

Session 20

The Millennial Kingdom

A. Introduction

1. The Millennial Kingdom (also known as the “Millennium”) is one of the major themes and revelations in the Bible.
 - a. It is one of the most important doctrines and foundational teachings in the Bible.
 - b. It is one of Jesus’ core messages when He was on earth i.e. the Kingdom of God (Matt. 6:10; Acts 1:3, 6–7).
2. Yet this is one of the most neglected doctrines in the Body of Christ. Very few believers are aware or have clear understanding about the Millennial Kingdom. There are two reasons for the neglect of this teaching:
 - a. The teaching on the Millennial Kingdom is often dismissed as mere symbolism or figurative (e.g. Isa 11: 6–9). As a result, the topic is viewed as mysterious or even mystical.
 - b. The teaching on the Millennial Kingdom is often dismissed as irrelevant and impractical for daily Christian living.
3. The lack of understanding of this vital theme in the Bible has caused the Body of Christ to lose our focus of Eternity.

B. Why is it important to know about the Millennial Kingdom?

1. It puts the life that we are currently living here in this Age into perspective.
 - a. The lack of an understanding of the coming reality of the Millennial Kingdom has caused believers to not live with an eternal perspective (1 Cor. 9:24–27; 2 Cor. 4:16–18; 5:9–11).
2. It will increase our yearning and longing for the return of Jesus.
 - a. Jesus will return to make every wrong thing right, and establish His righteousness and justice upon this earth.
 - b. We will get to partner with Him to establish His Kingdom here on earth. We will not be apart from Him again!

C. Three General Positions within the Body of Christ Regarding the Millennial Kingdom

1. Pre-millennialism — Jesus will return before His 1000-year reign;
2. Post-millennialism — Jesus will return after a 1000-year period of prosperity where Christianity prospers and Christian values and ethics are manifest in every area of society;
3. A-millennialism — There is no literal kingdom and the 1000-year reign is interpreted as symbolic and allegorical. Those who hold this position believe we are now in a “spiritual millennium” because Jesus is already currently reigning in heaven.

D. When is the Millennial Kingdom?

1. When we put together God’s storyline according to the Scriptures, and incorporate a Jewish perspective regarding the Kingdom of God, we can see that the Millennial Kingdom will be initiated by the Second Coming of Jesus (pre-millennialism).
 - a. Jesus will defeat the Antichrist and his empire at the battle of Jerusalem (Rev 19:17–21);
 - b. Jesus will then cast Satan into the bottomless pit for 1,000 years (Rev 20: 1–3);
 - c. Jesus will govern a worldwide Kingdom from Jerusalem as King of kings in partnership with the resurrected and raptured saints with Jerusalem as the centre of His government (Matt. 19:28; 20:21–23; 25:23; Luke 19:17–19; 22:29–30; 1 Cor. 6:2–3; 2 Tim. 2:12; Rom. 8:17; Rev. 2:26–27; 3:21; 5:10; 20:4–6; 22:3).

E. What Is the Millennial Kingdom?

1. The Millennial Kingdom is a literal 1,000-year period in which Jesus will rule and establish His Kingdom here on earth (Rev 20:4–6).
 - a. Scripture teaches that the earth will go through three different “Ages”:
 - i. Natural human history — beginning from the fall of Adam and Eve until the Second Coming of Jesus;
 - ii. The Millennium where Jesus will rule and reign on earth for 1,000 years;

- iii. The Eternal Age where the Father will dwell on earth with mankind forever — the ultimate goal of redemption (Rev 21:3).
2. It is an incorrect biblical paradigm that all believers will dwell in Heaven forever. Instead, the correct biblical paradigm is that Heaven is coming down onto earth (Rev. 21 – 22).
3. The glory and the Kingdom of God will be openