become mature in Christ and what happens when Revelation's 1000 years occur. It presents the various views for the 1000 years and what happens when they come. In our view, the 1000 years come during Christ's Second Coming.

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**Scriptures quoted are taken from the New American Standard Bible.**

***See the glossary for definitions and understanding of the terms used.***

**Note: This report is chapter three of my book: *Watchman Warning* (1994). The details are summarized in my other book: *Watchman, How Far Gone is the Night?* (1995). We encourage you to read these books for more detail and breadth for greater background and more complete understanding. They are available by contacting the above.**

**This chapter is written for those who have some knowledge of the issues and doctrines in prophecy. Those wanting a more beginning view can read *Watchman, How Far Gone is the Night?***

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# **CHAPTER THREE**

## **GOD'S PLAN AND THE MILLENNIAL DOCTRINES**

### **DETAILED BACKGROUND TO THE UNDERSTANDING OF PROPHECY (A Study of the Covenants and the Jewish and Church Dispensations)**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter completes God's plan by detailing the events in the Jewish and Church Dispensations. See Figure 2-13 in the book. By doing so, it presents the Millennial doctrines that show the 1000 years of Revelation 20 symbolize the Last Day of the Church Age. They do not represent a future Jewish golden-age Millennium, nor any part of the Church Period.

In the Dispensation of the Jews, God brought several covenants, promises, shadows of the Cross in the Mosaic Law Covenant, and circumstances that eventually caused the Jews to reject and crucify Christ. The shadows included the temple, the feasts, and the animal sacrifices. The Cross established the New Covenant that brought salvation.

The last Dispensation of the Church enacted this New Covenant. It replaced the Mosaic Law Covenant and ushered in the realities that God had planned for every believer to be in Christ. Christ will complete and terminate God's plan for both the Jews and the Gentiles and for both those in heaven and those on the earth during this dispensation (Ephesians 1:7-12).

Ephesians 1:10 - with a view to an administration [the Church Period] suitable to the fulness of times, that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens, and things upon earth ...

The church is the group "upon whom the ends of the ages have come (1 Corinthians 10:11. There is the present age that will be followed immediately by the eternal age to come (Mark 10:30). There will not be a future literal Millennium after the Church Age. Only the eternal age follows.

The spiritual warfare throughout history was necessary to (1) bring about the fall of man, (2) provide the testing environment which brings believers to spiritual maturity, (3) create the situation that would cause Christ to be crucified, and (4) establish the operation of the Pattern Sequences to bring the end of the Jewish covenant nation and the termination of history. The fall of man was a natural result of the testing of man as to whether or not he would obey God. Making mistakes in this "on-the-job" learning process is sin.

Living a perfect righteous and holy earthly life was necessary for Christ to (1) fulfill the Law (Matthew 5:17) so that He could demonstrate His qualifications to be the Lamb without blemish that would satisfy God's justice for man's sin, (2) ascend into heaven to receive all power of heaven and earth so that the world's people might be evangelized (Matthew 28:18-20), and (3) be worthy to break the seals of the seven-sealed book that would initiate the Pattern Sequence that will end history (Revelation 5:9).

Each of the three dispensations was a prerequisite and a transition into the next, showing that God has a single, integrated, multi-phased plan throughout history. God has only one group of His elect: the body and church of Christ. He does not have two groups of the elect: Israel and the church.

#### **The Jewish Dispensation**

God (Christ) came to Abraham with a covenant (Genesis 12:1-3) and had him leave His country and go to the promised land, later to be called Israel (Hebrews 11:8). Through Abraham and His descendants Isaac and Jacob, the nation of Israel was formed. God ruled directly over each responding individual in the nation. God used prophets and judges to guide the nation. The nation did not have a king, but operated as part of the Kingdom of God when people responded in obedience to Him. God ruled from heaven over the people who responded to Him. God's kingdom was not a kingdom of this world. Those who obeyed God acted under His Kingship.

## God's Plan and the Millennial Doctrines

Near the time of the death of Samuel the prophet, the leaders of Israel deemed that Samuel's sons were unfit to rule over or to guide Israel as Samuel had done. Because of this situation, the people demanded a king like the Gentiles had (1 Samuel 8). By asking for a king, the people were rejecting the direct rule of God over them.

God gave Israel a king. The first king was Saul. He was followed by David and then by Solomon. After the reign of Solomon, the kingdom was divided into two kingdoms: the Northern Kingdom or the Kingdom of Israel, and the Southern Kingdom or the Kingdom of Judah.

During this period, those outside of Israel in the other nations could have fellowship with God if they joined the worship with Israel. Those who did were called proselytes (Acts 2:10; 6:5; 13:43).

God gave several covenants to Israel in this Jewish Dispensation that are involved in the study of prophecy. These include the Abrahamic Covenant, the Palestinian Everlasting Covenant, the Mosaic Law Covenant, the Davidic Covenant, and the New Covenant. In addition, God makes other promises to Israel as well, regarding keeping her in her land.

### The Abrahamic Covenant

In this covenant, God made the following promises to Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3; 17:7, 8; 22:16-18; 26:24; Acts 3:25; Galatians 3:16):

1. To give him and his descendants the land of Canaan, later to be called Israel (Genesis 13:14, 15; 17:7, 8; 1 Chronicles 16:16-18).

As part of this covenant, God gave national Israel an everlasting covenant in regard to the land. Prophetic interpreters in their writings have named it the Palestinian Covenant. They call it the Palestinian Covenant because it deals with the land of Israel (Palestine). The Bible calls it an everlasting covenant, not the Palestinian Covenant. As such, I call it the Palestinian Everlasting Covenant for ease of identification and understanding.

2. To make him a great Nation. This would happen when the number of the sons of Israel numbered as the stars of the heaven, the sands of the seashore, and the dust of the earth. Israel reached this number in the time of her prosperity (Numbers 23:10; Deuteronomy 1:10, 11; Nehemiah 9:23, 24; Isaiah 10:22).
3. That through his Seed, all the nations of the world would be blessed (Genesis 22:18; Acts 3:25; Galatians 3:8, 9, 16). His Seed was Christ and through the Cross, Christ brought great blessing to all people beginning on the Day of Pentecost as the gospel began to go to all nations. This would be the time when the Holy Spirit would be poured out on all flesh or mankind (all nations), according to the Joel prophecy (Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2:14-21). The pouring out would come, beginning with Israel, according to the sequence in Acts 1:8.

The biblical teachings in the previous discussions and those of the Palestinian Everlasting Covenant were taken from Genesis 12:1-3, 7; 13:2, 14, 15; 15:18-21; 17:7, 8, 19; 22:16-18; 24:7, 34, 35; 26:3-5, 14; 28:4, 13-15; Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 1:10, 11; 28; 30:7; Joshua 21:41-45; 1 Kings 3:8; 4:20; 8; 2 Chronicles 1:9; 16:16-18; Nehemiah 1:1-11; 9:7, 8, 23, 24; Psalm 89:30-32; Isaiah 18:2; 24:5; 51:2; Jeremiah 3:8, 11-15; 11:10; 25:8-11; 30:16, 20; 31:32; Ezekiel 16:60; 33:24; Acts 3:25; Daniel 9:1-9; Romans 11:1-10; Galatians 3:7, 16.

### The Palestinian Everlasting Covenant

As part of the Abrahamic Covenant, God gave the land of Israel to Abraham and his descendants (Israel) as an everlasting possession under the Palestinian Everlasting Covenant (Genesis 17:7, 8; 22:16-18; 1 Chronicles 16:16-18). He gave them the boundaries of their land (Genesis 15:18-21; Exodus 23:23, 31; Joshua 1:4) and promised that they would completely possess the land, meaning that they would live in and control the land. This possession started with Abraham and then continued with his descendants. **Israel, at one time, actually lived in and completely possessed the land as God had said they**

## God's Plan and the Millennial Doctrines

would (Joshua 21:41-45; Nehemiah 9:7, 8, 24; Ezekiel 33:24; Acts 7:1-7).

For example (emphasis added):

Joshua 21:43, 45 - So the Lord gave Israel all the land which He had sworn to give to their fathers, and they possessed it and lived in it ... Not one of the good promises which the Lord had made to the house of Israel failed; all came to pass.

Nehemiah 9:7, 8, 24 - "Thou art the Lord God, Who chose Abram and brought him out from Ur of the Chaldees, and gave him the name Abraham. And Thou didst find his heart faithful before Thee, and didst make a covenant with him to give him the land of the Canaanite, of the Hittite and the Amorite, of the Perizzite, the Jebusite, and the Girgashite — to give it to his descendants. And Thou hast fulfilled Thy promise, for Thou art righteous ... So their sons entered and possessed the land. And Thou didst subdue before them the inhabitants of the land, the Canaanites, and Thou didst give them into their hand, with their kings, and the peoples of the land, To do with them as they desired."

Ezekiel 33:24 - "Son of man, they who live in these waste places in the land of Israel are saying, 'Abraham was only one, yet he possessed the land; so to us who are many, the land had been given as a possession.'"

God's promises were not tied to a specific period when Israel would possess the land. The promises only state that Israel would at some time possess the land. Because Israel has completely possessed the land, God has completely fulfilled His promise. He is no longer obligated to return Israel to her land to fulfill this promise.

(The present return of Israel to her land does not meet biblical requirements of the Palestinian Everlasting Covenant. According to this covenant, God will only return the Jews to their land after their repentance from their sin and after their agreement to obey Him once again (cf. Leviticus 26:40-45). The present return of the Jews to their land is in a condition of unbelief. They have returned primarily because they believe they have a biblical mandate to the land. But in their return, contrary to the return in the Old Testament, God has not allowed them to immediately build a temple. Thus, God has not reinstated them to the land under the covenant relationship.)

As part of the covenant, God promised Israel great blessing and that they could stay in the land as long as they obeyed Him (Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 28). If they disobeyed Him, He would bring them warnings and cursings commensurate with their disobedience. **Finally their disobedience would cause them to break the covenant, and it would become non-effective.** As a result, God would bring them devastating calamity and remove them from the land to exile as disciplinary action.

Leviticus 26:33 - "You, however, I will scatter among the nations and will draw a sword after you, as your land becomes desolate and your cities become waste."

Jeremiah 11:10, 11 - "They have turned back to the iniquities of their ancestors who refused to listen to My words, and they have gone after other gods to serve them; the house of Israel and the house of Judah have broken My covenant which I made with their fathers." Therefore, thus says the Lord, "Behold I am bringing disaster on them which they will not be able to escape; though they will cry to Me, yet I will not listen to them."

Ezekiel 16:59 - For thus says the Lord God, "I will also do with you as you have done, you have despised the oath by breaking the covenant." (Emphasis added.)

After a designated period of discipline in exile, God would re-offer Israel the covenant and bring them back into the land if they would confess their sins and agree to obey Him once again (Leviticus 26:40-45; Jeremiah 50:5; Ezekiel 16:60; Daniel 9:1-19).

Ezekiel 16:60, 62 - "Nevertheless, I will remember My covenant with you in the days of your youth, and I will establish an everlasting covenant with you .... Thus I will establish My covenant with you, and you shall know that I am the Lord."

## God's Plan and the Millennial Doctrines

At this time He would bring retribution-judgment on the nation that took Israel into discipline (Deuteronomy 30:7; Jeremiah 30:16, 20).

The blessings, cursings, and events in this process followed the Pattern Sequence of prosperity, calamity, discipline, deliverance, and retribution (Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 28). The calamity followed by discipline had three stages in the case of both the Northern and Southern Kingdoms. There were signs and entities concerning the events that occurred according to the Pattern Sequence. Chapter Five, "The Pattern Sequence of Revelation" develops these Pattern Sequences for both the Northern and Southern Kingdoms and the endtime nation.

### The Mosaic Law Covenant

God gave Moses and Israel a Law Covenant for the sake of the people and His long-term purposes. Because it was given to Moses, we call it the Mosaic Law Covenant. The covenant involved the moral law (commandments), the civil law (the judgments), and the ceremonial law (the ordinances); (Exodus chapters 20-31). The ceremonial law with its feasts, sacrifices, and temples was a shadow of the Cross and its meaning (Hebrews 8:4, 5; 10:1). Israel had to keep the Mosaic Law to maintain fellowship with God. God based the Law Covenant on animals' blood. The period of this Law covenant ran from the time of the giving of the covenant to the Crucifixion of Christ.

The commandments of the Law were meant to show that people sinned. Thus, it led responding people to salvation in Christ (Galatians 2:22-24). It gave them background to understand Christ's work on the Cross. Keeping the tenets of this Law Covenant was never a basis for salvation, but it was the criteria for staying in the land, according to the Palestinian Everlasting Covenant.

The Law keeps people under judgment, and it shows that people sin (transgress God's laws). Those who were saved by believing in the coming Messiah were held in custody under the Law until God released them after the Cross came. Unless a person can always obey the Law throughout their lifetime, which they cannot, the Law keeps them under the condemnation of God. Christ was different, He obeyed the Law perfectly. So He was free from the condemnation of the Law.

As part of this Law Covenant, Israel was to build a tabernacle and later a temple for their worship activities. The animal sacrifices offered in the tabernacle or temple were shadows of the Cross and brought temporary forgiveness of sins so that Israel could stay in fellowship with God and, thus, remain in the land of Israel. A major part of this covenant was the Aaronic priesthood who rendered the temple service. The priests and the prophets had direct access to God.

## The Covenants Are Interrelated

Clearly, the provisions of the Abrahamic, the Palestinian Everlasting, and the Mosaic Law Covenants are interrelated.

### Additional Promises of God

In addition to these covenants, in many Scriptures, God promised Israel that He would return her to her land from exile or establish her in the land future to the time when the promise was given. These Scriptures include Isaiah 2:2-4; 11:1-12; 27:12, 13; 35; 43:1-7; 49:8-16; 59:20, 21; 60:18-20; 61:1-9; 65:17-25; 66:20-22; Jeremiah 16:14, 15; 23:3-8; 30:1-24; 31:35-37; 32:37-41; 33:14-18; Ezekiel 11:14-21; 20:33-38; 34:11-31; 36:8-15, 22-32; 37:11-28; 39:35; 40-47; Daniel 2:31-45; Hosea 1:10, 11; Joel 2:28-32; 3:17-21; Amos 9:11-15; Micah 4:1-7; Zephaniah 8:4-8; Zechariah 13:7-9; 14). All of these references are discussed in Appendix D, "The Return of Israel."

In some references, such a return into what seems to be wonderful conditions has not yet been identified by many interpreters as having occurred. They believe that such returns will not occur until a Millennium after the Return of Christ — a Jewish golden-age Millennium.

Ezekiel (chapters 40-48) describes **a wonderful temple** that has not yet been identified as having been built. The Bible does not state when this temple comes in history. Interpreters do not know exactly what

## God's Plan and the Millennial Doctrines

to do with this temple or how it fits into God's scheme of things. Some interpreters believe that it could be an allegory referring to the new Jerusalem. Others think the temple is implemented in the Millennium because such an understanding coincides with the Dispensational View that God will return Israel to her land in the Millennium according to the Palestinian Everlasting Covenant. At that time, they believe that animal sacrifices and the old priesthood will be reinstated as described in the Ezekiel chapters.

However, the Bible teaches clearly that the physical temple has been replaced by the believers in Christ. The ultimate sacrifice of Christ as the Lamb without blemish has completely and forever replaced the animal sacrifices (Hebrews 9:11-14). The New Testament economy of the New Covenant has completely and permanently replaced the Old Testament economy of the Mosaic Law Covenant making a return of the Jews in a Millennium an impossibility (Book of Hebrews). **Placing this temple in the Millennium conflicts with the clear teachings of Scripture. The Bible reveals no purposes for God to return Israel to her land as a covenant nation after the Cross or after the Second Coming of Christ.**

Future animal sacrifices would be an affront to God and His Son — the Cross was the final and only efficacious sacrifice. Christ died once for sin for all time (Hebrews 7:7; 9:12, 28; 10:10; 1 Peter 3:18; Jude 1:3). The memorial for Christ's sacrifice for sin is the bread and the cup at the Lord's table (1 Corinthians 11:23-30) because they represent His broken body and blood. They, not the animal sacrifices, were part of the New Covenant in His blood. The animal sacrifices were only a shadow of Christ's true sacrifice, and the Bible does not authorize them as the memorial because it would make no sense after the true sacrifice of Christ. The temple of God is now formed by all believers individually (1 Corinthians 3:16; 6:19) and corporately (Ephesians 2:19-21). God does not reside in temples made by human hands (Acts 17:24).

In summary, the Scriptures oppose any teaching where God reinstates the physical temple and animal sacrifices after the time of the Cross. (Even if Israel were returned to her land in the Millennium, God will not reinstate the Mosaic Law Covenant with a temple or animal sacrifices.)

The rather difficult passages usually cited in support of a Jewish golden-age Millennium — such as Isaiah 11 and 35 — indicate that these anticipated wonderful times were actually enjoyed and fulfilled during Christ's First Coming. This is shown, for example, by a comparison of Matthew 11:2-6 with Isaiah 35:5, 6. In the Matthew passage, John the Baptist sent a messenger to Christ asking whether He was the Coming One, or whether they should look for another. Christ answered John with a quote from Isaiah which identified Him as the Messiah. Christ was healing people just as Isaiah had prophesied the Messiah would do. All of God's promises have been completely fulfilled prior to the Cross. See Appendix D for analysis of the Scriptures.

### The Davidic Covenant

God promised King David in the Old Testament that He would one day place Christ on David's throne (2 Samuel 7:12, 13; Psalm 89:3, 4, 35-37; 132:11, 12; Jeremiah 33:14-22; Ezekiel 37:24-28; John 18:33-38; 19:19-22; Acts 2:29-33). The Bible teaches that Christ was born a king, and Christ declared to Pilate at His Crucifixion that He was a king. But He said that His Kingdom was not of this world (but instead, of heaven). The Bible teaches that Christ began His reign on David's throne from Heaven at the time of His Ascension:

Acts 2:29-33 - "Brethren, I may confidently say to you regarding the patriarch David ... because he was a prophet, and knew that God had sworn to him with an oath to seat one of his descendants upon his throne, he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that He was neither abandoned to Hades, nor did His flesh suffer decay. This Jesus God raised up again, to which we are all witnesses. Therefore having been exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured forth this which you both see and hear."

Christ's Kingdom began at His Ascension when He received all power of heaven and earth — rule over all nations (Matthew 28:18; Ephesians 1:20-22; 1 Peter 3:22). This power included the power to be king of Israel. Christ having David's throne means that He had the power of David's throne at the same time He rules over all the nations. Christ never sits literally on David's physical throne on the earth to rule over only Israel — He rules over all the nations from heaven.

## God's Plan and the Millennial Doctrines

### The New Covenant

God promised individuals of both the houses of Judah and Israel — individuals of both the Northern and Southern Kingdoms — a New Covenant (Jeremiah 31:30-34). This covenant was never promised to Israel as a covenant nation, and it was never part of the Old Testament economy. This covenant was not coupled to the Old Testament Abrahamic, Palestinian Everlasting, and Mosaic Law Covenants. This covenant would be implemented in a future period apart from the Jewish Dispensation.

About this covenant, Jeremiah said:

Jeremiah 31:31-34 - "Behold, days are coming," declares the Lord, "when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah, not like the covenant which I made with their fathers in the day I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, My covenant which they broke, although I was a husband to them," declares the Lord. "But this is the covenant which I will make with the house of Israel after those days," declares the Lord, "I will put My law within them, and on their heart I will write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people. And they shall not teach again, each man his neighbor and each man his brother, saying, 'Know the Lord,' for they shall all know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them," declares the Lord, "for I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more."

The New Covenant would bring a change in the heart of individual believers and a new and different rule of God. The covenant has to do with an individual's relationship with God, instead of a relationship of God with national Israel as a covenant nation.

### God's Purposes for Israel and the Law

God's purposes for Israel as a nation were that she provide the genealogy that would bring the Messiah as King of Israel through the lineage of David in the king line, render services in the temple, bring the Word of God, and be a light to the Gentiles (Psalm 96:3, 7-10; Isaiah 42:6; Matthew 1:1-17; Luke 3:23-38; Acts 7:38; Romans 3:1, 2; 9:4; Galatians 3:8). God used Israel to crucify Christ and her Pattern Sequence to be a model for the endtime Pattern Sequence.

### Daniel's 70 Weeks

God gave the prophet Daniel the very important prophecy of the 70 Weeks (Daniel 9:24-27). These weeks represent a 490 year, exclusively, Jewish period. These Weeks would bring three significant provisions:

1. That the Jews (of the Southern Kingdom) would be restored to their land at the end of their 70-year captivity in Babylon to rebuild the city of Jerusalem and the temple. The Jews would be brought back into the land, based on a re-offer of the Palestinian Everlasting Covenant and on their confession of their sins, represented by Daniel's prayer (Daniel 9:1-19).
2. That Christ would come and be the Messiah at the exact end of 483 years (the end of 69 Weeks). (The exact end of the 483 years was the time of the baptism of Christ when He was anointed the Messiah by the Holy Spirit.)
3. That the Messiah would confirm the New Covenant to the Jews and afterward be crucified for sin in the middle of the last seven years (70th Week) in order to establish salvation under the New Covenant.

This exclusively Jewish period ended at the end of the first three and one-half years into the Church Period. Then the gospel went to all nations. This prophecy is explained in more detail later in chapter 3 and is fully developed in Appendix B.

### Israel's History

Israel's conduct when she was operating under the Palestinian Everlasting Covenant and a Pattern

## God's Plan and the Millennial Doctrines

Sequence throughout her history, alternated in a pattern of obedience, followed by disobedience (Leviticus 26; Deuteronomy 28). This sequence appears many times in the book of Judges. After Israel's Kingdom was divided into the Northern and Southern Kingdoms, each of these kingdoms had a major encounter with God, operating within a Pattern Sequence. The relationship with the Northern Kingdom ended in divorce (Jeremiah 3:8), because they did not confess their sin and agree to once again live under God's authority in the land under the Palestinian Everlasting Covenant. Because 10 of the 12 tribes of Israel were associated with the Northern Kingdom, after the divorce, they have become traditionally known as the 10 lost tribes of Israel.

The Jews of the Northern Kingdom were never again to be in their land under their own sovereign government. Many from the 10 Jewish tribes of the Northern Kingdom migrated to Judah to live in the Southern Kingdom. So they show up during Christ's ministry and during the book of Acts. Many were saved on the Day of Pentecost. God's relationship with the Southern Kingdom under the Palestinian Everlasting Covenant brought them back into the land to rebuild Jerusalem and the temple (Ezra and Nehemiah) after their 70-year captivity in Babylon. He brought them back after they confessed their sins that was required by the covenant.

The prophets speak largely about the other two tribes (Benjamin and Judah) in the Southern Kingdom. The Jews of the Southern Kingdom that represented Israel's leadership made a blood covenant with God when they took responsibility for Christ's Death. (The blood covenant is described in the next section.) Making this blood covenant, they again refused to have God (Christ) rule directly over them, and as a result, they broke the Palestinian Everlasting Covenant. Because they rejected the rule of His Son and His teachings, refusing to be restored in fellowship to Him, God has no way for them to be restored to fellowship with Him. As a result, He divorced the Southern Kingdom.

By His grace, God postponed the devastating calamity on the Jews for their breaking the Palestinian Everlasting Covenant through the blood covenant for 40 years. God gave Israel time to repent of their sins and to believe the gospel. In A.D. 70, God and Christ brought the Romans as Their servants to implement the devastating calamity and permanently terminate Israel as a covenant nation. The Roman armies were the armies of God, and He used them to bring destruction on His own people and the temple, just as He brought the Babylonian armies as His servants against them during the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple earlier during the 70-year captivity (Jeremiah 25:9, 11; Ezekiel 24:31).

Since A.D. 70 when Jerusalem was destroyed, the Jews have not been a nation until May of 1948. But Israel at this time came into the land and took charge as a nation out of fellowship with God. God has not given Israel continued possession of the land. Her existence now is not as a covenant nation.

It would appear that any Scripture such as Jeremiah 31:35-37 that teaches Israel will remain in existence before God forever must have some other meaning or have had conditions placed on it that were not met. She has not remained in existence as a nation from A.D. 70 to 1948. In this passage of Scripture, God declared that Israel would remain as a nation before Him forever as long as the heavenly luminaries gave their light. The heavenly luminaries did not shine on Israel for three hours when Christ was on the Cross. During those three hours the land was in complete darkness (Matthew 27:45; Mark 15:33; Luke 23:44, 45). Thus, based on Jeremiah 31:35-37, God is no longer obligated to continue to treat Israel as a covenant nation after the Cross. This is exactly what has happened. God has not treated her as such; Israel has not remained as a covenant nation since the Cross. (Appendix D, "The Return of Israel.")

Israel's not being in control of her land for almost 1900 years shows that she has broken the Palestinian Everlasting Covenant, and that God has given her a divorce. According to Scripture, God always returned Israel to her land immediately after the disciplinary period was over to rebuild Jerusalem and the temple. There is no Scriptural precedent for Israel being in exile for 1900 years if she remains as a covenant nation. This period is about as long as Israel was a nation — from the call of Abraham to the time of the Cross.

As the Jewish Dispensation was coming to its end, Christ inaugurated the New Covenant with His disciples in the Upper Room before His crucifixion (Matthew 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:14-20).

Luke 22:20 - And in the same way He took the cup after they had eaten saying, "This cup which is poured

## God's Plan and the Millennial Doctrines

out for you is the new covenant in My blood.

After His Resurrection, Christ gave His disciples His Great Commission to take His gospel to all people and disciple them to keep His commandments. This commission was to be implemented in the Church Dispensation.

### The People's Blood Covenant

At Christ's Crucifixion, the Jews (of the Southern Kingdom — the Judeans) made a binding blood covenant with God that caused Him to reject them as a covenant nation forever (Matthew 27:25; Mark 14:24; Luke 22:20; Acts 5:28). This covenant was made when the Jews said, "His blood be on us and on our children" (Matthew 27:25). These words came after Pilate said he was innocent of Christ's blood (death). When the Jews said that His blood be **on their children**, this rejection was for all time. In their covenant statement, the Jews took responsibility for their own permanent rejection of Christ's rule over them and for His Death. The spilling of Christ's blood at His Death made the covenant effective. Thus, God now has no basis to restore the Jews as a covenant nation. The People's Blood Covenant at Christ's Crucifixion brought a permanent rejection of their Messiah and the only way of reconciliation to God. Thus, the people, as a covenant nation, sealed a blood agreement with God for themselves and their children — they rejected Christ's reign over them forever. By this covenant they ignorantly prevented any future possibility of their reconciliation to God as a covenant nation.

Although the Romans actually carried out the Crucifixion, the Jews were ultimately responsible (Acts 2:22, 23, 36; 3:13-15; 5:28). On the Day of Pentecost, when Peter confronted the house of Israel about what they had done, they said, "Brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:36, 37). Peter's answer to them was, "Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins ..." (Acts 2:38). Peter was saying that even though they **corporately** had crucified Christ, the Jews could now **individually** return to Christ and God by believing the gospel (repenting) and, as an act of faith, by being baptized. All returns of the Jews to God could now be only on an individual basis — no longer on a national basis.

#### Discussion

There are other blood covenants that illustrate this concept. For example, the first covenant of the Law was inaugurated by the shedding of animal blood (Exodus 24:1-8; Hebrews 9:18-22). To make the covenant effective, this blood was sprinkled on the altar, the book of the covenant, and on the people. Moses said, "this is the blood of the covenant which God commanded you" (Hebrews 9:20), referring to the passage in Exodus 24. It was called the blood of the covenant. The people said, "All that the Lord has spoken we will do, and we will be obedient!" (Exodus 24:7). The people's words of agreeing to abide by it and the shedding of blood made the covenant effective. The shedding of Christ's blood, His physical death, made the People's Blood Covenant effective.

This blood covenant at the Cross prohibits a Jewish Tribulation, and a later Millennium, where the Jews would be in fellowship with God as a covenant nation. It prevents God from bringing the Jews, as a covenant nation, back into the land. **The Jews can only return to God individually, via the Cross, as any Gentile can. Then they can have all of Christ's riches and blessings, as God intended from the beginning.**

#### The Marriage of Jehovah

Christ as Jehovah was married to Israel in Old Testament times under the Palestinian Everlasting Covenant (Exodus 6:4-8; Isaiah 54:5; Jeremiah 31:32) and is now marrying the church in New Testament times (Revelation 19:7-9; 21:9). Christ in John 8:58 referred to Himself as, "before Abraham was born 'I AM.'" This is a reference (Exodus 3:13-17) to the time of the burning bush when God who declared to Moses that He was "I AM," the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob who brought the sons of Israel out of Egypt. Christ was declaring that He was the One Who spoke to Moses at the burning bush. God as the husband of Israel brought them out of Egypt (Jeremiah 31:32). The Bible teaches that man has never seen God (the Father) physically or heard His voice at any time (John 1:18; 5:37). Thus, the God that brought Israel out of Egypt, the God Who Moses heard at the burning bush, and the One that Ezekiel saw

## God's Plan and the Millennial Doctrines

on the throne was Christ. Others who saw God or heard His voice saw Christ. Thus, Christ is the God over Israel in the Old Testament times, and He is portrayed as being married to Israel.

God maintained the marriage and fellowship under the Palestinian Everlasting Covenant as long as the people of Israel obeyed, while in the land, or returned to Him in obedience from disciplinary exile (Leviticus 26:40-45). When the people of Israel returned to Him, God returned them to the land. When the people of Israel disobeyed, their apostasy and sin was a form of spiritual adultery and desertion to false gods. In these conditions, the people of Israel forsook the covenant (Deuteronomy 29:25-28). In accordance with the covenant, God always accepted their repentance from this adultery and desertion, if they agreed to obey once again.

In the of book of Hosea, Hosea's marriage to Gomer his wife is an object lesson regarding Israel. It teaches that God wants marriages to continue or be restored permanently, even if alienation occurs over a long period. Gomer left Hosea and became an adulterous woman. But after a long time, she returned to Hosea. This is what God wanted for Israel. However, if after a long time, the people of Israel refused to repent and return in obedience, God could give them a writ of divorce. This would cut them off from the marriage and permanently make the covenant inactive on their behalf. This is what happened.

The northern Kingdom, after many years of alienation, refused to return to God, because of hardness of heart, and He gave her a writ of divorce. This divorce cut off the Northern Kingdom as a covenant nation forever, from all covenants, marriage, and fellowship.

Jeremiah 3:8 - "And I saw that for all the adulteries of faithless Israel, I had sent her away and given her a writ of divorce ... "

Prior to the Cross, the Southern Kingdom had always returned to God from exile. However, during Christ's gospel ministry, the religious leaders and people refused to have Him reign over them. They influenced the Romans to crucify Christ as they made the blood covenant with God, taking responsibility for Christ's Death (Matthew 27:25). The covenant was effective then to them and to all their future generations. As Christ was being crucified and dying for sin, God rent the temple's veil from top to bottom, showing that the period of Judah was being terminated (Matthew 27:51). This act terminated the marriage with the Southern Kingdom of Judah and with it the Palestinian Everlasting Covenant.

Because of the divorce to both the Northern and Southern Kingdoms, Israel as a covenant nation has been stripped of all her covenants. National Israel no longer has special significance in God's plan. However, as individuals they can believe the gospel and come under the New Covenant.

The fact of the divorce to both kingdoms had occurred was demonstrated when Christ began to marry the Church beginning on the Day of Pentecost under the New Covenant. It was also demonstrated by God taking the administration of the Kingdom of God away from Israel and giving it to the Church (Matthew 21:33-46; Luke 20:9-18). Being married to the church, He is legally betrothed to individual believers as they become Christians under the oriental marriage concept. This legal binding is shown by the earnest of the Spirit in a promise to continue the relationship (Ephesians 1:13, 14). The oriental marriage concept is discussed in the next chapter.

Christ cannot be married to Israel while He is married to the church because God cannot have two wives simultaneously. This is taught by God's requirement that priests, kings, and church elders are to be one-woman men (Genesis 2:18-24; Leviticus 21:10-24; Deuteronomy 17:17; Isaiah 54:5; Jeremiah 31:32; 1 Timothy 3:2). They are to be devoted exclusively to a single wife. Christ cannot be married to Israel and the church simultaneously because this is against His own law. Because He divorced Israel and is married to the church, He can never remarry Israel in a covenant relationship, because He would defile Himself (Deuteronomy 24:1-4).

Also, Christ cannot be married to Israel and the church simultaneously because the marriages would be under two different covenants — the Palestinian Everlasting Covenant with Israel and the New Covenant with the church. **Because the new marriage, with individual Israelites, is only under the New Covenant, there is no basis to return national Israel to her land.**

## God's Plan and the Millennial Doctrines

While Christ can no longer remarry Israel as a covenant nation, Christ **can marry individual Jews** under the New Covenant. God unites new believers with Christ through His gospel in His death, burial, and resurrection and through spiritual baptism (Romans 6:1-13; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 3:27; Colossians 2:12). As people believe in Christ as Savior they are placed in Christ and die with Christ on the Cross (1 Corinthians 1:30; 2 Corinthians 5:14, 15; 2 Peter 1:4). Through their spiritual death with Christ on the Cross, believing Jews and Gentiles die to their old husband in metaphor (described as the Law) and come under a new regime (Romans 7:1-6). The Mosaic Law, including the divorce and marriage laws, no longer has jurisdiction over them. Because believers have died to the Law, Christ can marry them. Christ avoids defiling Himself because Jewish believers die to the Law as their old husband at the moment they believe the gospel. When a Jew believes in Christ as Savior, he becomes part of "the Israel of God" (Galatians 6:14-16).

Human works maintained Israel's marriage under the Palestinian Everlasting Covenant. Divine works maintain the church's marriage under the New Covenant. The New Covenant forever set aside the Old Testament covenants that pertained to Israel as a covenant nation, including the Palestinian Everlasting Covenant.

In summary, God will not restore Israel to the land after the Great Tribulation for two reasons:

1. God has no basis to restore Israel to the land because the New Covenant has no such provision and because His divorce of Israel and Judah set aside the Palestinian Everlasting Covenant that did have the provision.
2. God has divorced national and covenant Israel and married the church. God cannot remarry Israel without defiling Himself. He cannot remarry Israel because, as king of Israel and head of the church, He cannot have two wives.

(Genesis 2:18-24; Exodus 6:4-8; Leviticus 21:10-24; 26:40-45; Deuteronomy 17:17; 24:1-4; 29:25-28; Isaiah 50:1; 54:5; Jeremiah 3:8; 31:32; Romans 7:1-6; Galatians 6:14-16; Philippians 1:6; 2:12, 13; Ephesians 4:7-10; 5:23; 1 Timothy 3:2; Hebrews 10:26; Revelation 19:7.)

## The Church Dispensation

### The Beginning

The book of Acts shows the transition from the Jewish to the Church Dispensation. The Cross of Christ brought salvation to everyone who would believe the gospel. Beginning with the Day of Pentecost, 50 days after the Cross and the Resurrection of Christ, Christ began to build His church using people who believed that He died for sin on the Cross, was buried, and rose bodily from the dead according to the Scriptures (1 Corinthians 15:1-4). The Day of Pentecost began the Church Dispensation.

On this Day, the angels said to the disciples that they would receive power after the Holy Spirit comes upon them and that they should be His witnesses beginning with Jerusalem and progressing to the end of the earth (Acts 1:8). Christ at this time departed into the clouds from the earth and from His disciples. At that time the angels said that He would return as He went — in the clouds (Acts 1:9-11).

After His Ascension, God gave Christ all the power of heaven and earth (Matthew 28:18-20; Ephesians 1:20-22; 1 Peter 3:22). Christ is ruling in heaven with all the authority of heaven and earth at the right hand of God. His authority includes the authority of David's throne, and He rules over Israel as well as over all the nations. This new authority has allowed Christ to send His servants with the gospel to all the nations, including Israel. The Great Commission was based on this new authority.

As the Church Period began on the Day of Pentecost, the Jews began to speak in tongues (foreign languages which the individuals doing the speaking did not know, but some of the hearers did) to show the Jews that Christ, the Seed of Abraham, was now blessing people from all nations (Acts 2:1-21). Tongues were a sign that the Holy Spirit was now being poured out on all flesh, according to the Joel Prophecy (Joel 2:28-32). The gospel was going to all nations in the sequence of Acts 1:8.

## **God's Plan and the Millennial Doctrines**

The responsibility for the administration of the Kingdom of God was now being taken from the Jew and being given to the church because the Jews had killed the Son of God (Matthew 21:33-46; Luke 20:9-18). The Jewish period was now over. Tongues as well as the gifts of knowledge and prophecy stopped after the transition period in the first century was completed (1 Corinthians 13:8). God no longer gives the gift of tongues.

In pre-Day of Pentecost times from Adam to Christ, people were saved by calling upon the Name of the Lord. Their salvation was held captive under the Law until the Cross came and brought the reality of salvation.

Galatians 3:23 - But before faith came, we were kept in custody under the law, being shut up to the faith which was later to be revealed.

When they received the reality of salvation when the Cross came, Christ took them to heaven with Him at His Ascension to become part of His church.

Ephesians 4:7-10 - Therefore it says, "When He ascended on high, He led captive a host of captives, and He gave gifts to men." Now this expression, "He ascended," what does it mean except that He also had descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is Himself also He who ascended far above the heavens, that He might fill all things.

The believers who died prior to the Day of Pentecost were held captive in Abraham's bosom in paradise presumably in the earth waiting for the Cross to come (Luke 16:19-31). The location was near hades where the unbelieving dead were kept in wait for the Great White Throne Judgment.

All people are either unsaved in Adam or saved in Christ (Romans 5:12-21). There are no other choices. If people are saved, they are part of the church and body of Christ and have been translated into the Kingdom of Christ. If they are unsaved, they remain as unregenerate and under the Dominion of Satan. All believers are part of Christ's church regardless of when they live in history.

### **Salvation**

Salvation came through the Cross of Christ. Salvation means that the satisfaction of God's justice for man transgressing His laws has been placed to the personal account of the believer. God now has translated him from the Dominion of Satan (Darkness) into the Kingdom of God (Colossians 1:13). The Holy Spirit has changed him into a new creation or new creature (2 Corinthians 5:17) and has permanently sealed him to be with Christ in eternity (Ephesians 1:13, 14). The Holy Spirit has baptized the believer so that sin can no longer have complete reign over him (Romans 6:1-13). The believer is now to walk in newness of life.

Isaiah 53:9 teaches that Christ had two deaths on the Cross. The gospels show that He had both a spiritual death and a physical death. Both deaths were required to bring salvation.

His spiritual Death on the cross for sin established the New Covenant in His blood. During the three hours on the Cross from noon to three p.m., the land was in complete darkness, and Christ's pure blood purged out and made justification for all the sins of all people (Romans 3:25; 5:9; Hebrews 1:3; 9:22; 1 John 1:7; 2:2; Revelation 1:5; 5:9; 7:14). He was spiritually dead but physically alive at the time when His pure and sinless blood purged out all sin. He was physically alive when He said that the salvation process is finished (Luke 23:46).

His physical death and physical resurrection placed the New Covenant into effect at His Ascension and on the Day of Pentecost. The maker of the covenant has to physically die in order to place the covenant into effect (Hebrews 9:16, 17).

Thus, both the spiritual and physical deaths of Christ on the Cross were necessary to establish and enact salvation. The establishment of the New Covenant showed that God's justice for sin had been completely satisfied by a Lamb without blemish.

## God's Plan and the Millennial Doctrines

God inaugurates covenants with blood throughout the Bible (Hebrews 9:19-21). In this case, the blood of Christ was used to inaugurate the New Covenant. The New Covenant in His blood was for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 20:28; Romans 3:25; 5:9; 1 Corinthians 11:25; Ephesians 1:7; 2:13; Colossians 1:20; Hebrews 9:12). The inauguration required the death of an animal or person — for salvation, the person of Christ.

The Bible in many places uses the term "shedding of blood" to mean the physical death of a person (Matthew 23:30; Luke 11:50; Acts 22:20; Romans 3:15). The shedding of Christ's blood meant His physical death. I believe that when the New Testament speaks of Christ's blood being shed for the remission of sins, it includes both deaths on the cross.

Thus, both the spiritual and physical deaths of Christ on the Cross were necessary to establish and enact salvation. The establishment of the New Covenant showed that God's justice for sin had been completely satisfied by a Lamb without blemish (Christ being without sin and without a nature that sins).

Those who desire to acquire personal salvation and become a Christian can read about the process and the event in Endnote #1<sup>1</sup> at the end of this chapter.

### The New Covenant

Christ enacted the New Covenant on the Day of Pentecost, bringing salvation to all who respond to the gospel. Christ's blood, as it purged sin on the Cross, established the New Covenant, and His death and resurrection caused it to be effective at the beginning of the Church Period (Hebrews 9:12-18; 10:1-18).

Hebrews 9:14-18 - ... how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this reason He is the mediator of a new covenant, in order that since a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were committed under the first covenant, those who have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. For where a covenant is, there must of necessity be the death of the one who made it. For a covenant is valid only when men are dead, for it is never in force while the one who made it lives. Therefore even the first covenant was not inaugurated without blood.

The New Covenant is the only basis for salvation. The New Covenant period as announced in the Bible extends from Christ's Death to His Second Coming (1 Corinthians 11:25, 26). Thus, the period of the New Covenant is the Church Age. **This is the only covenant that is in effect for the church.** Hebrews 8:6 tells us that this New Covenant has already been enacted in the Church Period. The church was given the ministry of the New Covenant (2 Corinthians 3:6).

The New Covenant brought a new priesthood and a change in the Law (Hebrews 7:12). Christ became high priest after the order of Melchizedek (Hebrews 7:17), and believers in Christ became members of a royal priesthood (1 Peter 2:9). Each individual has individual access to God. Christ's new priesthood permanently replaced the Old Testament Aaronic priesthood (Hebrews 7).

Hebrews 7:11, 12 - Now if perfection was through the Levitical priesthood (for on the basis of it the people received the Law), what further need was there for another priest to arise according to the order of Melchizedek, and not be designated according to the order of Aaron? For when the priesthood is changed, of necessity there takes place a change of law also.

Hebrews 7:17 - For it is witnessed of Him, "Thou art a priest forever according to the order of Melchizedek."

See also Hebrews 7:18-27.

The believer in the Cross became the sanctuary of God; the temple of God and of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 3:16, 17; 6:19; 2 Corinthians 6:16; Ephesians 2:21), and believers are now to be living sacrifices to God (Romans 12:1). Being in Christ, believers are now to renew their minds with God's Word (Romans 12:2).

## God's Plan and the Millennial Doctrines

The Cross and the New Covenant broke down the barrier between the Jew and Gentile, and all saved people now have equal inheritance in Christ for salvation and in the program of God (Ephesians 2:11-22). In the Old Testament, because the Jews administered the Kingdom of God, they were positioned above the Gentiles. The Gentiles had to come to them to have fellowship with God. Because the administration of the Kingdom of God has been given to the church comprised of both Jews and Gentiles, the Old Testament barrier has been broken down. Christ's work on the Cross accomplished this. The New Testament speaks of Jews as individuals being saved just like the Gentiles are saved (Romans 11).

Ephesians 2:11-22 - Therefore remember, that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called "Uncircumcision" by the so-called "Circumcision," which is performed in the flesh by human hands — remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one, and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace, and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity. (Emphasis by author.)

Thus, both the Jew and the Gentile are now one body in Christ — one new man. They are no longer separate entities. The Bible teaches clearly that there are no distinctions between those who are in Christ (Romans 10:12; Galatians 3:28; Colossians 3:11). All believers are equal in Christ with only Christ now having any preeminence (Colossians 1:18).

Galatians 3:28 - There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Colossians 3:11 - ...there is no distinction between Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, slave and freeman, but Christ is all in all.

Under this new arrangement of the Cross, believers from both houses of Israel and Judah become one new man in Christ (the sticks of Joseph and Judah become one stick in Christ as Jews from all the tribes of Israel believe the gospel; Ezekiel 37:19). The salvation of both houses under the New Covenant was demonstrated on the Day of Pentecost when Jews from both houses were saved (Acts 2:14, 22, 37-41).

Tenets of the New Covenant are expressed in Jeremiah 31:31-40 and in Hebrews 8:8-12 and in Hebrews 10:16, 17. Although the New Covenant as recorded in Jeremiah 31 only refers to the Jews, Gentiles are also included in it because it was implemented in the Church Period. The Scripture shows this as follows:

1. Provision: I will put My law within them.  
Enactment: Romans 5:5; Ephesians 3:20; Colossians 1:29; 3:16; Hebrews 10:15-17.
2. Provision: I will write My law on their hearts.  
Enactment: Romans 10:8; Colossians 3:16; Hebrews 10:15-17.
3. Provision: I will be their God and they shall be My people.  
Enactment: Hebrews 10:15-17; 2 Peter 2:9, 10.
4. Provision: They need not teach one's neighbor to know the Lord, because everyone (believers) shall know God.  
Enactment: Galatians 4:9; Philippians 1:9,10; 1 Thessalonians 4:9; Hebrews 10:15-17; 1 Peter 1:1-11; 1 John 2:3, 5, 13, 14, 27; 4:2; 5:20.
5. Provision: I will forgive their iniquity and sin and remember them no more.  
Enactment: Acts 2:28; 5:31; 10:43; 13:28; 26:18; Hebrews 10:15-17.

### Relationship of the New Covenant to the Mosaic Law Covenant

## God's Plan and the Millennial Doctrines

Under the Mosaic Law Covenant, people made peace with God on a temporary basis through the blood of animals. But now under the New Covenant, people make permanent peace with God through the blood of Christ and His sacrifice. What is important now is that people believe that Christ died on the Cross for their sin.

The Cross of Christ and the New Covenant permanently replaced the Mosaic Law Covenant (Hebrews 8:6, 7, 13; 9:16, 17, 24-26; 10:2-10):

Hebrews 8:6, 7 - But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, by as much as He is also the mediator of a better covenant, which has been enacted on better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, there would have been no occasion sought for a second.

Hebrews 8:13 - When He said, "A new covenant," He has made the first obsolete. But whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to disappear.

Hebrews 10:9, 10 - then He said, "Behold, I have come to do Thy will." He takes away the first in order to establish the second. By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

The Mosaic Law Covenant was permanently replaced by the New Covenant based on Christ's blood when God rent the veil from top to bottom at the time of Christ's Crucifixion. The people could now look into the holy of holies in the temple which before, under the Law Covenant, such action was prohibited to them.

Knowledge that the old Law Covenant had been replaced and the Law Period was over came when God asked Peter to eat items on the sheet from heaven (Acts 10:10-16). During the Law Period, the Jews were prohibited from eating these items because under the Law they were declared unclean.

Anyone who will reestablish the Mosaic Law Covenant with its trappings after the Cross can become transgressors of the Law because righteousness does not come through the Law. It only comes through the Cross. If righteousness came by the Law then Christ died needlessly (Galatians 2:21).

Galatians 2:18 - "For if I rebuild what I have once destroyed, I prove myself to be a transgressor."

Thus, God will never build another physical temple or reinstate animal sacrifices.

### The New Testament Mysteries

The New Testament teaches 12 mysteries. A mystery is information that is revealed in the New Testament, but was revealed only in part or not at all in the Old Testament.

Romans 16:25 - ... according to the revelation of the mystery that was held secret for long ages past.

Colossians 1:26 - ... the mystery which has been hidden from past ages and generations; but has now been manifested to His saints.

The mystery information dealt mostly with the existence of the coming Church Period, and that the Jew and Gentile would have equal inheritance in Christ and in the Kingdom of God. The Jew thought that he would someday always rule the world over the Gentiles. The Abrahamic Covenant brought insight that God would bless the Gentiles through the coming Messiah as the Seed of Abraham. But the Jews never believed that the Gentiles would be equal with them in any Kingdom of God.

The mystery information was withheld to require Satan and the Jews to use faith to (1) identify Christ as the Messiah and God, (2) know that Christ would go to the Cross, and (3) realize that God did not plan to restore Israel's Kingdom in a covenant relationship. **Had they known these things, they would not have crucified Christ (1 Corinthians 2:7, 8).**

**The overall concept of the mysteries is that God planned to sum up all things in Christ during the**

## God's Plan and the Millennial Doctrines

**Church Period under the Kingdom of God.** This secret was kept from Satan and the Old Testament and gospel-period people. Had the Jews known of this mystery, they would have known that Christ was offering them a relationship kingdom, and they would have accepted it. They would not have crucified Christ.

The 12 mysteries will now be considered one at a time.

### **1. The Kingdom of God: The Wheat and the Tares; The Good and the Bad Fish**

Mark 4:11 - And He was saying to them, "To you has been given the mystery of the Kingdom of God; but those who are outside get everything in parables."

There were two parables given under the mystery of the Kingdom of God that deal with the separation of believers and unbelievers at the end of the Church Age. These were the parable of the wheat and the tares and the parable of the dragnet concerning the good and the bad fish.

In God's Kingdom, the wheat and good fish (believers) are separated from the tares and bad fish (unbelievers) placed by the devil, at the end of the Church Age when Christ comes with His angels. The Kingdom of God is here and continues throughout the Church Period.

The first parable implies that the separation of the wheat and the tares will occur at the **SINGLE** harvest by the angels at the end of the Church Age. When the separation occurs, the tares will be burned by being cast into the Lake of Fire. The parable's teaching prevents the Rapture from occurring until after the tares are bundled, which occurs during the Great Tribulation. It precludes a Jewish golden-age Kingdom following the Rapture because God's Kingdom is here now and the separation of the wheat and tares will be followed by the final judgment. The mystery does not allow for more wheat and tares to exist together on earth after their separation at the end of the Church Age.

After the separation, "... the righteous shall shine forth as the sun ..." (Matthew 13:43). This is a quote from Daniel 12:2, 3 where the Bible speaks of the Resurrection of the just and the unjust. Thus, the separation of the wheat and the tares occurs at their resurrections, at the end of the age of the wheat and the tares. This can only be the end of the Church Age. (Matthew 13:1-52; Mark 4:1-34; Luke 8:4-15.)

### **2. The Wisdom of God in the Gospel of the Preaching of Jesus Christ as Savior**

1 Corinthians 2:7, 8 - but we speak God's wisdom in a mystery, the hidden wisdom, which God predestined before the ages to our glory; the wisdom which none of the rulers of this age has understood; for if they had understood it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory ...

The main teaching was that Christ had to die for sin. However, Satan does not believe there is sin (Genesis 3:4), because he does not understand God's justice (Proverbs 28:5). Therefore, he did not believe in the satisfaction of God's justice for sin, even though insight was given in Psalm 22, Isaiah 53, and in the sacrifice system that a person would need to die for sin. Thus, Satan thought he could have Christ crucified to his advantage. God used Satan's action of crucifying Christ for His own purposes. This was part of His wisdom. (Romans 16:25-27; 1 Corinthians 2:1-16; Ephesians 6:19, 20; 1 Timothy 3:9; Revelation 10:7.)

### **3. God Sums Up All Things in Christ During the Church Age**

Ephesians 1:9, 10 - He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him with a view to an administration [stewardship or dispensation] suitable to the fulness of the times, that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things upon the earth ...

## **God's Plan and the Millennial Doctrines**

The Church Age is the dispensation in which God sums up all things in Christ, both those in heaven and those on the earth. The Church Age is the last dispensation — and it concludes all aspects of the spiritual warfare between Christ and Satan; a Millennial Kingdom Dispensation does not follow. The Church Dispensation is a mystery, and its details were not revealed in the Old Testament or the Gospel Periods. Thus, the Jews did not understand that God planned to complete His redemptive work exclusively in the Church Period. He did not plan to restore Israel's Kingdom. (Ephesians 1:4-14.)

### **4. Christ's Relationship with the Church**

Ephesians 5:32 - This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church.

The church is Christ's bride. The Jews did not realize that God would divorce them as a covenant nation and begin to marry the church. The Jews, as a covenant nation, thought they would be Jehovah's wife forever. (Deuteronomy 17:17; 24:1-4; Isaiah 54:5; Jeremiah 3:8; 31:32; Romans 7:1-6; Ephesians 5:22-33.)

### **5. Christ in You, The Hope of Glory**

Colossians 1:25-27 - Of this church I was made a minister according to the stewardship from God bestowed on me for your benefit, that I might fully carry out the preaching of the word of God, that is, the mystery which has been hidden from the past ages and generations; but has now been manifested to His saints, to whom God willed to make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory.

The Jews did not realize that the Messiah would rule God's Kingdom by personally indwelling each believer with His Holy Spirit. If they had realized this, they would have known that God did not plan to restore Israel's Kingdom. (Colossians 1:24-29.)

### **6. The Gentiles and Israel Have Equality and Equal Inheritance in Christ**

Ephesians 3:4, 6 - ... you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ ... to be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow-heirs and fellow-members of the body, and fellow-partakers of the promise in Christ through the gospel ...

The Bible teaches that God had relationships primarily with Israel during Old Testament history and that God would deal equally with the Jews and Gentiles when Christ, as Abraham's seed, blesses all people who respond to the gospel in the New Testament Period. This happens as His Holy Spirit is poured out on all flesh. These concepts were not understood. If Jewish leaders had understood that Israel and the Gentiles were to have equal inheritance, they would have known that God did not plan to restore the kingdom to the Jews — particularly in position above the Gentiles. They would have known that the New Covenant applied to the Gentiles. (Genesis 12:3; Joel 2:28; Ephesians 3:3-13.)

### **7. Christ Himself, Being Godliness in the Flesh**

1 Timothy 3:16 - And by common confession great is the mystery of godliness: He who was revealed in the flesh, was vindicated in the Spirit, beheld by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory.

The Jews did not realize that the Messiah would be God in the flesh instead of just a man. They were looking for a type of person like King David. Thus, they did not recognize their visitation by the Messiah. Had they known that Christ was God, they would not have crucified Him. (Colossians 2:2-15; 1 Timothy 3:16.)

### **8. The Partial Hardening of Israel**

Romans 11:25-27 - For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery, lest you be wise in your own estimation, that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles

## God's Plan and the Millennial Doctrines

has come in; and thus all Israel will be saved; just as it is written, "The Deliverer will come from Zion, He will remove ungodliness from Jacob. And this is My covenant with them, when I take away their sins.

The Bible tells us that God saves the Jew in the same manner as He does the Gentile. God hardened the Jews who rejected the gospel, just as He did the Gentiles.

Romans 11:7 - ... That which Israel is seeking for, it has not obtained, but those who were chosen obtained it, and the rest were hardened ...

The hardened Jews did not realize that they could only be saved by believing the gospel. They did not believe that God would deal equally with them and the Gentiles. They thought that they exclusively were already in God's Kingdom. (Romans 11:5-10, 25-27.)

### 9. Lawlessness (Iniquity)

2 Thessalonians 2:7 - For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work ...

The Jews did not realize that, during their history and the Gospel Period, many of their religious beliefs were false and had Satanic origins. They did not realize that they were in spiritual warfare. They thought that what they were believing and doing was from God. If they had known about the influence of iniquity from angelic sources, they may have listened more carefully to God and Christ. They might have tried to differentiate between what was from God and what was from Satan. (2 Thessalonians 2:1-12.)

### 10. Babylon the Great

Revelation 17:5 - and upon her forehead a name was written, a mystery, Babylon the great, the mother of harlots, and the abominations of the earth.

Babylon the Great is an entity that rides and controls Revelation's Beast empires with the seven heads. This control is financial, religious, and political. The heads of the Beast represent kings of world empires that ruled over God's people in different historical periods when the Beast lived. The Beast is both a king and an empire; the head is the king and the body is the empire. The Bible calls these kings and empires a beast because they have characteristics that oppose God, His Kingdom, and His righteousness. This mystery implies that a different Babylon the Great reigned over each empire, represented by each head of the Beast. **Thus, Babylon the Great does not represent an endtime harlot church as some believe.** Because of the mystery, the Jews did not realize that the Beast's religious influence was not from God, such as during the periods of the sins of Manasseh and of Jeroboam (Revelation 18:24). Because they did not understand, they adopted these false religious systems that caused God to act against them and take them into exile. This situation allowed the Jews to act out the Pattern Sequence which eventually brought their demise. The system probably influenced the Jews to crucify Christ. This information was not taught until Revelation was revealed in about A.D. 96, long after the Cross. (Revelation 17; 18.)

### 11. We Shall Not All Sleep, But We Shall All Be Changed

1 Corinthians 15:51 - Behold, I tell 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 trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.

The context of this passage refers to believers.

1 Corinthians 15:57 - but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

The mystery is that all will be changed, not just the Jews. Had the Jews known this, they would have realized that God would not restore a kingdom in an exclusive relationship to them. This passage teaches closure to God's plan; life will not go on indefinitely. There will come a time when believers will receive imperishable bodies in resurrection. The passage's reference to Old Testament Scriptures ("Death is

## God's Plan and the Millennial Doctrines

swallowed up in victory; O death, where is your victory; O death, where is your sting") teaches that the bodily change in resurrection occurs at the end of a discipline period of a Pattern Sequence. Because of the Pattern Sequence, the change happens after the Great Tribulation, at the seventh trumpet, when Christ raptures His church. (1 Corinthians 15:51-58.)

### 12. The Seven Stars and the Seven Lampstands

Revelation 1:20 - As for the mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands, the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.

The seven stars are messengers to seven churches. This revelation includes a discussion of the test that comes upon the whole world. This test divides the world into believers and unbelievers. (Revelation 1:8-20; 2; 3)

### General Discussion Regarding the Mysteries

God also may have chosen to include the mystery information in the New Testament to require modern interpreters (using faith while integrating several Scriptures) to insert the mystery information into the difficult Old Testament passages in order to understand their meaning. If interpreters do not do this, there is a strong likelihood that they will not see the connection and believe wrongly that Israel will be returned as a covenant nation after the Tribulation. The requirement to insert the mystery information to understand about Israel is part of the spiritual warfare.

For example, both the Daniel 2 and the Daniel 7 passages appear to go from the time of Rome directly to the Coming of Christ without a Church Period. The Church Period is meant to be in these passages, but because the Church Period is held as a mystery, the Church Period is not mentioned in the passages.

The same is true for the New Covenant in Jeremiah 31:31-34. The Jeremiah passage refers the New Covenant only to the Jews. The New Covenant refers to Gentiles, but the passage does not mention the Gentiles because the Gentiles having equal inheritance with the Jews in Christ was kept as a mystery.

This same situation is true with the Olivet Discourse passage in Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21. The passage appears to go from the Great Tribulation in the destruction of Jerusalem to the Coming of Christ without a Church Age. Because the Church Age is not inserted into the passage because of the mystery, interpreters have incorrectly assumed that the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple and the Great Tribulation occur in the endtimes, instead of at A.D. 70. When the Church Age and its endtime Great Tribulation are inserted into the passage, it becomes clear that the mentioned Tribulation occurs in A.D. 70 and the time of the false christs and prophets with great signs and wonders occur in the endtime Great Tribulation. There are two Great Tribulations in the passage. One is directly mentioned and the other is kept as a mystery.

### **The Spiritual Replaces the Natural**

The New Testament spirituals replaced the Old Testament naturals (1 Corinthians 15:46). The "spiritual" implies a personal relationship with God. The "natural" refers to a specific country, a human government, and a way of life. God wrote the Old Testament in a natural format and the New Testament in a spiritual format.

The natural was the result of man's works. The spiritual is the result of God's works, and these replaced man's works. After God's works come, man's works are never reinstated. There was no eternal security in the Old Testament based on man's works, but only in the New Testament based on God's works in Christ on the Cross.

The concept that man's works are replaced by God's is taught in the allegory of the bond woman, or Israel, and the free woman, or believers (Galatians 4:21-31). The bond woman and the earthly Jerusalem represent man's work according to the flesh — their children are in slavery. The free woman and the heavenly Jerusalem represent God's work according to promise — the children in Christ are free.

## God's Plan and the Millennial Doctrines

Under the New Covenant, the Bible teaches that:

1. Heart circumcision replaced flesh circumcision (Romans 2:29).
2. Weapons of spiritual warfare replaced those of physical warfare for those who are God's people, believers in the gospel (Isaiah 2:4; Joel 3:10; Micah 4:3; Ephesians 6:10-19).
3. The spiritual temple, comprised of all believers, replaced the physical temple (1 Corinthians 3:16, 17; 6:19; Ephesians 2:19-22; 1 Peter 2:5).
4. The sacrifice of Christ, and Christians living as living sacrifices in application, replaced animal sacrifices (Romans 12:1; 1 Peter 2:5).
5. Worshipping God everywhere in truth and spirit replaced worshipping at the temple in Jerusalem with animal sacrifices (John 4:21-24).
6. God's universal, spiritual or relationship kingdom replaced Israel's territorial, physical kingdom (Matthew 13).
7. Christ's reign from heaven replaced the reign of Israel's kings on the earth (Acts 2:29-36; Ephesians 1:20-23).
8. Christ's priesthood, after the order of Melchizedek, replaced the Aaronic priesthood (Hebrews 7).
9. Spiritual birth into God's Kingdom replaced physical birth into Israel's Kingdom (John 3:3, 5).
10. The heavenly Jerusalem replaced the earthly Jerusalem (Galatians 4:21-31).

According to these teachings, the natural kingdom of Israel, as a covenant nation, will never be restored after the Day of Pentecost. It has been replaced forever by the spiritual or relationship kingdom of the church and the Kingdom of God. The works of the flesh have been replaced by God's works of promise. Only the spiritual Kingdom of God will continue, with every believer in a true love relationship with Christ. Thus, there will not be a future Millennial Kingdom, where the physical nation has prominence before God or over the Gentiles; there will be no kingdom that has a physical temple and animal sacrifices. The only nation important to God now is the spiritual nation, the church, with her people as spiritual sacrifices.

### The Lamb's Book of Life

Before the foundation of the world, God wrote the name of every person who would ever live in the Lamb's book of life. When a person rejects Christ, takes the mark of the Beast, or dies without having believed in Christ, his name is erased from the book. When a person believes in Christ as Savior and is born again, his name remains permanently, never to be erased. At the end of the Church Period when the heavenly court sits, when the Book of Life contains only the names of believers, the names of unbelievers having been erased, the Rapture of the church occurs and the final judgments come. This happens after the last person has chosen either Christ or Satan, at the very end of the Great Tribulation. (Exodus 17:14; 32:33; Deuteronomy 25:19; 29:20; Psalm 69:28; Isaiah 26:4; Ezekiel 13:9; Luke 10:20; Romans 11:25-27; Philippians 4:3; Hebrews 12:23; Revelation 3:5; 13:8; 17:8; 20:15; 21:27.)

(The Bible has few teachings about whether or not little children will be saved. We know of God's deep concern for children [Mark 10:14; Luke 18:16]. Many children who are associated with God's people and have not yet reached the age of God accountability and knowledge of sin apparently will be taken in the Rapture. The fact that these children will probably go to be with God is implied by the teaching that those of Israel who did not have the knowledge of good and evil were allowed to enter the promised land, while the older people who did not obey God were not allowed to [Deuteronomy 1:34-39]. However there are other Scriptures that teach that children of evil families are to be killed because they may never believe. God told the Jews to go into the promised land and kill every man, woman, and child presumably because they no longer could be saved for their sin was mature [Genesis 15:14-16; 1 Samuel 15:3; Psalm 21:18]. Thus, many children of unbelievers may not go in the Rapture. In summary, it appears that

## God's Plan and the Millennial Doctrines

those children who would be saved if they should live will be taken in the Rapture. But those who would not be saved if they should live will not be. Only God knows the answer for individual children.)

Esau gave up his birthright to his father Isaac's blessings in exchange for having his earthly life's necessities conveniently met (Genesis 26:27-34; Hebrews 12:16). In type, this is a rejection of God and of the coming Savior. This same type of situation exists during the mark-of-the-Beast period, when people reject the gospel to accept the mark of the Beast in order to receive their life's necessities.

From the descendants of Esau came Amalek, the founder of the Amalekites (Genesis 36:12), who continually rejected God. God was against the Amalekites and said, "The Lord will have war against Amalek from generation to generation" (Exodus 17:16). Because of their rejection and failure to worship Him, God erased Amalek's name from the Book of Life (implied):

Exodus 17:14 - Then the Lord said to Moses, "Write this in a book as a memorial and recite it to Joshua, that I will utterly blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven."

Deuteronomy 25:19 - ... you shall blot out the memory of Amalek from under heaven ...

As with Amalek, God is against all those who worship and serve the gods of other nations and not Him — the true God (Deuteronomy 29:14-21; Exodus 32:30-33). He erases their names from the Book of Life:

Deuteronomy 29:20 - ... the Lord will blot out his name from under heaven.

Exodus 32:33 - And the Lord said to Moses, "Whoever has sinned against Me, I will blot him out of my book."

Psalms 69:28 - May they be blotted out of the book of life, and may they not be recorded with the righteous.

Ezekiel 13:9 - So My hand will be against the prophets who see false visions and utter lying divinations. They will have no place in the council of My people, nor will they be written down in the register of the house of Israel ...

The Bible states that the names of all believers (those who worship Him) are maintained in the Book of Life, and that God will not erase them:

Luke 10:20 - "... but rejoice that your names are recorded in heaven."

Philippians 4:3 - ... and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the Book of Life.

Hebrews 12:23 - to the general assembly and church of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven ...

Revelation 3:5 - He who overcomes shall thus be clothed in white garments; and I will not erase his name from the book of life ...

People who worship the Beast and take his mark have given up their birthright; they can no longer be saved. They have committed themselves to the worship of false gods. Their action causes God to remove their names from the Book of Life.

Revelation 13:8 - And all who dwell on the earth will worship him [the Beast], every one whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the Book of Life of the Lamb who has been slain.

Revelation 17:8 - ... And those who dwell on the earth will wonder, whose name has not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they see the beast ...

Revelation 13:8 and 17:8, taken by themselves, imply that the names of those who take the mark of the Beast were either erased from the Book of Life or were never written in it. Revelation 13 teaches that those who take the mark of the Beast worship him and the dragon (Satan). See Revelation 13:4, 12, 14,

## God's Plan and the Millennial Doctrines

15. Revelation 17:8 also implies false worship. Maintaining consistency with the other verses above, God erases the names of those who are unbelievers, and thus, who are also false worshippers (see Revelation 3:5). Their names were once written in the Book of Life, but were erased; thus, from God's perspective, "their names have not been written in the book of life from the foundation of the world." Revelation 13:14-16 indicates that **all** unbelievers take the mark of the Beast and worship him.

At Christ's Great White Throne Judgment, at the end of time, anyone whose name is not found in the Lamb's Book of Life is thrown into the Lake of Fire forever.

Revelation 20:15 - And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

God allows only those whose names remain in the Book of Life at the end to enter the new Jerusalem, to be with Him and Christ forever.

Revelation 21:27 - and nothing unclean and no one who practices abomination and lying, shall ever come into it [new Jerusalem], but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

### **The Binding of Satan, the 1000 Years As All or the Last Part of the Church Age**

Revelation 20:1-3 teaches that Satan will be bound with chains (like a strong man is bound with chains) in the prison of the abyss, which will be sealed over for 1000 years. He is bound so that He cannot deceive the nations from believing the gospel. **Satan is taken completely out of circulation.** Revelation 20 teaches that the 1000 years occur after the Beast period (after the Great Tribulation) and after the First Resurrection.

Revelation 20:1-3 - And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, and threw him into the abyss, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he should not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be released for a time.

Many interpreters believe that the 1000 years symbolize all or the last part of the Church Period. They believe that during the Church Age, Satan is allowed to deceive people and dissuade them from believing the gospel. He is bound in the sense that he is not able to prevent the gospel from being proclaimed. However, Scripture, as illustrated above, does not support this belief.

Revelation 20:4 states that those who have been martyred during the Beast period will live and reign with Christ for 1000 years after the court sits for judgment.

Revelation 20:4, 5 - And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand; and they came to life [zao] and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. The rest of the dead did not come to life [zao] until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection.

This death of the martyrs cannot refer to a spiritual death because the Bible says that some were beheaded. The 1000 years comes after the Beast period and after the court sits for judgment. According to Daniel 7, the court sits after the period of the Little Horn (the Beast of Revelation) after which time the saints reign with Christ. The period of the Little Horn is the same 42 month period for the Beast in Revelation. The 42-month Beast period cannot represent the Church Age because, at His Coming, Christ casts the Beast and his False Prophet into the Lake of Fire, and Daniel 7 says that Christ destroys the Little Horn. Second Thessalonians 2:8 confirms this teaching for it has Christ destroying the Man of Lawlessness at His Coming. The Beast period of 42 months occurs just before Christ returns. The Church Period is omitted in Daniel 7 because God held it as a mystery. Thus, the Daniel 7 passage

## God's Plan and the Millennial Doctrines

appears to go directly from the time of ancient Rome to the time of the Coming of Christ making it appear that the time, times, and half a time (the 42 months in Revelation) in Daniel 7 may refer to the Church Age. But this is not the case. Therefore, neither the Beast period nor the 1000 years can refer to the Church Age.

The fact that they (the martyrs) lived after having physically died, shows that they are physically, not spiritually resurrected. Believers are only spiritually resurrected at the time they first believe in Christ (Romans 6:1-13). This will happen before the time they physically die.

The same Greek word *zao* is used in Revelation 20:4, 5 for the coming to life of both the believers and the unbelievers. *Zao* means to live. Coming to life means to live again or implies a bodily resurrection. The death referred to is a physical death because of the reference to beheading. Thus, the resurrection is a physical resurrection. The soul never dies even if the body does. It continues to live. So the use of *zao* does not apply to a spiritual living again or to a spiritual resurrection.

The double usage of *zao* in Revelation 20:4, 5 forms a parallelism. If one occurrence refers to a bodily resurrection, then they both do. The "rest of the dead" coming to life certainly implies a bodily resurrection. This is what the context teaches for those who will come alive before the 1000 years, and the rest of the dead who will come alive after the 1000 years. *Zao* is used in Romans 14:9 and Revelation 2:8 for Christ coming alive again in bodily resurrection. Hence, the coming alive of the believers in Revelation 20:4 definitely refers to a bodily resurrection, and it occurs after a literal 42 month mark-of-the-Beast period which just precedes Christ's Return.

Revelation 20 teaches that Satan will be bound so that he cannot deceive the nations. Thus he will not be able to prevent their people from hearing or believing the gospel and will not be able to persuade people to believe falsehoods. He will not be able to develop religious systems of falsehoods.

Satan's power over death was defeated at the Cross (Hebrews 2:14), and the gospel was allowed to go to all the nations beginning on the Day of Pentecost. These facts have nothing to do with the binding of Satan but, instead, describe a fulfillment of the power given to Christ after His Resurrection (Matthew 28:18-20). No power was taken from Satan, but instead, more power and permission were given to Christ to take the gospel to the nations and then disciple them. Christ could not begin His church until He received all power of heaven and earth after His Crucifixion.

**During the Church Period, Satan greatly deceives the nations.** The fact that Satan is not bound and deceives the nations during the Church Age is taught in many Scriptures. During the Church Age, Satan goes about like a devouring lion to seek whom he can devour (1 Peter 5:8). Satan filled the heart of Ananias to lie to the Holy Spirit (Acts 5:3) and has power over human bodies (1 Corinthians 5:5). Believers can yield to Satan (Ephesians 4:7). Satan had synagogues in the early church and caused persecution (Revelation 2:8, 10; 3:9). People turned aside from the gospel to follow Satan (1 Timothy 5:15). Satan thwarted Paul in the ministry (1 Thessalonians 2:18) and energizes the Man of Lawlessness (2 Thessalonians 2:9). He had a messenger that was a thorn in Paul's side (2 Corinthians 12:7). Paul delivers two people over to Satan for discipline (1 Timothy 1:20). Satan sets snares (1 Timothy 3:7), and he is resisted (James 4:7). Satan is an angel of false light with many false workers (2 Corinthians 11:13-15). He is the god of this world during the Church Age, and he deceives unbelievers to keep them from believing in the truth of the gospel (2 Corinthians 4:4; Ephesians 2:2). The battle of the church is not with flesh and blood, but with the devil's schemes and with the angelic powers of darkness (Ephesians 6:11,12). People are saved by being translated or delivered from the Dominion of Satan into the Kingdom of God (Acts 26:18) — the Kingdom of His dear Son (Colossians 1:13). Satan tempts believers (1 Corinthians 7:5) and takes advantage of them with his schemes (2 Corinthians 2:11) throughout the Church Age. He gives his authority to the Beast just before Christ returns (Revelation 13). Many cults have been formed in the United States to deceive people. Just examining the countries of the world shows that Satan has deceived and imprisoned most of the earth in religious systems of false doctrines, so that most people will not receive salvation. **Thus, the 1000 years cannot be equated to the church period because Satan is very active during this period, deceiving people of all nations with falsehoods.**

God uses Satan to test His church in order to bring her to greater spiritual maturity. **Both Christ and**

## God's Plan and the Millennial Doctrines

**Satan must be able to influence mankind in a fair spiritual warfare. Thus, it is not possible that Satan could be bound during the Church Age (or for the same reason, during a Jewish golden-age Millennium).**

Through many religions, Satan presently has most of the world's people in false systems of spiritual bondage. The Bible does not teach that he will be bound only to the degree that he cannot prevent the gospel from being proclaimed, as many who hold that the 1000 years represents the church period believe. As many Scriptures and historical events attest, Satan has not been bound in the least during the Church Age, and the Church Age or its last 1000 years certainly is not the Beast Period.

In summary, it is not possible that the 1000 years of Revelation 20 can represent any part of the Church Age.

### **The Endtime Sequence of Events at Christ's Coming**

The endtimes will come in the sequence of (1) the Tribulation, (2) the court will sit for judgment, (3) the seventh trumpet will sound, (4) the kingdom of the world will be given to the Lord and His Christ, (5) Christ will begin his absolute eternal reign, (6) the reign of the Beast will be taken away, (7) the Resurrection and the Rapture of the church will occur, (8) the 1000 years will begin when the church reigns with Christ, and (9) all unbelievers will be killed. This understanding of this sequence makes the bowl period equal to the 1000 years because they follow after the seventh trumpet sounds and the final battles in Revelation 16 are equal to the final battles in Revelation 20:7-10 when the armies of the whole world battle against Christ and His armies. The discussion that follows shows why this sequence will occur. Refer to [Figure 3-1](#).

Christ reigns over all the earth during the Church Period with the power to take the gospel to all the nations. He sits at the right hand of God the Father (or Power). At the end of the Church Period, the Beast with His False Prophet will be ruling the world during the last part of the Great Tribulation. They will make war against the saints (the church) for three and one-half years (Daniel 7:21, 25; 2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4, 9, 10; Revelation 13:5-8).

At the end of the Church Period and after the mark-of-the-Beast period, the court will sit for judgment to determine whether God and Christ with the holy angels have won the spiritual warfare against Satan and his evil angels. At the time of this judgment, Satan is ruling the world through his empowerment of the Beast (Revelation 13:4).

Daniel 7:10, 13, 14 - And myriads upon myriads were standing before Him; The court sat, and the books were opened ... I kept looking ... with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming ... And to Him was given dominion, glory and a kingdom, that all the peoples, nations, and men of every language might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away; and His kingdom is one that will not be destroyed.

Daniel 7:25-27 - 'And he [the Little Horn] will speak out against the Most High and wear down the saints of the Highest One ... But the court will sit for judgment, and his dominion will be taken away, annihilated and destroyed forever. Then the sovereignty, the dominion, and the greatness of all the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be given to the people of the saints of the Highest One; His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all the dominions will serve and obey Him.'

(These verses refer to an everlasting kingdom. Some interpreters may believe that the Hebrew and the Greek for everlasting means a long time, not everlasting or eternal. But this concept is not supported by Scripture. This situation is explained at the end of Appendix E.)

The bases for Christ winning the warfare are that all the elect believe the gospel (Ephesians 1:4) and accomplish the exact works (Ephesians 2:10) that God chose for them before the foundation of the world. Thus, at this judgment, the Books of Life and Works will be opened and examined, just like they will be at the Great White Throne Judgment for unbelievers (Revelation 20:12). The Book of Life now contains only the names of believers. The names of all others have been erased. The Book of Works now

## God's Plan and the Millennial Doctrines

contains the works the elect actually did. The names will be compared against actual lists that God prepared before the world's foundation — the names of the elect and the works that they would accomplish.

The Bible teaches that books will be opened at this judgment (Daniel 7), but it does not directly teach what is in the books. However, the books and their contents are implied from the information provided and from knowing what books will be opened at the Great White Throne Judgment. At this judgment, unbelievers will be judged for their works, according to the book that contains their deeds. They will be cast into the Lake of Fire if their names are not found in the Book of Life (Revelation 20:11-15).

Thus, at the judgment after the Beast period, the Books of Life and of Works will be opened and examined. The list of names remaining in the Book of Life will be only those of believers. The list of names now exactly matches God's list of the elect. The names of unbelievers will have been erased. The actual works accomplished by believers will exactly match God's list in the Book of Works. Both of these matches determine that God and Christ have won the warfare.

Because of the exact match, the court rules in favor of Christ. The seventh trumpet now sounds. Having won the warfare, the court now awards the rule of the kingdom of the earth to the Lord and His Christ. They are now given **an eternal reign** with absolute control over the earth, angels, and people (Revelation 11:15).

Revelation 11:15, 16 - And the seventh angel sounded; and there arose loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He will reign forever and ever." And the twenty-four elders, who sit on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshiped God ...

Daniel 7:22 - until the Ancient of Days came, and judgment was passed in favor of the saints of the Highest One, and the time arrived when the saints took possession of the kingdom.

Having this court rule in their favor and control over the earth, Christ and God now have the authority to resurrect, rapture, and reward the church. Individuals in the church will be rewarded based on their works (1 Corinthians 3:10-15).

God and Christ now have the authority to bring the final judgments on all unbelievers. Christ can now come on the clouds at the right hand of Power to bind Satan and to place him in the prison of the abyss (Revelation 20:1-3, 7). (Daniel 2:44; 7:9-14, 25-27; 1 Corinthians 3:10-15; 15:24; Ephesians 1:4, 5; 2:10; Revelation 5:11; 11:15-18; 20:4, 11-15.)

Christ will reign until His last enemy is defeated and has become His footstool. During this reign after the mark-the-Beast period and after the seventh trumpet sounds, He comes on the clouds, sitting on His throne. He comes to rapture His church and sit on another court with the church to judge unbelievers, as the wrath of God is poured out from the contents of the bowls. This judgment lasts a short period of the Last Day represented by a day as 1000 years (2 Peter 3:8). After the Last Day and the Great White Throne judgments, He delivers up the kingdom to the Father (1 Corinthians 15:24) and continues His reign over believers in eternity (Revelation 22:3). The unbelievers will have gone to the Lake of Fire.

**Immediately** after the Great Tribulation and just after the first court makes its ruling, signs will be seen in the heavens of a coming Day-of-the-Lord judgment (Matthew 24:29-31). The sun, moon, and stars will be darkened. **Then**, Christ will come on the clouds, sitting at the right hand of Power, and people will see Him coming. **Immediately afterward**, He will rapture His church.

Matthew 26:64 - Jesus said to him [the high priest], "You have said it yourself; nevertheless I tell you, hereafter you shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven."

Revelation 1:7 - Behold, He is coming with the clouds, and every eye will see Him, even those who have pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth will mourn over Him, Even so. Amen.

## God's Plan and the Millennial Doctrines

Mark 13:24-27 - "But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light, and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers that are in the heavens will be shaken. And then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. And then He will send forth the angels, and will gather together His elect from the four winds, from the farthest end of the earth, to the farthest end of heaven. (Underline emphasis added by author.)

Christ's Coming begins at the sounding of the seventh trumpet and continues through the period of the bowls, which includes the Last Day as the 1000 years, to Armageddon, and to the Great White Throne Judgment. The world sees Him coming on the clouds before the Rapture. But their sin is mature, and they are unable and refuse to believe — they have made formal rejections by taking the mark of the Beast. **Revelation teaches that no one repents during this period (Revelation 16:9). No one believes after the Rapture.**

Believers see Him coming at the moment of the Rapture, which occurs before the bowls are poured out. Unbelievers see Him throughout the period of the bowls. The dead unbelievers see Him coming on the clouds at their resurrection and the time of the White Throne Judgment. This latter time is apparently when the high priest will see Christ coming at the right hand of Power and on His throne of judgment. This appears to be correct because the high priest needs to be resurrected before he can see Christ coming on the clouds, and it fits the flow and context of Revelation 20.

**This period, from the time of the heavenly signs of the Day of the Lord to the Retribution-Judgment on unbelievers and to the Great White Throne Judgment, is called Christ's "Coming," "Revelation," and "Appearing." Christ's Coming will cover the entire endtime period, including the 1000 years. THE COMING OF CHRIST WILL BE ONE GREAT EVENT, WITH A SERIES OF HAPPENINGS. IT WILL BE ONE GREAT UNITY RETURN WITH ALL THE RESURRECTIONS AND THE TEMPORAL AND ETERNAL JUDGMENTS OCCURRING AT THIS TIME, AS CHRIST COMES SITTING AT THE RIGHT HAND OF POWER, SITTING ON HIS THRONE. HUMAN AND THE EXISTING TYPE ANGELIC HISTORY WILL BE TERMINATED. THE CROSS AND THE SECOND COMING ARE THE TWO GREATEST EVENTS IN HISTORY.** (Matthew 24:29-31; Mark 13:24-27; Luke 21:25-28.)

At the beginning of the 1000 years as the Last Day, the temple in heaven is opened and the holy angels are given the bowls of God's wrath. During the 1000 years, the wrath is poured out on the earth. Christ and the church begin their judgment of the fallen angels and unbelievers using the bowls. During the period, Retribution-Judgment is passed out according to (1) the Pattern Sequence; (2) the Abrahamic Covenant (those who curse God's people, God will curse); and (3) God's statement — those who kill by the sword, during the mark-of-the-Beast period, must be killed by the sword. The church sits on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel, unbelievers, and fallen angels from the beginning of the 1000 years through to and including the time of the Great White Throne Judgment. The White Throne Judgment occurs after the 1000 years, or the Last Day. (Genesis 12:3; Matthew 19:28; Luke 22:29, 30; 1 Corinthians 6:2, 3; 1 Timothy 5:21; Revelation 11:18, 19; 13:10; 15:2, 5-7; 20:4.)

After the 1000 years (the Last Day) are complete, Satan will be loosed from prison. He will rally the nations and their armies to fight Christ and His armies when they descend from heaven (Revelation 16:13-16; 20:7-9). This rallying happens at the sixth bowl.

Satan will now bring his armies to Armageddon, anticipating the Coming of Christ to the earth. Christ comes as the seventh and last bowl of huge hail stones is poured out upon the earth. Christ, accompanied by His angelic and church armies, comes in flaming fire. They descend to the earth. Then the armies of Satan surround their camp, called the camp of the saints. Then Christ and His angels tread the winepress, while crushing unbelievers with a rod of iron and the fierce wrath of God. The unbelievers are destroyed by fire from heaven. This is the final and "Great" Day-of-the-Lord or -God Judgment and the main impact of the Retribution-Judgment.

The Beast and the False Prophet are immediately seized and thrown into the Lake of Fire, before the battle begins (Daniel 7:11; Revelation 20:20). The rest of the people are killed in the battles that follow (Daniel 7:12; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; Revelation 14:14-20; 20:21). People are destroyed by fire from heaven and the two-edged sword in the mouth of Christ, the One Who sits on the white horse (Revelation 1:17; 2:12; 19:15; 20:9). The blood of those killed rises to the horses' bridles in a wine press operation.

## **God's Plan and the Millennial Doctrines**

After the battles, Satan is thrown into the Lake of Fire, while unbelievers are resurrected and are taken to the Great White Throne Judgment with the fallen angels. As the end comes, Christ's Kingdom will crush and put an end to all the kingdoms that were part of the statue of Daniel 2, including the 10 toes or European nations. Christ will incarcerate the evil angels and take them to the Great White Throne Judgment. (Psalm 2:9; Daniel 2:44; 7:12; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9; 2:8; Revelation 3:26, 27; 12:5; 14:14-20; 16:12-21; 19:15, 19-21; 20:7-15.)

Both unbelieving people and angels are judged at the Great White Throne Judgment. The books of Life and Works are opened. Those persons whose names are not found in the Book of Life are judged for their works, or deeds, against what was written in the Book of Works. The works demonstrate their spiritual condition and the way they lived their lives. They are cast alive into the Lake of Fire forever, being punished eternally for and according to their deeds. (Revelation 20:11-15.)

All believers from all time now go to the new Jerusalem to live with Christ forever. At this time, "When all things are subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also will be subjected to the One who subjected all things to Him, that God may be all in all, He delivers up the kingdom to God the Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power ..." (1 Corinthians 15:24, 28; Revelation 21; 22.)

### **NARRATIVE SUMMARY OF GOD'S PLAN**

This section presents a narrative summary of God's single multi-phased plan in overview using the information previously presented under the plan of God, including in the dispensations.

Before the foundation of the world, God planned to develop a group of people (who respond to Him) with spiritual maturity based on His character and attributes. This maturity was necessary so that these people would worship and serve Him and serve each other from the motivation of love within a hierarchy of head-subordinate relationships throughout eternity. All of God's purposes for eternity are not recorded in the Bible.

To develop this spiritual maturity and to live using God's character qualities and attributes, man has to learn to live out three activities: to exalt God, live a godly life, and accomplish God's work. This involves living by faith, love, and hope in head-subordinate relationships with all of life directed by the righteous and holiness of God and by God bringing all the results. The work meant that people are to encourage others to obey God and appropriate His plan with all its aspects.

Like developing any high skill, developing spiritual maturity requires a "hands on" or "on-the-job" testing and proving environment. The testing environment is provided by the influence of evil created angels, beginning with the fall of man in the Garden of Eden, the activity of fallen man, and the world system established by man under the influence of the fallen angels. The tests consist of either living out the servant role or the god role as these tests come upon man throughout his lifetime. The servant role lives out the three activities directed by God with His value system, and allowing God, using faith, to work all things together for good. It is a life of total trust in God to manage one's life. The god role on the other hand is just the opposite. The god role is lived out using one's own value system, trusting one's self (or mankind) to work all things together for good. It is a life lived independent of God and His direction, attempting to manage one's own life.

Through unrecorded incidents, the created angels ended up with many being holy angels headed by Michael the archangel and with the rest being evil angels headed up by Satan. Satan and the evil angels bring the tests for mankind. The Bible does not provide the basis for how the many angels become holy and the others became evil.

Because Satan and the evil angels have transgressed His laws, God sentenced them to the Lake of Fire. This sentence is not carried out until after the end of human history. God apparently gives the angels a proposition. God apparently said that He will allow Satan with the evil angels and Christ with the holy angels to influence mankind over a period of 6000 years. He (God) will record the names of people who will live over this period of 6000 years that will accept His rule over them — these people are God's elect. He will also record the works of God that they will do. Christ with the holy angels will influence mankind to obey God in the servant role. Satan with the evil angels will be allowed to influence mankind to disobey

## God's Plan and the Millennial Doctrines

God in the god role. If during the period of the 6000 years, Satan with the evil angels can prevent any one of the elect from believing the gospel and accomplishing any one of His chosen works, then God will exonerate Satan and the evil angels from going to the Lake of Fire. On the other hand, if he does not, the sentence to the Lake of Fire will be carried out. The angels accepted the proposition.

Thus, a spiritual warfare is established between Christ with the holy angels and Satan with the evil angels. Christ becomes the Jehovah of the Old Testament and the Lord over all believers in the New Testament. As people live out the servant role, they live under the auspices of the Kingdom of God that Christ rules from heaven. Satan now becomes the prince of the power of the air and rules over all unbelievers throughout history. His dominion is called the Dominion of Darkness. As people live out the god role, they live under this Dominion of Darkness. These concepts of the Kingdom of God and the Dominion of Darkness God kept as mysteries. Even though they were active throughout the Old Testament Period, God did not reveal them to the Old Testament people. They were only revealed beginning with the Gospel and Church Periods.

History begins with man (Adam and Eve) being created without sin and placed in the Garden of Eden, a perfect environment. Christ as Jehovah gives them a test to live either by the servant or by the god role. He tells them to care for the garden and not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The concept was that if they lived the servant role they would not need the knowledge. They only needed to obey God. But if they wanted to live the god role independent of God they would need the knowledge in order to manage their lives.

Satan enters the Garden of Eden disguised as a serpent. He influences them to live like a god and, thus, to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This disobedience resulted in the fall of man. This caused mankind to come under the condemnation of God, like the evil angels are, to face the sentence of being cast into the Lake of Fire. All descendants of Adam and Eve fall under a similar condemnation and face a similar sentence. Mankind is unable to satisfy God's justice for the transgressions of His Laws.

God gives Adam and Eve as well as Satan the promise of the coming of a seed of the woman (long-term descendant of Eve). Satan would bruise the seed's heel, but the seed would bruise Satan's head (destroy him). How this was to happen was not revealed at this time. Adam and Eve were given animal skins for clothing indicating that they had become saved. After Adam and Eve, people became saved by calling upon the Name of the Lord.

Through incidents of history during the first Dispensation of the Gentiles, God reveals the fair and just conditions that He overlays over the warfare. These conditions included that Satan could not prevent people from making their own choice of following God or Satan and becoming married and having families. Satan and his angels could not have relations with women in order to have a hybrid race of part man and part angel that would prevent the Savior from coming Who must be true man. This is learned from Noah's flood incident. Satan could not bring international government to prevent people from making a free choice except during periods of divine discipline. This is learned from the incident of the Tower of Babel. As a result of the Tower of Babel, God gave the people different languages. The people grouped by the different languages and nations were established. This Gentile Dispensation lasts about 2000 years.

The next part of His plan, God needed a nation whose lineage would bring the Savior and also crucify Him in order to satisfy His justice for sin, bringing salvation for people so that they could enter heaven and eternity. This nation began with the call of Abraham. God gave Abraham a covenant that promised him and his descendants the land of Israel, that his descendants would become a great nation, and that His Seed (Christ) would one day bring blessing to people in all nations. This covenant is called the Abrahamic Covenant. The calling of Abraham began the Jewish Dispensation. The nation became Israel.

God's program can only progress when people exercise faith-obedience to accomplish His will. In order to establish the nation, Abraham by faith had to leave His home land and travel to the land that would become Israel. Through Abraham and His descendants, Isaac and Jacob (later called Israel), the nation of Israel was founded. Through faith-obedience in a series of incidents, the people of Israel conquered the land of Israel and possessed it, by controlling it and living in it. God has fulfilled His promise that they would possess and live in the land.

## God's Plan and the Millennial Doctrines

Christ as Jehovah, the God of the Old Testament, now established several covenants with Israel that would accomplish several purposes. One was the Mosaic Law Covenant. This covenant consisted of commandments the people were to keep and feasts they were to eat, and sacrifices of animals without blemish that they were to offer. The commandments of the Law were designed to show that they could not consistently obey the Law. Thus, it showed them that they needed a Savior to pay for their transgressions and to enable them to obey. This Law was also given to allow Christ to later demonstrate that He lived perfectly and, therefore, demonstrate that He was qualified to be a Lamb without blemish to die for the sins of mankind.

As part of the Abrahamic Covenant, Christ as Jehovah also gave Israel the Palestinian Everlasting Land Covenant that was based on His marriage to them. The provisions of this covenant were that Israel could stay in the land of Israel if they had general long-term obedience and worship of Him. This obedience specifically included keeping the Mosaic Law. If they were to have long-term disobedience, they would break the covenant, and God would bring an enemy against them and exile them from the land. Such disobedience would bring estrangement in the marriage. Then after a designated period of discipline, if Israel would confess their sin and agree to once again obey Him, God would once again reinstate the covenant and bring Israel back into the land. But if they would not confess their sin and would not agree to obey him once again, He would give them a writ of divorce and not reinstate the covenant. This action would terminate their marriage and dissolve the national covenant relationship.

God gave the Jews a Pattern Sequence that overlaid their obedience to the Mosaic Law Covenant that was part of the Palestinian Everlasting Covenant. There were five levels of discipline in the Pattern Sequence that were contained within the pattern of prosperity, apostasy, calamity, discipline and more apostasy, increased or devastating calamity with exile (a Day of the Lord), more discipline with great apostasy, deliverance back to the land with confession of sin, and finally the devastation of the conquering nation (a Day of the Lord). This Pattern Sequence was for the purposes of God's dealing with Israel, but it was also a prototype for the one that God uses to terminate human history at the end of the Church Dispensation. Understanding Israel's Pattern Sequence allows the church to understand that God terminates history using another Pattern Sequence.

After King Solomon died, the Kingdom of Israel was divided into two parts: the northern part or the Kingdom of Israel and the southern part or the Kingdom of Judah. Each of these kingdoms also went through a major Pattern Sequence.

The Jews of the Northern Kingdom never repented of their sins. So God gave them a writ of divorce. The divorce meant that He terminated all covenants with her, and they could no longer exist as a covenant nation.

God gave the Jews of the Southern Kingdom through Daniel the prophet the prophecy of the Seventy Weeks after he confessed sins for himself and the nation. He received the prophecy when they were in exile in Babylon about two years before the termination of their discipline period of 70 years. The prophecy stated that they would be returned to Israel to rebuild Jerusalem and the temple (implied). It also stated when their Messiah would come and when He did come that He would offer them the New Covenant about the time that He would be cut off (crucified). Christ's ministry was during the first half of the last and 70th Week for three and one-half years, He was crucified in the middle of the week, and the first part of the Church Period occurred in the last three and one-half years of the 70th Week.

In her history, God gave many promises to Israel about a return to her land that appeared to be in wonderful circumstances. Upon investigation of these promises, they were all fulfilled by the time of the Cross. When they are first read, they appear to be fulfilled in times that have not been recognized to have occurred. Thus they appear to be implemented subsequent to the Church Period. But a careful investigation of them with a study of the New Testament Scriptures shows that they already have been fulfilled. These promises are written in a manner that is difficult to interpret. Without careful study and harmonizing their teachings with other Scriptures, they appear to be fulfilled in the future. This situation is part of the spiritual warfare.

God gave David, one king of Israel, the promise that one of his descendants (Christ) would always remain on the throne of Israel. This promise is called the Davidic Covenant. Because of this covenant,

## God's Plan and the Millennial Doctrines

the genealogies of the Jews were maintained so that when the Jewish Messiah came, they would know that He was qualified to be king of Israel. God also gave many other prophecies so that He could be identified when He came. The Davidic Covenant was not tied to any of the above covenants.

God also gave another covenant to Israel as individuals. This was the New Covenant. Its provisions would bring a new life under the coming Savior, different from the life they were now living. This covenant also was not tied to any of the above covenants or even to the Jewish covenant nation. The Old Testament indicates that it applied to the Jews. But because God kept the Church Period as a mystery, we can know that this covenant also applied to the Gentiles. This covenant is implemented only in the Church Period.

At the time of Christ, the Jews were once again in apostasy, and they did not recognize the time of His visitation to them. He offered them the Kingdom of God so that they would once again become obedient. But they turned Him down and had Him crucified using the Romans so that He could not rule over them. They wanted the Kingdom of Israel, but they were not willing to obey God to get the Kingdom of God.

Matthew 23:13 - "But woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, because you shut off the kingdom of heaven from men; for you do not enter in yourselves, nor do you allow those who are entering to go in."

Because they refused to obey, and because they made a blood covenant (based on Christ's blood) to take responsibility for Christ's Death, God gave them (the Southern Kingdom) a writ of divorce. With the divorce in effect for both the Northern and Southern Kingdoms, Israel as a covenant nation was cut off from all covenants. The Palestinian Everlasting Covenant was terminated that gave the Jews possession of the land of Israel. Israel was now numbered among the nations. The Jewish Dispensation was now terminated. According to the Pattern Sequence, God brought them a devastating calamity in A.D. 70 because they did not repent as a nation.

The Cross of Christ established the New Covenant in His blood that permanently replaced the Mosaic Law Covenant. God rent the veil of the temple, showing that the Mosaic Law Period was over. Christ's blood purged out all the transgressions (sins) of all people when He was on the Cross. The work of Christ on the Cross completely satisfied God's justice for everyone breaking or transgressing God's Laws. People can appropriate the covenant for themselves by believing that Christ satisfied God's justice on their behalf. The Cross allows the Holy Spirit to be poured out for the salvation of people in all nations, including those in Israel. The Mosaic Law Covenant will never again be active for believers.

At Christ's Ascension after the Cross and after His Resurrection on the Day of Pentecost, Christ received authority over all the nations, including over the nation of Israel. He in effect sat on David's throne because He had all the power vested in it. At this time He brought all the believers who had previously died to heaven to be part of His church that He began on the Day of Pentecost under the New Covenant. Beginning on this day the gospel began to go to all the nations starting with the nation of Israel for the first three and one-half years of the church period. At this time, the Abrahamic Covenant was completely fulfilled.

The New Covenant was enacted on the Day of Pentecost as Christ began His church. The church is defined as all those believers in the gospel who have been called out (translated) from Satan's Dominion of Darkness into Christ's Kingdom of God. The church comprises God's people and the domain that rules over them in head-subordinate love relationships is the Kingdom of God. This enactment of the New Covenant began the Church Dispensation. The New Covenant brought several provisions. It brought a new priesthood in Christ as high priest and believers as priests, a living temple in the believers, the believers as living sacrifices, and equality of all people, including the Jews and Gentiles, in Christ. All believers now have equal inheritance in Christ. Only Christ now is to have first place. And very importantly, the New Covenant allows the Holy Spirit to seal each believer guaranteeing that they will be with Christ in eternity. This action provides the believer with eternal security.

The Church Dispensation is the period that God completes His plan for all heaven and earth. His plan was to bring all responding people to spiritual maturity in Christ. God works in all believers throughout their lifetimes to cause this to happen.

## God's Plan and the Millennial Doctrines

Near the end of the Church Dispensation, God established the United States as the endtime covenant nation that He would use in a Pattern Sequence to end human history. This Pattern Sequence would be patterned after the one that He had with Israel. He allowed Satan to establish Babylon the Great, the northern-army nation, and finally the Beast Empire. This Pattern Sequence will bring discipline upon the church and the world for their apostasy, immorality, sin, and false worship. The church will go through the entire endtime Tribulation and its associated calamities. The Tribulation includes the calamities and periods of discipline that are associated with the Pattern Sequence.

At the end of the Beast empire of 42 months, the last part of the Great Tribulation, and at the end of the 6000 years of history, the court will sit in heaven to determine who has won the spiritual warfare; Christ or Satan. Satan will be allowed to give his man, the Beast, three and one-half years for his program just as God gave His man, Christ, three and one-half years for His program.

The Books of Life and of Works will be opened by the court. The court will find that all the elect will have believed and will have accomplished all of God's chosen works. The court will rule in favor of God and will award the kingdom of the world to the Lord and His Christ. God and Christ will have won the warfare. This ruling will allow Christ to terminate history. The church will be resurrected, raptured, and rewarded. All the unbelievers will be first killed. Then they will be resurrected, judged at the Great White Throne Judgment, and punished by being cast into the Lake of Fire for eternity. The evil angels will also be cast into the Lake of Fire.

The church will now be with God and Christ for eternity in the new Jerusalem. The holy angels will be with her. The spiritual maturity that all believers have developed in this lifetime by living out the three activities through the trials, temptations, testings, and persecutions of life they will have forever — no chance of improving it. God's original plan to develop a people with spiritual maturity in Christ will have been successfully completed. Eternity now begins for all people.

## ISSUES IN THE DETERMINATION OF PROPHETIC VIEWS

### Introduction

**All interpreters do not believe all of the presented discussions about God's plan, particularly about His plan for Israel. These interpreters believe that God has not divorced Israel, and that she will be returned to her land in a golden-age Millennium. Other interpreters believe the 1000 years occur as the Church Period. These are reasons the church has several different views of prophecy.**

If biblical history is as described in the previous discussions about the plan of God, then the Rapture can only be posttribulational, and the 1000 years can only represent the Last Day of the Church Age, during the period of the bowls. There will not be a future Jewish golden-age Millennium, and the 1000 years do not occur as the Church Period.

Because other interpreters believe differently, the issues regarding a future Millennium will now be discussed. The view that the 1000 years occurring as the Church Period will not be discussed in detail further because its details were already presented under the binding of Satan, showing that it is not a valid biblical concept.

Many issues regarding the timing of the Rapture are discussed in this chapter, but most are discussed in chapter 4.

### The Dispensational-View Millennial Issues

Many premillennial and dispensational interpreters believe that Israel will return to her land in a Jewish golden-age Millennium after the Great Tribulation because they believe the following tenets:

(A reference to the location in this book that explains why I believe that each tenet under discussion is not biblical appears in the parenthesis under each tenet.)

## God's Plan and the Millennial Doctrines

1. The Kingdom of God that Christ offered the Jews in His earthly ministry pertained to the political Kingdom of Israel that God will implement in Revelation's 1000 years. Thus, the Millennium is called the Millennial Kingdom. (See this chapter.)
2. God has not fulfilled all of His promises throughout the Old Testament to Israel about her return to the land. (See Appendix D, "The Return of Israel.")
3. Israel's people have not yet possessed **all** of the land that God said that they would according to the Abrahamic Covenant (See this chapter).

**(There is not a single Scripture that says that God has not fulfilled His promises to Israel — that she has not completely possessed the land. But, as previously mentioned, there are several Scriptures that declaratively teach that Israel did possess the land.)**

4. The New Covenant period recorded in Jeremiah 31 is only for the Jews, not for the Gentiles. It will be enacted sometime after the Church Period. (See this chapter.)
5. Christ (or God) remains married to Israel, and, beginning on the Day of Pentecost, Christ has two wives — Israel and the church.

(All Dispensationalists may not believe this tenet, but it is a necessary one to have a future Jewish golden-age Millennium.)

6. Individuals in Old Testament Israel and those of a Jewish golden-age Millennium, although saved by the Cross, are not part of the church. They remain as part of Israel or another part of Christ's body. (See this chapter.)
7. The promise that Christ would sit on David's throne has not yet been fulfilled. He will sit on David's throne in the Millennium. (See this chapter.)

**Because interpreters believe that Israel will be returned to her land after the Church Period and after the Rapture of the church, based on the above tenets, they also believe that God has separate plans for Israel and the church. This is true whether they believe the Rapture is pre- or posttribulational. As will be shown, the only way that the Dispensational and Premillennial Views (having separate plans for Israel and the church) can be correct is if God were to have two stand-alone programs for Israel and the Church that have conflicting sets of doctrines, something that the Bible does not teach.**

These tenets of the Dispensational View are a consistent set of beliefs. They are either all correct or all incorrect. Refuting any one or all of them refutes the Premillennial and Dispensational Views. Discussions are presented in this chapter, showing why **NONE** of these beliefs are biblical. The discussions will begin with the Kingdom of God and will be followed with a discussion of the Millennial issues.

## **The Kingdom of God; Spiritual Warfare with the Mysteries Can Impact our Interpretation of the Scriptures**

### **Introduction**

There are two major views by interpreters of the Kingdom of God that Christ offered the Jews, during His earthly ministry.

One is a political kingdom when the Messiah and the Jews would rule the world from the Kingdom of Israel with the Messiah sitting on David's throne. Because Christ went to the Cross and died, the Dispensationalist and those of Group One believe that this Kingdom was postponed to the Millennium. However, the Bible never teaches that Christ offered the Kingdom of God as a political kingdom or that

## God's Plan and the Millennial Doctrines

He postponed the Kingdom. The Bible never equates the Kingdom of God to the Kingdom of Israel. The Bible never connects the Kingdom of God to a Millennial Kingdom or to the 1000 years of Revelation 20. This has been an assertion of interpreters of Group One. It is based on the incorrect connection that the rule of Christ on David's throne is equal to the time when Christ rules with the church during the 1000 years of Revelation 20.

The other view is that Christ offered a relationship kingdom as a basis for living a godly life as discussed earlier. This kingdom has been in effect since Genesis, and Christ implemented it in a new way in the Church Period after salvation came through His Cross. Interpreters of Group Two generally believe this view. I believe it is the biblical view.

In interpreting prophecy, we must remember that spiritual warfare is operating throughout biblical history. God's plan includes making the carrying out of the warfare fair and just for all participants — God, Christ, Satan, holy and evil angels, believers, and unbelievers. "Fair" means that all participants have an equitable way to use their strategies, methods, and choices even though God with His sovereignty and righteousness is the only One Who can win the warfare.

Accordingly, God has written the Bible in a manner to bring fairness to the spiritual warfare. He brings in mystery information in the Gospel and New Testament times that was not previously revealed. We must use this information if we are to determine the correct understanding of the Scriptures. The Bible does not conveniently and systematically lay out its teachings on key prophetic subjects in a manner that they can be easily understood. At first reading, many doctrines of the Bible even seem to conflict with each other. Interpreters must search for truths in the Bible and then harmonize them to determine God's overall truths — particularly the truths regarding endtime prophecy. Interpreters generally have tried to practice this procedure. But this procedure is a difficult job.

A study of the Kingdom of God provides insights to prophecy as well as demonstrates the effect the spiritual warfare can have on interpretation.

### The Kingdom of God

The kingdom of God is God's personal rule over all universes and all creatures. Everything that exists is in His Kingdom and under His authority (Deuteronomy 10:17; 1 Chronicles 29:11, 12; Psalm 24:1; 50:12; 95:3; 135:5, 6; 148:13; 1 Corinthians 10:26). God rules by His attributes, such as by His righteousness. Accordingly, He rules through sets of righteous head-subordinate authoritative relationships that are to obey His spiritual laws and righteousness (Romans 13:1, 2; 1 Corinthians 11:3,4; Colossians 1:16; 2:10, 15; Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 3:22).

For the purpose of bringing maturity to His elect, God allows Satan and Christ independent rule in His Kingdom. Satan rules in the Dominion of Darkness over unbelievers, and Christ rules in the Kingdom of God or of Christ over all believers. The Dominion of Darkness is under the ultimate rule of the Kingdom of God and is allowed independent rule only during biblical history. Christ is the Jehovah and God of the Old Testament, the great I AM. Satan is the god over all unbelievers from Genesis (after the fall) to Revelation. This was not widely known until the New Testament times because God kept this concept as a mystery — the mystery of Iniquity or of Lawlessness (2 Thessalonians 2:7). The Kingdom of God was not widely known either because it also was kept as a mystery. Thus, Christ's rule was not well known during the Old Testament period.

According to the gospels, God's Kingdom is not a visible one that comes with signs such as an earthly kingdom would, but it is an invisible kingdom that is everywhere in our midst, ruled from heaven (Luke 17:20, 21). All people are to seek God's Kingdom and righteousness as their first priority (Matthew 6:33). People must believe the gospel and be born again to see the Kingdom of God (John 3:3). Christ said that one must be born of water and the Spirit to enter the Kingdom of God (John 3:5). People are not physically born into God's Kingdom like they would be in Israel's Kingdom. God's Kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, not a temporal one such as is Israel's Kingdom or as a Millennial Kingdom would be. God's (or Christ's) Kingdom is not of this world (John 18:36, 37). Flesh and blood (unbelievers) cannot inherit it (1 Corinthians 15:50), as would be the case in a Jewish Millennial Kingdom. All of these truths were in effect during the Old Testament times, but were not well known because the Kingdom of

## God's Plan and the Millennial Doctrines

God was kept as a mystery. The above characteristics were of the kingdom that Christ offered the Jews. It was a relationship kingdom.

Christ ruled under the direct leadership of God the Father. As such the Father was the God of our Lord Jesus Christ (Ephesians 1:3, 17). Christ always obeyed God the Father without living any independent action or rule in thought or deed of any kind (John 5:19, 20).

All the kingdoms of the world act either under the authority of Christ or under the authority of Satan. When they exercise independent rule, they act under the Dominion of Satan. When they use divine laws, trust God, they act under the Kingdom of God.

Thus, the overlay of the Kingdom of God is:

1. God the Father has absolute rule over every person and creature.
2. God allows both Satan and Christ to rule during history to bring His elect to spiritual maturity. Satan rules independently. Christ rules, obeying God without deviation or independent rule.
3. When kings and people rule, obey God, and live righteously, they live under the direct rule of Christ, and when they rule, disobey God, and live sinfully, they live under the Dominion of Satan. God allows these kings to rule in either manner by their choice throughout biblical history.

Those who are under God's direct authority without independent rule of any kind will respond to God the Father as does the Lord Jesus Christ. God the Father must rule because He is the only one Who has perfect righteousness and other perfect attributes. Thus, He must be the source of the direction of everyone's life. Everyone must follow His direction for their lives in real time. This is accomplished by living by love, faith, and hope in perfect, righteous, head-subordinate relationships. Living by other than by His righteousness results in sin, transgressing spiritual laws.

The Lord Jesus does not take any independent action in thought or deed. Living in this perfect way, the subordinate lives out what the perfect head is working in him. He will live trusting the head to work all things together for good. Using the faith-process to accomplish this, the subordinate will show His faith to be genuine by from his love of the head, obeying all the head's commandments. He will also carry out the head's work that is assigned to him by the means of only doing what the head is doing in him. Thus, he accomplishes the will or purpose and work of the head. Christ said that He came to do the will of Him Who sent Him and to accomplish His work (John 4:34). The subordinate is to obey his head from a great love and respect for his head. This type of living implements the servant role. To live independently of God is to live the god role.

The Kingdom of God has ruled from eternity past to eternity future, mainly forever and always. As such in biblical history, God's Kingdom rules from Genesis to Revelation. All those who obey God in any biblical dispensation, live under the authority of His Kingdom. Thus, Adam and Eve when they obeyed God lived directly under His Kingdom rule. When they disobeyed God, they lived under the Dominion of Satan's rule and under God's indirect rule. This was also true for people throughout Old Testament Jewish history. The Jews however, desired a kingdom like that of the Gentiles (1 Samuel 8:7), instead of God's direct and individual rule. So they gave up God's direct rule over their lives and had Him rule through kings. God allowed this for several purposes. However, the Jews who still directly obeyed God responded under His direct rule and under His Kingdom. Examples are the prophets and those after God's own heart who will do all His will such as King David.

The main purpose of God in allowing the independent rule of the Dominion of Satan was to use it as a means to bring God's elect to spiritual maturity in Christ and as a means to end history. To accomplish this result of spiritual maturity, people had to choose God, be enabled by the Holy Spirit based on the Cross of Christ (be born again), and then learn and become spiritually mature through the trials and testings of life. The trials and testings always test whether the believer will live the servant or the god role. Successfully passing the test living by the servant role brings growth in spiritual maturity in the believer.

Being born again was God's method to translate believers in the Cross from under the Dominion of Satan

## God's Plan and the Millennial Doctrines

into the Kingdom of God (or of His dear Son). As such believers are called out of Satan's Dominion into God's Kingdom. Being called out these people are called church and the body of Christ. Being in the body of Christ and having Him as head, they come under His authority and Kingdom.

During the time of Christ's ministry, the Jews believed (wrongly) that the Messiah was coming to establish a political Jewish Kingdom that would rule the world in a golden-age era. At the time of this kingdom, the Messiah would sit on David's throne. There would be a wonderful temple and city of Jerusalem into which all the nations would flow (Isaiah 2:1-4; Ezekiel 40-48; Micah 4:1-5; Zechariah 14:16). The Jews expected to rule the world. They expected to continue the practice of animal sacrifices because they did not understand the Cross. If they had understood, they would not have crucified Christ (1 Corinthians 2:1-9) and would not have continued the animal sacrifices to A.D. 70. They did not understand the details and significance of the Cross because God kept its details as a mystery. Because Christ did not offer this political type of kingdom, the Jews had Him crucified. They thought He was in the way of establishing the kingdom as they understood it.

But Christ offered the relationship Kingdom of God to the Jews that is ruled from heaven. This was just like the kingdom that ruled over the Jews before they chose to have a king like the Gentiles had. This kingdom was implemented in a new way in the Church Period when Christ was given authority over all heaven and earth.

If God's Kingdom was implemented in a new way in the Church Period, there cannot be a Millennial Kingdom that the Jews were expecting. The description of the Kingdom of God that adherents to the Dispensational and Premillennial Views believe is not the one that Christ offered the Jews. He did not offer them a kingdom when He would sit on David's throne in a Millennium with the Jews stationed above the Gentiles. Instead, Christ offered them a kingdom where He would rule from heaven over everyone born again. This would include both the Jews and the Gentiles in a relationship manner. Thus, the Kingdom of God that Christ offered cannot refer to the reign of Christ in any Millennium, particularly in reference to the Jews exclusively.

The concepts of the church and the Kingdom of God blend together. Saved people are called the church, and the domain that reigns over them is the Kingdom of God. The Bible calls the church a nation (1 Peter 2:9; Revelation 1:6). The Laws of the Kingdom are the righteousness and commandments of God. These concepts have been true throughout biblical history.

The Church Period as an administration was also kept as a mystery (Ephesians 1:7-12). Had the Jews known this teaching, they would have known that Christ at this time could not offer them a political Kingdom of Israel. Thus, they would then have no reason to crucify Him. The Church Period was kept a mystery so that the Jews would think that the prophecies of Daniel 2 and 7 and of the Olivet Discourse has a period that went from the time of the Roman Empire and the Gospel Period directly to the end of their (Church) Age without having a Church Period. Had they known about the Church Period, they would have known that Christ's offer of the Kingdom could not be for an exclusively Jewish Kingdom. Thus, if they had known about the Church Period, they would not have crucified Christ (Ephesians 1:9, 10).

Knowledge about the Kingdom of God was withheld so that the Jews would not know that its operation is God's norm from the times of Genesis to the times of Revelation, with a new emphasis in the Church Period (Mark 4:11). In general, the method that Christ used to allow His disciples and not the Jews to understand was to teach using parables. Thus, the Jews were not allowed to understand the mystery of the Kingdom until they were born again as were Christ's disciples (Matthew 13:10-17). The understanding of the Kingdom of God did not come until Christ's teaching came in the Gospel Period and the understanding and meaning of the church in the Church Period. Thus, the Jew did not have comprehension of either in the Gospel Period.

**Modern dispensational interpreters have made a similar mistake to the one the Jews made in believing why the Jews rejected the Kingdom, but with a TWIST. Modern interpreters believe that Christ did offer the political type of kingdom (instead of a relationship kingdom) that the Jews were expecting. They believe that Christ offered them David's earthly kingdom. But because the Jews refused to accept it, Christ postponed this kingdom to the Millennial Period. After the postponement, He went to the Cross. (However, there is not a single Scripture that teaches or**

## God's Plan and the Millennial Doctrines

**implies that Christ postponed His kingdom offer or that He offered a political kingdom. Why should He, His relationship Kingdom has been in operation since Genesis.)**

**If Christ did not offer the Jews a political kingdom, then He could not have postponed it. If He offered them the political kingdom of Israel, the Jews would have accepted it. If He offered them a relationship kingdom, the Jews would have rejected it, and it would be implemented in the Church Period. The latter is what I believe the Bible to teach.**

It is clear that dispensationalists, in order to help establish their belief that God will implement a Millennium, believe that Christ offered the Jews a political kingdom. They believe this because the description of their postponed kingdom matches the description of the same political kingdom that the Jews were mistakenly looking for. But this is not the description of the kingdom that Christ offered the Jews. If Christ had offered them a political kingdom, they would have rallied around Him and accepted His offer. But they did not.

An examination of all four Gospels shows that there is not a single Scripture that even implies that Christ offered the Jews a glorious and political Kingdom of Israel. He offered them a kingdom that came without physical observation, was not of this world, was ruled from heaven, and into which only born-again believers could enter (Luke 17:20, 21; John 3:3, 5; 18:36, 37). It was not a kingdom for unbelievers.

Christ could not offer the Kingdom to unbelievers without simultaneously offering them a way to be born again. Christ's Kingdom was a legitimate offer based on the implementation of the Cross. It was not a legitimate offer without the Cross. The Jewish leaders could not accept the Kingdom without first being born again. But they had eyes that could not see and ears that could not hear. They were in apostasy (Matthew 13:14). Because they were in this condition, they could not understand that Christ's offer was needed by them. They were not looking for a Kingdom that would rule righteously over their hearts. Instead, they were looking for a kingdom that would rule the world over the Gentiles. They wanted their position of glory maintained.

Christ offered a relationship kingdom in the Gospel Period that, beginning on the Day of Pentecost, would take His church toward spiritual maturity in Christ. A relationship kingdom is one in which God would have an intimate personal relationship with believers whereby they would live by His commandments in head-subordinate relationships, utilizing love, faith, and hope. This is life under the New Covenant.

Many Scriptures in the gospels and epistles attest to the fact that the Kingdom of God was implemented in the Gospel and Church Periods, just like it was throughout the Old Testament Periods (Matthew 6:10, 33; 13; 13:34-43; 28:18; Mark 1:15; Luke 12:31, 32; 17:20, 21; 19:11; John 3:3, 5; 18:36; Acts 1:2-6; 8:12; 14:22; 19:8; 20:25; 26:18; 28:23, 30, 31; Romans 14:17; 1 Corinthians 4:20; 6:9, 10; 15:24-28, 50; Galatians 5:21; Ephesians 1:21; 4:7-10; 5:5; Colossians 1:13, 17; 4:11; 1 Thessalonians 2:12; 2 Thessalonians 1:5; 2 Timothy 4:1, 18; Hebrews 12:28; James 2:5; 2 Peter 1:11; 3:22; Revelation 1:9; 12:10; the apostle Paul taught about God's Kingdom in his teachings in the last chapter of the book of Acts [Acts 28:30, 31]).

The implementation of His Kingdom in the Church Period was part of God's long-term objective because His Kingdom and righteousness is what every person is to seek first.

Christ did not offer the Jews a political or civil kingdom, and then, because the Jews rejected it, suddenly decided to go to the Cross. His mission from the beginning was to go to the Cross for the forgiveness of sins. Our sovereign God is not thwarted by unregenerate Jews. God and Christ did not change their minds. They offered the Jews a kingdom that They knew the Jews would reject so that the Jews would crucify Christ in order that God and Christ could implement their Kingdom in the Church Period. The Jews carried out the plans of God using the Romans. This is the reason that God kept the understanding of the Kingdom of God as a mystery.

Christ never promoted an overthrow of the Roman government that would be required if He was offering the Jews a political kingdom where He would actually sit on David's throne and rule the world, including over the Romans. If He did, He would sin, acting against His own laws because He would not be subject to the governing authority of Rome (Romans 13:1; Titus 3:10). If He did offer such a political kingdom,

## God's Plan and the Millennial Doctrines

the Romans would have tried Him for treason.

Pilate the Roman governor in Jerusalem at Christ's trial asked Christ if He were king of the Jews (meaning that His Kingdom was in this world; Matthew 27:11; Mark 15:2; Luke 23:3; John 18:7). Christ answered and said that He was the king of the Jews. This was the very purpose for which He came into the world (John 18:37). But He also said that His Kingdom was not of this world, and thus, it was not a threat to the Romans. It was not a Jewish political kingdom. His statements and the fact that Pilate could not find His Kingdom caused Pilate to be willing to release Him. His Kingdom, not being of this world, was ruled from heaven in a relationship manner with the provision that all of its citizens were to obey their earthly governments, including the government of Rome (Romans 13:1).

According to God's plan, the Cross broke down the barrier between the Jew and Gentile (Ephesians 2:11-22). They both now have equal inheritance in Christ. Thus, both the Jew and the Gentile are now one body in Christ — one new man. They are no longer separate entities. The Bible teaches clearly that there are no distinctions between those who are in Christ (Romans 10:12; Galatians 3:28; Colossians 3:11). All believers are equal in Christ with only Christ now having any preeminence (Colossians 1:18). Because these teachings are true, Christ could not have offered the Jews any kingdom where the Jews would reign over the Gentiles. He could only offer them a kingdom over which He would reign both over the Jews and the Gentiles on an equal basis. This is the relationship Kingdom of God that was implemented in the Church Period. (Romans 2:11; 2 Corinthians 7:19; 10:32; Galatians 2:6; 3:8, 9, 26-29; Ephesians 2:11-22; 3:1-13; Colossians 1:18; 3:11, 25; James 2:1-9.)

The apostle Paul also offered the Jews this same relationship Kingdom of God (Acts 19:8, 9; 20:25; 28:23-31). These Jews did not accept it either. They did not accept it because they were in apostasy as the other Jews were in the time of Christ's ministry. Preaching the Kingdom of God is the same as preaching the gospel. God wants everyone born again and living under His Kingdom authority and righteousness (Matthew 6:33) in a relationship, not a political, type kingdom.

The New Testament gives many witnesses that Christ is now King and Lord over the church. If the Kingdom of God is not now ruling over the church, then what kingdom is? His kingship rules over all nations. At the moment people from all nations become born again and become part of His church, they come under the relationship authority of the Kingdom of God. At His Ascension, Christ received the authority of all heaven and earth and to take His gospel to all the nations; no longer just to Israel (Matthew 28:18-20). Even though Christ has reigned over the Kingdom of God since Genesis, His Kingdom took on new meaning for believers after the Cross came when they were sealed by the Holy Spirit with the reality of salvation (Ephesians 1:13, 14). Christ's Kingship over the Kingdom of God was never postponed. On the contrary, it was implemented according to plan in the Church Period with new emphasis. Believers in the church are called a kingdom (Revelation 1:6).

The only way the Kingdom of God could be postponed and implemented in a Jewish golden-age Millennium is if God were to have two different Kingdoms: a relationship one for the church (as the Bible teaches) and a political one for Israel (as the dispensationalist postulates). But the Bible does not teach the concept of two such kingdoms. Because there is only one kingdom, there will not be a Jewish golden-age Millennium.

The Jews living in faith-obedience could have known, by integrating the Scriptures to which they had access, that the Gentiles would be involved in God's future plans. But because they were disobedient, the understanding of the Scriptures were not open to them. This is one reason Christ taught in parables so that the unbelieving Jews would not understand. Abraham's Seed was to bring blessing to all the nations of the earth, not just to Israel (Genesis 12:3). **All of the prophets since the time of the prophet Samuel spoke of these days when Christ as the Seed of Abraham would bring blessings to all the nations through the Cross (Acts 3:18-26).** They could have known that the Messiah would suffer for the sin of others (go to the Cross; Psalm 22; Isaiah 53). By the prophecy of Daniel's 70 Weeks (Daniel 9:24-27), they could have known when their Messiah would come.

Additionally, because the New Covenant brings a change to people's hearts, believing Jews could have known that the kingdom which was to come would not fit their model of a political kingdom. They could have known that the kingdom to come was to be different from the one that they had known, had

## God's Plan and the Millennial Doctrines

experienced, and thought was coming. Because they did not (perhaps they could not) investigate and harmonize all the available Scriptures, the majority of the Jews did not recognize the time of the visitation of their Messiah (Luke 19:44). They did not know that Christ was God in the flesh because of the mystery — the mystery of Godliness (1 Timothy 3:16). Had they known this concept, they would have accepted Christ as their Messiah and the Kingdom that He offered them. They thought that He would be a man as was king David. The Jews later, on the Day of Pentecost, realized that they had crucified their Messiah (Acts 2:37-41).

Even the disciples did not truly realize that Christ was to bring the Kingdom of God. After His Resurrection when He was teaching them about the Kingdom of God, they asked Him when He would return the Kingdom to Israel (Acts 1:1-11). He answered them concerning the coming of the Holy Spirit. The coming of the Holy Spirit was concerned with the coming of the Church period, and with it, the Kingdom of God (Romans 14:17). The Holy Spirit was to be poured out on all flesh: on both the Jews and the Gentiles.

The Old Testament Scriptures may appear, using literal interpretations, to show that a new age is coming with a reinstatement of the temple and animal sacrifices and with the Jew dominant above the Gentile. But because the New Testament Scriptures show that this cannot happen (they teach the contrary), it is clear that such literal interpretations need to be carried further in their development to determine what they actually do teach. Analysis of these Scriptures as presented in Appendix D, "The Return of Israel," shows that these Scriptures have other meanings than that of a future Millennial Kingdom. The difficulty in recognizing the truth is part of the spiritual warfare and should be recognized as such.

### Required Situations if the Premillennial and Dispensational Views Are Valid

#### Background

There is only one New Covenant that is established by the Cross and that is enacted to bring salvation. Its provisions follow. They were previously introduced.

All believers are equal in Christ. There is no longer any distinction between any believers, such as between the Jew and Gentile because the Cross broke down the barrier between the Jew and the Gentile — between all peoples. The Jew cannot again be positioned above the Gentile. Thus, the Jew cannot rule the world, including over the Gentiles. The New Covenant through the Cross completely replaced the Mosaic Law Covenant with its temple and animal sacrifices. The gospel is an end of the Law to all who believe. Believers now comprise the sanctuary (temple) of Christ and are living sacrifices. Christ died for sin once for all time. Christ and the believers are the new priesthood. Thus, there will not be any Millennium with animal sacrifices, a physical temple, or an Aaronic priesthood.

If any part of the Mosaic Law Covenant is reenacted, then the New Covenant enacted in the Millennium is not based on the Cross. Those believing in the Millennium must have a different understanding of the New Covenant and its associated means of salvation. They must not believe that the Cross permanently broke down the barrier between the Jew and Gentile, and that the New Covenant did not permanently set aside the Mosaic Law Covenant with its temple and animal sacrifices.

When believers become Christians, they die to the jurisdiction of the Law (Romans 7:1-6). The Law metaphorically is no longer their husband. Christ now is. Because they have died to the Law, the Mosaic Law Covenant cannot be reestablished. Additionally, anyone who does reestablish the Law that God has put aside becomes a transgressor of the Law (Galatians 2:18). No one is justified by the Law. It was initially enacted to show that sinners needed a Savior. But now that the Savior and His Cross have come, the Law is no longer needed. Thus, animal sacrifices and the temple will not be reenacted.

If Israel comes back into her land in the future during the 1000 years, the following will need to occur during the Millennium (such situations are not taught in the Bible):

1. **The Palestinian Everlasting Covenant** - The Palestinian Everlasting Covenant will need to be reenacted in order to bring unresurrected Jews back into the land. Under this covenant, God only

## God's Plan and the Millennial Doctrines

brings Jewish believers, never unbelievers or Gentiles, into the land. Because the future Millennium is postulated to be the Kingdom of God, unbelievers will not be allowed in the Kingdom. Flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, only born-again believers can. The New Covenant of the Church Period brings salvation to believing Gentiles, but it does not bring them into the Millennial Kingdom based on the Palestinian Everlasting Covenant. (For a pretribulation Rapture, if the New Covenant is for Jews only and begins with the Tribulation, there is no covenant in force to save the Gentiles who are believers in Christ in the Tribulation period.) Believing Gentiles may be alive after the Tribulation at the time when the Jews believe and, thus, could be in the period of the Millennial Kingdom. But Christ, according to the Dispensational View, did not offer this kingdom to the Gentiles, only to the Jews. The Palestinian Everlasting Covenant has no basis by which to bring Gentiles into the kingdom. Gentiles in this Kingdom Period would come under the authority of the Jews if the Jews rule the world with Christ. But the New Covenant prevents this from happening because the Cross brought equality of the Jew and Gentile in Christ. There is no covenant that allows the Gentiles to be in the Millennial Kingdom. If the New Covenant at this time is only for Jews, Gentiles, if they were to be in this kingdom, cannot be saved after the kingdom begins. Because of the provisions in the New Covenant and the Cross, the Jews cannot reign over the Gentiles even if the Gentiles do enter the kingdom.

But such a situation for Gentiles being in a Millennium makes no sense because Christ has the authority to take the gospel to all the nations. He has the authority to take the gospel to the Gentiles in the Tribulation and in any Millennium if there is to be one. But being saved by the gospel requires the New Covenant to be effective for them. The New Covenant by definition is effective for all people including the Gentiles in the Tribulation and would be in any Millennium as well. The large number of saved Gentiles in the Tribulation shows that the New Covenant is in full effect during this period. It is apparent that the Jeremiah New Covenant applies to both Jews and Gentiles.

The Jews will need to repent and agree to obey God before He will bring anyone of them into the land based on the Palestinian Everlasting Covenant. Unbelievers (Jews) living at the time will need to first believe the gospel before God will allow them to enter the land. God does not allow unrepentant people to enter the land based on this covenant or based on the Kingdom of God. Dispensational interpreters believe that a large number of Israel's people will actually repent of their sin and believe the gospel when they see Christ coming as the Deliverer (Romans 11:25-27).

Interpreters generally have two divergent meanings for Romans 9-11. Dispensationalists (and Group One) believe that these chapters teach that Israel is later returned to her land. I join with those of Group Two who take the opposite view. I believe that these chapters teach that God has not forsaken the Jew because He can have all that God offers — salvation in Christ and access to all His riches. God does not offer anything else. The chapters in Romans 9-11 do not teach at all that the Jews enter their land in a Millennium when Christ as the Deliverer comes. These chapters in Romans are discussed in detail in chapter 4.

Israel's return to the land in the Millennium would be still subject to the provisions of the Pattern Sequence for blessings for obedience and cursings for disobedience, because they are provisions of the Palestinian Everlasting Covenant. This requirement of the Pattern Sequence will require the Mosaic Law Covenant with its commandments to be reenacted and obeyed as a prerequisite for staying in the land. But the New Covenant replaced the Mosaic Law Covenant. "Christ is the end to the law for righteousness to everyone who believes" (Romans 10:4). The perfect and efficacious sacrifice of Christ replaced the imperfect and non-efficacious sacrifice of animals. Christ died for sin once for all time. Thus, the Mosaic Law Covenant cannot be brought back and reinstated, therefore, the conditions of the Palestinian Everlasting Covenant cannot be fulfilled or reenacted.

If the Palestinian Everlasting Covenant were to be re-enacted, then Israel as a covenant nation is still married to Christ. A divorce has not taken place. But being married at the same time to both covenant Israel and the church violates His own laws. (This is true whether or not Israel as a covenant nation was actually married to Christ or whether or not the Bible uses the marriage in a metaphorical sense. God's acts and explanations are always consistent with His character and laws. For example, God cannot be married to individual Jews who are unbelievers.)

## God's Plan and the Millennial Doctrines

The way around this difficulty is to believe that God will bring Israel back into her land based on His promises alone to return Israel. But this doctrine would not return the temple and the animal sacrifices. It would not serve any purpose, and it does not bring the Dispensational View into reality.

2. **God's Program of Bringing His Elect to Spiritual Maturity** - God's main program is to bring His elect to spiritual maturity in Christ through the use of trials and testings in an evil environment. Because Satan will be bound during the 1000 years, His binding would appear to place limitations on the maturity that God's people could reach (such would be the case whether Satan is bound in the Church Period or in a Millennium as the 1000 years). Further, if Christ is going to rule with a righteous rod of iron during the Millennium as the Dispensationalist believes, it seems like He would not permit an evil environment during His reign. He would only allow people to live righteously. (People can only live perfectly righteous if they are resurrected believers.) However, there would have to be an evil environment eventually because, after the 1000 years, Satan will bring armies from all the nations to surround the camp of the saints to make war (Revelation 20:7-10). It would take years to train such Gentile armies and to produce armaments — years in the Millennium, years of disobeying Christ. This disobedience would be an evil and unrighteous environment.

The Bible (Isaiah 2:4) teaches that in Israel's future the nations will never lift the sword in war against each other ever again. The nations will hammer their spears into plow shares. The Dispensationalist applies this Scripture to the Millennium. The truth is that the nations will make war against each other after the 1000 years (Revelation 20:4-10). Only the church no longer makes physical warfare (Ephesians 6:12). Only the church is involved in spiritual warfare without the use of physical weapons. The teachings of Isaiah 2:4 are implemented in the Church Period.

3. **The General Resurrections** - The Bible speaks of a one-event general Resurrection of all the saints and, likewise, another one-event general Resurrection of all the unbelievers. A discussion of this teaching is presented in detail in chapter 4. It teaches that all of both the dead and the living in Christ are resurrected as they are immediately raptured at the Coming of Christ (1 Corinthians 15:51-57; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18).

The Bible appears to give no reference as to when the saints are resurrected who died before the Day of Pentecost if they are understood to be separate from the church. The Bible teaches that the dead Tribulation saints are resurrected in the First Resurrection that precedes the 1000 years. Because the Bible in Revelation 20:4 uses the term, "First Resurrection," one would think that this would be the very first resurrection of any believers. Because this resurrection occurs after the Great Tribulation and after the Beast period, the Scriptures would appear to preclude a pretribulation Rapture based on this verse alone.

The Bible also teaches that the Resurrection of the just is a general Resurrection that occurs on the Last Day of the Church Age (See chapter 4). It teaches that an hour is coming when all, both the just and unjust, who are in the graves will hear God's voice and be resurrected (John 5:28, 29). There is no biblical reference as to when (or if) saints who die in a Millennium will be resurrected.

All the references to the resurrections have a common meaning and harmonize if all believers from Genesis to Revelation are part of the church of Christ. They are all resurrected in one single event in a general Resurrection of the just at the Rapture that occurs at the First Resurrection of Revelation 20:4. This is exactly what 1 Corinthians 15:51-58 teaches for the Resurrection and 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 teaches for the Resurrection and the Rapture. Similarly, one single-event resurrection of unbelievers is the meaning of all the Scriptures.

Because there is only one Resurrection of the just, all the just are resurrected at the First Resurrection with the Tribulation saints after the Tribulation and before the 1000 years.

4. **Necessary Elements For a Jewish Golden-Age Millennium** - In order to have a future Jewish golden-age Millennium it would be necessary to have the following elements simultaneously in place:
  - a. The high priesthood of Christ and the priesthood of the believer under the New Covenant, and the Aaronic priesthood under the Mosaic Law Covenant.

## God's Plan and the Millennial Doctrines

- b. The living sanctuary and the living sacrifice of the believer under the New Covenant, and the physical temple and animal sacrifices by the Israelites under the Mosaic Law Covenant.
- c. The marriage of Christ to all believers as individuals of all nations (including Israel) under the New Covenant and His marriage to Israel as a covenant nation under the Palestinian Everlasting Covenant.
- d. Eternal security in Christ for believers under the New Covenant, and uncertainty as to whether or not Israel would remain in her land, based on her obedience under the Palestinian Everlasting Covenant.

It is illogical to think that God would return Israel and believers to the lower level of Old Testament living after implementing the New Testament higher living in Christ. The lower level living based on animal sacrifices and human works to remain in fellowship with God and in the land has been replaced by the Cross and the higher living of the church as a living sacrifice. After salvation, the confession of sin has Christ's blood continuing to cleanse sin (1 John 1:7, 9). Animal sacrifices are no longer needed in God's program. (Some believe that the animal sacrifices are used for a memorial to Christ's sacrifice during the Millennium. But the Bible does not teach such a concept, and they have no real function.)

It is even more illogical that both levels of living would be implemented at the same time. Nevertheless, both would be required in order to have a Jewish golden-age Millennium with both the New Covenant and the Palestinian Everlasting Covenants being simultaneously in effect.

### New Covenant

The only way around this situation in a future Millennial Kingdom is to postulate (1) a different kingdom than the one that Christ offered the Jews, (2) different provisions of the New Covenant than the New Testament describes, and (3) an entry into the land based apart from the Abrahamic, Palestinian Everlasting, and Mosaic Law Covenants.

Such a situation raises questions about a different way of salvation and the meaning of the Cross for the Jewish version of the New Covenant for the Millennium. This situation would require God to have two distinct and separate stand-alone plans for Israel and the church with conflicting doctrines. The provisions and priesthood etc. and the way of living of the New Covenant for the church are different than those for Israel. The New Testament would have the Jews equal with the Gentiles. The Jewish New Covenant would have the Jews above the Gentiles. The New Testament has Christ as high priest. The Jewish New Covenant would have descendants of Aaron as the priests. Such a conceptual dichotomy is not taught in Scripture, and it is inconsistent with God's character. It does not happen because it neglects or discounts the work of Christ on the Cross.

The belief that the New Covenant period applies only to the Jews stems from the fact that only the houses of Israel and Judah are named in Jeremiah 31:31. Thus, pretribulationists and premillennialists believe that the New Covenant of Jeremiah 31:31-34 refers to an all Jewish Tribulation and future Millennium after the termination of the Church Period. They believe that God does not save Gentiles under this version of the New Covenant.

Thus, they believe that the Bible speaks of two New Covenant periods: one for the all-nations church in the Church Age, and a second exclusively Jewish one immediately following in the Tribulation and Millennium (or that the New Covenant period does not start until the Millennium). This interpretation is used to support the concept of a Jewish Tribulation and a Jewish Millennium, and consequently, a pretribulation Rapture of the all-nations church.

Scripture, however, does not support this conclusion. The Bible does not mention the Gentiles in the Jeremiah passage because, at that time, the concept that the Gentiles would one day have equal inheritance with the Jews in Christ, God maintained as a mystery (Ephesians 2:11-22). The Church Period was also held as a mystery (Ephesians 1:9, 10). He withheld the information until the Church Period. The Jews may have known of Gentile involvement in God's plan (Genesis 12:3; Isaiah 49:6; Hosea 1:10; 2:23; Amos 9:12; Matthew 12:21; Acts 13:47; 15:14, 19), but most probably they never

## God's Plan and the Millennial Doctrines

thought that the Gentiles would ever have **equal** inheritance with them in God's program. If the Jews really believed that the Gentiles were to have equal inheritance with them in God's Kingdom, they would not have crucified Christ. This is one reason that God kept this information as a mystery.

**The Jeremiah 31 passage does not exclude the Gentiles from being saved under its mention of the New Covenant.** Once that it has been admitted that Gentiles are saved in the Tribulation or in a Millennium, then it must also be admitted that Gentiles are saved under the New Covenant mentioned in Jeremiah 31:31-34. Otherwise there is no covenant in effect for their salvation. If after the Rapture, the New Covenant does not save Gentiles, there cannot be any Gentiles in the Millennial Kingdom of God. But the Dispensational View has the Gentile nations flowing into Jerusalem during the Millennium. The Bible clearly teaches that Gentile armies attack the saints after the 1000 years. But the Kingdom of God does not allow unsaved people into the Kingdom. The Dispensational View regarding the New Covenant has many inconsistencies and aspects that directly conflict with the teachings of the Bible.

When it is admitted that the Jeremiah New Covenant will save Gentiles in either the Tribulation or the Millennium, there is no reason that the Jeremiah New Covenant cannot refer to the Church Period when both Jews and Gentiles are saved. If the Jeremiah New Covenant applies only for Israel, and if its period does not begin until the Millennium, then there is no covenant for the salvation of those in the Tribulation after a pretribulation Rapture which ends the Church Period. Likewise, there is no covenant for salvation for Gentiles in a Millennium and God would have no purpose for Gentiles in the Millennium. (The question still remains, according to God's program, as to how the Gentiles got there.)

Thus, the Pretribulation and Premillennial Views who hold to the understanding that the Jeremiah New Covenant only refers to the salvation of the Jews have inconsistent and conflicting tenets, and tenets that conflict with direct biblical teachings. All of these problems go away if the Jeremiah New Covenant is implemented in the Church Period for both Jews and Gentiles, and there is no future Millennium. This latter statement is what I believe the Bible to teach.

## Discussion

It must be clear that God will only restore unresurrected Israelites to Israel's land based on the Palestinian Everlasting Covenant, and then only after they repent of their sins and agree to obey God. God only brings believers into His Kingdom. Thus, all the people in the Millennial Kingdom, if the Kingdom is the one that Christ offered the Jews, must be believers. God does not bring Gentiles or unbelievers into the land and into the Kingdom of Israel based on this covenant. Thus, for God to implement a Millennium, there must be repentant and saved unresurrected Jews living at the end of the Tribulation and after all the bowl events. For this to happen, the Jews must believe after the Rapture, whether the Rapture occurs before or after the Tribulation. For this to happen, they could not have taken the mark of the Beast or have their sinful state so mature that they no longer hold God in their minds, not allowing them to be saved.

All of God's elect are sealed by God before the devastating period of the trumpets and Great Tribulation begin (Revelation 3:10; 7:1-4; 9:4). The Jews being sealed are representative of all believers being sealed. They are sealed so that the fifth-trumpet happenings will not have any effect on them. This concept of sealing all believers before the devastating calamity comes is also taught in the Old Testament, during Israel's Pattern Sequence (Ezekiel 9:1-11). The action to seal believers before the devastating calamity is one of the steps in the Pattern Sequence. According to Revelation 3:10, God's elect are preserved through the Beast period without the period having any effect on them. Thus, they are all saved before the period begins. More discussion on Revelation 3:10 is presented in chapter 4. By the end of the Tribulation, all unbelievers are in an advanced sinful state of apostasy. It is very unlikely that anyone will believe after the termination of the Beast period and the Rapture.

## DISCUSSION OF ADDITIONAL MAJOR ISSUES

The following paragraphs deal with several additional important issues that need to be discussed

## God's Plan and the Millennial Doctrines

regarding the events at Christ's Coming and the beginning of a possible future Millennium.

### Who Enters the Millennial Kingdom?

Revelation 20:4 teaches a First Resurrection of saints. The ones resurrected are those who have been beheaded because of the testimony of Christ and the Word of God and those who have not worshipped the Beast or his image and have not received the mark of the Beast. This Scripture does not equate the two groups of believers. It does not say that those beheaded were beheaded in the Beast period. They may or may not be. Other Scriptures as explained earlier show that all believers are raised at the same time.

If the church is raptured before the Tribulation, and the martyred saints are resurrected after the Tribulation to reign with Christ, only unresurrected living believers who believe during the Tribulation would be left to enter and populate a Millennium. This appears to be the Dispensational View. But I do not see why God would want to do this.

Adherents to this view may also believe that many Jews will be saved when they see Christ coming as the Deliverer, or having been saved (not yet having died) during the Tribulation, will be delivered from the Tribulation into the Millennium (Romans 11:25-27). (But the Bible does not teach this as is explained in chapter 4.)

The Bible does not teach what happens to the Tribulation living saints if the Rapture occurs before the Tribulation. It does not teach that they enter into a Millennial Kingdom. The Bible also does not teach that both resurrected and unresurrected saints will commingle in the Millennium.

But if, on the other hand, the resurrection of Revelation 20:4 is a general Resurrection and Rapture of all believers, there will be no believers to enter and populate a Millennium. Based on the provisions of the Palestinian Everlasting Covenant, as entrance into the Kingdom of God, God will only bring believing and obedient Jewish people into the land. Thus, a view that has only unbelievers entering a Millennium is not an option as a biblical view. As described in chapter 4, when only unbelievers are left (no believers left), God will destroy them all, preventing any subsequent periods from occurring. This is true whether the Rapture is pre- or posttribulational.

Additionally, a view that brings only resurrected saints into a Millennium makes no sense either and does not seem to have any purpose. Resurrected saints do not marry or have children, and they have no way to increase their maturity which is God's main purpose for being on the earth (Matthew 22:30). Their destination is to be in the new Jerusalem that is founded on the sons of Israel and the apostles (Revelation 21:12, 14).

I do not know of any purpose for a Jewish golden-age Millennium. God's main program is to have His elect believe in Christ as Savior to become saved and then grow to spiritual maturity in Christ in the environment of the spiritual warfare, the world system, and the flesh. All believers are the church and body of Christ. This purpose is carried out in the Church Period. The Old Testament looks forward to Christ's First Coming and His Cross. The New Testament looks forward to the elect believing in Christ and to the Second Coming of Christ, when all believers will be with Christ in the new Jerusalem with a new earth and a new heavens. **As far as I can tell, the Bible never looks forward to a Jewish golden-age Millennium with a conglomeration or mixture of various incongruous covenants and issues.**

### The Unbelievers That Are Killed At Christ's Coming; At the Time of the Posttribulation Rapture

There is the issue as to whether Christ kills all unbelievers or only the armies of unbelievers at His Coming. If He kills all unbelievers, and only the martyred saints are resurrected in Revelation 20:4, then again there are no people available to enter a Millennium after a posttribulation Rapture at some point in Christ's Coming. It would also seem that both the martyred and living saints would go in the Rapture. If, on the other hand, He kills only the armies of unbelievers, the remaining unbelievers could enter a

## God's Plan and the Millennial Doctrines

Millennium. But as before, this is an unacceptable conclusion because of the required provisions of the Kingdom of God and the Palestinian Everlasting Covenant that only believers can enter into the kingdom, if the covenant were to remain valid for people to enter a Millennium. Thus, this option is not a possibility because the Bible does not teach it.

The way around this is to believe that after the posttribulation Rapture, many of the remaining unbelieving Jews will suddenly believe the gospel as they see Christ coming (Romans 11:25-27), and they will be allowed to enter the Millennium. I believe that this is the only way that a view comprised of a posttribulation Rapture followed by a golden-age Millennium will work. This appears to be a tenet of the Historical Premillennial View.

However, I do not believe that this is what the Bible teaches (See chapter 4). Romans 11:5-10, 25-27 contends that the Jews who believe do so just like the Gentiles do. Those who do not believe are hardened from further believing just like the Gentiles are. The Bible calls this hardening of those of Israel who do not believe, a partial hardening. This partial hardening is in the number of Jews (the non-elect), not in the degree that any Jew is hardened so that he cannot believe. A person is either hardened from believing, or He is not. This partial hardening continues to the end of the Church Age at which time the fulness of the Gentiles occurs. Those who are hardened still do not believe when Christ comes and is revealed. They remain hardened and unsaved.

"The fulness" in Romans 11:25 means that all the Gentiles who are to be saved, now have been saved. None are saved later. When Christ comes at this time as the Deliverer, both the Jews who have already believed (those who were not hardened) and the Gentiles who have already believed are delivered from the earth to enter heaven with Christ at the Rapture as He comes as the Deliverer. Scripture does not teach or verify that a large number of Jews or Gentiles after once being hardened for their rejection of the gospel suddenly believe to receive eternal life salvation. The reverse is true. Once a person is hardened by God, they can no longer ever believe and be saved. They are the non-elect.

If the fulness of the Gentiles occurs after the Tribulation, and the Gentiles are raptured when Christ comes as the Deliverer, then no believing Gentiles (or believing Jews) will be available to enter a Millennium. Again there is no basis for the Gentiles to be in a Millennium who come to make war against Christ and the saints at its end.

The coming of a Deliverer is an Old Testament concept that refers to the situation where God often sent a deliverer to bring Israel back into the land after her period of discipline and after her people cried out to Him in repentance (Judges 3:9, 15; 2 Kings 13:5; Leviticus 26:40-45). The confession of sin was necessary for God to reenact the Palestinian Everlasting Covenant that Israel broke that caused God to take them into discipline. Because the sequence is that God sends the deliverer after the people repent of their sins, the expected endtime sequence is that they first believe, the covenant is reenacted, then the deliverer comes. It is not that they see the Deliverer, then they believe.

Being in the Church Period, those delivered are delivered to be with Christ in heaven, not to the land of Israel. To be delivered into the land of Israel, the deliverance would have to occur after the Rapture, after the end of the Church Period, and when the Palestinian Everlasting Covenant was reenacted. This covenant is only reenacted after the Jews believe, not before. Thus, Christ as the Deliverer in Romans 11:25-27, if the Palestinian Everlasting Covenant were to be reenacted, comes only after the Jews believe. For such a belief, the Rapture would have previously occurred. There would not be a New Covenant in effect for these Gentiles who are saved which complete the fulness of the Gentiles. If the Rapture occurs at this time in Romans 11:25 (as I believe the Bible to teach), then all these saints go to be with Christ in the Rapture and not into a Millennium. But those not saved at the time when Christ comes are in great apostasy, just as they were when Christ came the first time. Thus, they will not believe even if they see Christ.

After the Cross, relationship and reconciliation with God are not based on the Palestinian Everlasting Covenant, they are only based on the New Covenant. All of the teachings in the New Testament after the event of the Cross teach that all reconciliation to God is through people believing in Christ as Savior, and later all going to be with Christ in the new Jerusalem. There is no teaching of reconciliation that brings Jewish or any believers into the land. Even the disciples were told that they would go to the

## **God's Plan and the Millennial Doctrines**

Father's house when Christ came (John 14:1-3). This is the hope of the Jews. Paul said that he was wearing a chain for the hope of the Jews (Acts 28:20).

The Gentiles will be delivered at the same time as the Jews. But God has no recorded basis or covenant to bring Gentiles into the Millennial Kingdom. And additionally, the fulness of the Gentiles will not occur until after the Great Tribulation. The fulness occurs then because a very large number of Gentiles will die in the Great Tribulation. Thus, the deliverance in Romans 11:25-27 occurs after the Tribulation. This teaching demands a posttribulation Rapture, and it does not allow for anyone entering a Millennium.

At the end of the Tribulation, except for the elect, all will have taken the mark-of-the-Beast, thus, forfeiting their possibility of salvation. Revelation 16:9 states that no one repents during the bowl period which occurs immediately after the Tribulation, immediately after the sounding of the seventh trumpet. The seventh trumpet ends the Beast Period of 42 months. This is the basis on which the Rapture of the Church can occur. All the elect have believed, and all the non-elect have made formal decisions to reject the gospel. There is no one available to enter a Millennium. The world at this time is in great apostasy, the greatest the world has ever known. Christ said it would be this way when He returned (Luke 17:26-30), and that, when He returned, He would find little faith on the earth (Luke 18:8). Thus, even if the Jews do see Christ when He comes, most would not be able to believe. Christ said that they would be in great apostasy.

When the rapture occurs there will be very few believers alive. Most will have been martyred. This is what is meant by "we who are alive and remain [a very few people] until the coming of the Lord" in 1 Thessalonians 4:15. All the rest will have taken the mark-of-the-Beast, and God will no longer save them.

It is very unlikely that a very large number of Jews will suddenly believe in such a situation, particularly if they believe after the posttribulation Rapture. The Bible simply does not support such a concept.

## **HARMONIZATION OF THE DOCTRINES OF SCRIPTURE**

When determining a prophetic view, the established doctrines in a view must be shown to harmonize with other Scriptures to know that a view is correct. This is true even for those Scriptures that do not directly teach about the timing of the Rapture and of the 1000 years. Examples of these are as follows:

1. When the Bible teaches that Cyrus the Great issued the decree to return the Jews to Jerusalem after their 70-year captivity, it is wrong to postulate that Artaxerxes Longimanus did, just because the Ptolemy chronology does not appear to come out correctly in Daniel's Seventy Weeks Prophecy. When Daniel's prophecy shows that there is only one Messiah and Prince in the passage, it is wrong to establish a view that asserts that the Antichrist makes a covenant with the Jews in Daniel 9:27 without finding other Scriptures that verify such an assertion. This is particularly true when the passage deals with restored fellowship with God starting with the Palestinian Everlasting Covenant and ending with the New Covenant. Such a conclusion destroys the whole meaning of the prophecy and wrongly establishes the Tribulation as a Jewish period of seven years that forces a pretribulation Rapture. It is wrong to place the Cross outside of the 70-Weeks period (e.g. after the 69th Week but before the 70th Week) when most of the purposes for the weeks are fulfilled in the Cross.
2. The Scriptures teach that the Cross has permanently broken down the barrier between the Jew and Gentile. Now all believers have equal inheritance in Christ and now Christ only is to have preeminence or first place. This teaching shows that the Jews will never again be prominent above the Gentiles. Thus, it is wrong to teach that the Jew will be above the Gentiles again in the Millennium.
3. When the Bible teaches that the priesthood of Christ after the order of Melchizedek replaced the Aaronic priesthood and His sacrifice replaced animal sacrifices, it is wrong to say that the Aaronic priesthood and animal sacrifices will return in the 1000 years.
4. When the Bible teaches that a large number of saved Gentiles die in the Great Tribulation, it is

## God's Plan and the Millennial Doctrines

wrong to say that the Tribulation is a Jewish period or that the fulness of the Gentiles occurs before the Tribulation.

5. When the Jeremiah 31 passage teaches that the New Covenant is for the Jews, the Scriptures do not exclude the Gentiles from also being saved under this same New Covenant. The Abrahamic Covenant teaches that Christ as the Seed of Abraham will bring blessings to all people. It is wrong to declare that there are two New Covenant periods: one for the Church Period when both Jews and Gentiles are saved, and another when only Jews are saved, in the light that Jews of both houses were saved on the Day of Pentecost and throughout the Church Period. Both Jews and Gentiles will be saved during the first part of the Tribulation (fifth-seal period) and would be in any Millennium.
6. When the Bible in Revelation 20:4 appears to teach that mainly Tribulation saints are raised at the First Resurrection before the 1000 years, it is not wrong to have a general Resurrection of all believers to occur at this time when the Bible elsewhere teaches one general Resurrection of all believers. But it is wrong to say that all the saints are not resurrected then when there is only one general resurrection of all the saints. When the Bible speaks of only one general Resurrection of believers, it is wrong to teach multiple resurrections of believers.
7. It is wrong to assert that the three Greek words that refer to Christ's Coming, Appearance, and Revelation are non-technical words that can refer to two Comings of Christ and base a belief on them without first showing from Scripture that they actually do. I do not believe that this can be done. It is wrong to say this particularly when the use of these words always refer to Christ's Coming to destroy unbelievers and the Man of Lawlessness.
8. When the Scriptures state declaratively in several Scriptures that Israel lived in and possessed all the land that God promised, it is wrong to state that they have not possessed the land. Scripture does not state that Israel did not possess all the land.
9. When Christ, throughout His earthly ministry, taught that the Kingdom of God is a relationship kingdom, not of this world, ruled from heaven over those born again, it is wrong to teach that Christ offered a political kingdom to the Jews where they would rule the world.
10. It is wrong to assert that the promise of Israel's return to the land occurs in the 1000 years without finding confirming Scriptures that teach it occurs in this period, particularly when the context of Revelation 20 has nothing whatever to do with a Jewish golden-age Kingdom.
11. Many Scriptures appear to go from the days of the Roman Empire to the time of the Second Coming of Christ (e.g. Daniel 2:32-45 and Daniel 7). These Scriptures can be understood by realizing that God kept the Church Period as a mystery. Thus, knowledge of its coming was not revealed in these Old Testament Scriptures, although they covered the period of the church. The same is true for the Jeremiah New Covenant. Jeremiah does not mention the Gentiles because the Gentiles being equal with the Jews was kept as a mystery. Thus, the New Covenant in Jeremiah refers to the Gentiles even though they are not mentioned in the Jeremiah passage.
12. It is incorrect to teach that Satan is bound in the Church Period, preventing him from deceiving the nations, when the New Testament teaches throughout that Satan is not bound in any manner, having most of the world deceived from believing the gospel. It is also wrong to teach that the 1000 years represent the Church Period when Revelation 20 teaches that the 1000 years come after the Beast period, unless it can be shown (not asserted) that Scripture teaches that the 42 months of the Beast period is also equal to the Church period. I do not believe that this can be done.
13. The book of Revelation teaches that Christ casts the Beast and the False Prophet into the Lake of Fire when He comes after the Great Tribulation (Revelation 19:20). Because He does, interpreters can know that the Beast period of 42 months cannot refer to the entire Church Period. Thus, the period of the Beast with its seventh and eighth heads occurs during the period just preceding the coming of Christ. Because it does, and most of Revelation is associated with the Beast period, most of Revelation occurs at the end of history and cannot refer to the time of the Jews when Jerusalem

## **God's Plan and the Millennial Doctrines**

was destroyed in A.D. 70. The only part of Revelation that is history is chapters 1, 2, 3, 12, and possibly the first two verses of chapter 11.

14. God brought Days of the Lord upon Israel and upon the surrounding nations that brought devastation to them because of their great sin. These devastations came after a period of apostasy in the case of Israel and at the end of the exile period in the case of the nations. The endtime Tribulation is a period of increasing apostasy. It is wrong to equate the entire Tribulation with the Day of the Lord because the devastation occurs on God's people only during the period of the trumpets and on all unbelievers after the Great Tribulation during the period of the bowls. The period of Revelation follows the parallelism of Israel regarding these Days of the Lord. Thus, it is wrong to state that the church will miss the Tribulation because she will not experience the last Great Day of the Lord — they are not equal.

## **DISCUSSION OF THE PROPHETIC VIEWS**

Because the 1000 years can be neither a Jewish golden-age following the Great Tribulation and the Second Coming of Christ nor any part of the Church Period before the Second Coming of Christ, they must represent the period when Christ Comes. This is the period of the bowls, the Last Day of the Church Age symbolized by the 1000 years, and the time of the resurrections and judgments just as Revelation 16 and 20 teach. It is the period between the time of the seventh trumpet and the battle of Armageddon when the destruction of all unbelievers occur. The church is resurrected and raptured before the period, or the Last Day as the 1000 years (2 Peter 3:8), and unbelievers are resurrected afterward and after they are killed in the final battles. Resurrected unbelievers are now taken to the Great White Throne Judgment.

### **The Dispensational View (And the Views of Group One)**

The Dispensational View cannot be valid because (1) God has but one plan for His elect — not two for Israel and the church — that they become spiritually mature in Christ; (2) all of Israel's Old Testament covenants have been permanently set aside by the Cross and the divorce of Israel; (3) Israel at one time completely possessed all the land that God promised her; (4) God's promises to Israel have already been fulfilled; (5) the saints in the Tribulation include Gentiles who are part of Christ's church; (6) the Kingdom of God that Christ offered the Jews in His earthly ministry was a relationship kingdom that is ruled from heaven and was implemented in the Church Period; (7) the church is not raptured until after the end of the Great Tribulation when the work of the church is finished; (8) the single New Covenant applies to all people and does not permit Jews to reign over Gentiles or have any future preeminence — only Christ can now have preeminence; and (9) no unbelievers are allowed in the Kingdom of God.

The doctrines of the Dispensational View (and those views of group one) make it an untenable, an impossible, and an unacceptable view. In laying a foundation for a future Millennium, dispensationalism (and premillennialism) incorrectly:

1. Discounts the fact that God has one plan and purpose for all believers: to take them to spiritual maturity in Christ. It seeks to have two sets of believers, with two different purposes and two different destinations.
2. Discounts the biblical teaching that all are one and equal in Christ. It must once again establish the barrier between the Jew and Gentile.
3. Discounts the biblical teaching that the memorial to Christ's death can only be the cup, of the New Covenant representing Christ's blood, and the bread, which represents Christ's broken body. This theology would reinstate animal sacrifices as a memorial. Animal sacrifices can never take away sin. Reestablishing such a system must be an affront to God!
4. Reestablishes the Jewish economy that the Cross permanently put aside. It nullifies the function, impact, and meaning of the Cross.

## God's Plan and the Millennial Doctrines

5. Wants to build another physical temple for worship. It discounts the fact that believers are now God's sanctuary and that God does not dwell in temples made by men.

**Because Dispensational Theology (and that of Group One) discounts the meaning of the Cross, and what it accomplished, it cannot be correct.**

In Scripture's main teachings, all responding people are to be saved and grow to spiritual maturity in Christ, under the operation of God's Kingdom rule, in the trials and testings of life. This is the central biblical theme, and Christ is the central figure. His First and Second Comings are the central events.

Dispensationalism appears to focus on salvation in Christ, the coming of the Antichrist, and the coming of the Jewish Millennium. God uses Satan to test His people, but according to dispensationalism (and premillennialism) God removes him from the earth during the Millennium when he is bound in the abyss. This prevents the attacks by Satan that help to develop the believer's faith. The concept of a separate program for the Jews, in a future Millennium when Satan is bound, is simply not found in the Bible.

## The Views of Group Two

The prophetic views of group two, consist of the Amillennial View, with a posttribulation Rapture and the 1000 years as the Church Period, and the Post Millennial and Reconstructionist Views, with the Rapture at the end of the Church Age.

These views are not valid regarding the 1000 years because Satan is deceiving the nations in the Church Age, the Beast period of 42 months occurs just before Christ returns at the end of the Church Age, and the 1000 years occur after the Church Age and after the mark-of-the-Beast period. Additionally, the Post Millennial and Reconstructionist Views are not valid because the world is in great apostasy, immorality, sin, and false worship when Christ comes, instead of being Christianized with Christians ruling in the world.

These views have the right view of the Cross in that all believers comprise the church, the Rapture is posttribulation at the end of the Church Age, the Cross permanently broke down the barrier between the Jew and Gentile, and being with Christ at the Rapture is what is important, not going into the land.

## Summary

From my perspective, the only possible view in all of its tenets is the Pattern View. This view has a posttribulation Rapture and the 1000 years as the Last Day of the Church Age. The Old Testament Jewish economy with all its covenants has been completely set aside. God's single plan for all believers, as part of Christ's body and church, even though they lived in different dispensations, is to take them to spiritual maturity in Christ and to the new Jerusalem so that they can know God more intimately and live by His character qualities and attributes throughout eternity. The single New Covenant is the only basis for salvation, and it is implemented in the Church Period for both Jews and Gentiles. Christ kills all unbelievers at His Coming, the events of Revelation are future occurring near the time of Christ's Return, and the world is in an advanced state of apostasy, immorality, sin, and false worship when Christ comes.

## SUMMARY OF THE LOGIC AND DEVELOPMENT BEHIND THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE MILLENNIUM AND WHEN IT WILL OCCUR

By my perspective, the logic, based on the previously presented material, behind the choice of the Millennium and its proper understanding is as follows:

1. All of God's promises to Israel for her returning to the land have been fulfilled (See Appendix D). God is not obligated to return Israel to her land.

## God's Plan and the Millennial Doctrines

2. Israel has completely possessed the land that God promised to Israel (This chapter). God has fulfilled His promise and is not obligated to return Israel to her land.
3. God said that Israel would continue before Him as a nation forever as long as the heavenly luminaries would give their light in the land. Israel's land was darkened for three hours while Christ's blood was purging sin. Israel has not been a nation from A.D. 70 until 1948. Israel's return is not now under God. Israel has returned to the land in unbelief. Regarding this Scripture, God is no longer obligated to maintain Israel in her land as a covenant nation.
4. The Cross established the New Covenant in Christ's blood that completely and permanently set aside the Mosaic Law Covenant with its priesthood, temple, and animal sacrifices. God is no longer interested in physical temples and animal sacrifices. The Mosaic Law Covenant was a shadow and predecessor to the Cross. Once the Cross came, there was no longer any need for the covenant. The temple with its animal sacrifices will not return under God whether or not the Antichrist allows one. No part of the Mosaic Law Covenant will come in any Millennium.
5. The divorce of Israel (both the Northern and Southern Kingdoms) permanently set aside the Palestinian Everlasting Covenant. God is no longer interested in whether or not Israel stays in the land. They are no longer a covenant nation. God at this time has no covenant or obligation that would bring Israel back into her land as a covenant nation.
6. Christ offered the Jews the relationship Kingdom of God during His earthly ministry. He did not offer them the political Kingdom of Israel. Christ's Kingdom was ruled from heaven over born-again believers, and it was implemented in the Church Period. Because Christ did not offer a political kingdom, there will not be one coming.
7. God has not cast aside His people of Israel. They can become believers in Christ and have all of His riches just like the Gentile can. The Cross with the New Covenant broke down the barrier between the Jew and Gentile, making all believers equal and one new man in Christ. Only Christ can now have the preeminence. The Jew can no longer rule over the Gentile under God. Thus, a Jewish ruled Millennial Kingdom is not coming.
8. Christ began His church on the Day of Pentecost. All the Old Testament believers became part of Christ's church after the Cross and when Christ ascended. He took them to heaven with Him at the time He received all power of heaven and of earth. All believers are now in the body and church of Christ without exception. From heaven, Christ now rules with the authority of David's throne over Israel as He reigns over all nations. Because all believers are part of Christ's church, there is no Millennium coming after the Rapture with a second set of believers.
9. God's main program is to take all believers to spiritual maturity in Christ. He is not interested in taking His people into the land of Israel per se. Next to being mature in and being with Christ, the land has no value.
10. All believers without exception will be resurrected at the same time and go to be with Christ in the Rapture of the church. The Rapture cannot occur until the fulness of the Gentiles occurs. The fulness occurs during the endtime Tribulation. When Christ comes after the Tribulation, He raptures His church and kills all unbelievers. There are no people left to populate any Millennium. One does not occur.
11. There is one resurrection of the just (the First Resurrection) that occurs after the Tribulation and just before the 1000 years. There is one Resurrection of the unjust (the rest of the dead) that occurs just after the 1000 years. Both of these general resurrections occur at nearly the same time on the Last Day. The 1000 years then represent or symbolize a short period of time called the Last Day. There is no literal 1000 year duration kingdom.

The Bible authorizes the use of the 1000 years as a day in 2 Peter 3:8. We are admonished to not miss this fact. Thus, we must do something with it.

## God's Plan and the Millennial Doctrines

2 Peter 3:8 - But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

The context of the passage (2 Peter 3:8-13) from which this verse comes is the time of the endtime judgment. Thus, the 1000 years as a day can refer to this period of judgment. This is exactly when the Last Day occurs.

12. Satan is bound during the 1000 years so that he cannot deceive the nations from believing the gospel. He deceives the nations throughout the Church Period. The 1000 years occur after the Beast period and after the First Resurrection. Thus, the 1000 years cannot occur as the Church Period.
13. The 1000 years represent the time that Christ comes to judge both the believers and unbelievers after the Great Tribulation. They represent the Last Day. They do not represent a Jewish Golden-Age Millennium, nor do they represent the Church Age. **The Bible does not teach or imply that the Jews will be returned to their land during the 1000 years of Revelation 20. The New Testament is silent about any such return, illustrating either its lack of emphasis, or that it does not happen. There is not the slightest hint in Revelation 20 of a return of Israel to her land during the 1000 years, even though the church reigns with Christ during this period. Revelation 20, instead, refers to the saints reigning with Christ at the time of His Coming, during the resurrections and the judgments.**
14. God has but one plan for all people. Those who respond are to believe in Christ, grow to spiritual maturity, and then go to be with Christ forever in the new Jerusalem.

Thus, there will not be a literal future Millennium and the Millennium is not any part of the Church Period apart from the Last Day. As such, the Rapture can only be posttribulational. The only group of people that are important to Christ now is His church. The covenant nation of Israel has gone away forever.

[Figure 3-2](#) shows the summary of prophecy and what has happened to Israel as a covenant nation.

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## ENDNOTES

### 1. APPROPRIATION OF THE GOSPEL

Becoming a Christian is both a process and an event. God works in and draws you to Himself over a period of time using His Word, as you gradually become convinced and convicted of your sin and need of salvation, or satisfaction of God's justice. This is the process. Then at some point in time, you believe the gospel and act from your faith to appropriate salvation for yourself. This is the event. To you receiving salvation, these may not always be clear steps.

There are two requirements, according to the Scriptures, of belief for your salvation:

1. You must be convinced that, according to the Scriptures, you are a sinner, a transgressor of God's laws, and that you need salvation — need the satisfaction of God's justice on your behalf for your sin. You must believe that there is a penalty for your sin — eternity in the Lake of Fire — if the satisfaction of God's justice is not applied to you personally. (There can be a large latitude of understanding.)
2. You must believe that Christ, being God or the Son of God, satisfied His own justice for your sin, having died on the Cross for your sin, was buried, and rose bodily from the dead on the third day. You have nothing to do, but only to believe it is true and personally accept it (as an act of your will), as receiving a free gift of very high value.

There are two steps in becoming a Christian, as God works in you:

1. You must believe the Scriptures that declare you are a sinner and teach that the gospel satisfied God's justice for your sin. His work is a complete work. You must believe that you

## God's Plan and the Millennial Doctrines

cannot add anything to it or do anything to earn it, such as by doing good works or deeds, or by living a good life (Acts 4:12; Titus 3:5-7).

Romans 3:23 - for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

Ephesians 2:1 - And you were dead in your trespasses and sins ...

Romans 1:16 - ... it [the gospel] is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes ...

1 Corinthians 15:3, 4 - ... [the gospel is] that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.

John 3:16 - " For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life."

Ephesians 1:7 - In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace.

Ephesians 2:8, 9 - For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast.

2. You must demonstrate that your faith in the gospel is alive and genuine by obedience to Scripture, so that God can save you based on your faith which is made alive through your action of obedience. God never saves on the basis of works or deeds. However, demonstrations or options for obedience to Scripture to make your faith become living-faith include (1) confessing your faith in the Cross to others, (2) by being water baptized as a public witness of your faith, or (3) by a prayer to God telling Him of your faith in the gospel.

James 2:26 - For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works [demonstration of your faith] is dead.

You can confess Christ and the Cross to others:

Romans 10:9, 10 - that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved; for with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation.

You can be water baptized:

Mark 16:16 - "He who has [first] believed and has [second] been baptized shall be saved ..."

Or you can pray to God for salvation:

Romans 10:13 - ... "Whoever will call upon the name of the Lord will be saved."

Matthew 21:22 - "And all things you ask in prayer, believing, you shall receive."

A sample prayer is as follows (you may pray this prayer or one of your own choosing, citing the Scriptures upon which your faith is based):

Dear holy, heavenly Father: I believe that I am a sinner and a spiritual law breaker as Your Scriptures teach. Therefore, I need a Savior because I cannot satisfy Your justice for my sin. I believe that the Lord Jesus Christ came down from heaven to be born of a virgin as the Son of God by Your Holy Spirit, with a divine nature. This allowed Him to live without sin, as no other person can do. I believe that this uniquely qualified Him to satisfy Your justice for my sin. I believe that He died on the cross for my sin, was buried, and rose bodily from the dead on the third day, according to Your Scriptures. I believe that Christ's Death on the Cross and His

## **God's Plan and the Millennial Doctrines**

bodily Resurrection from the dead satisfied Your justice completely for my sin, and, thus, there is nothing else to do. I can and need not do anything to add to it such as doing good deeds or works. I cannot earn it in any way; it is a free gift. Now save me as you promised as I believe and enable me to grow spiritually. To demonstrate my living-faith in obedience to Scripture, I ask this prayer in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, whom I accept as my Lord. Thank you for hearing and answering my prayer. Amen.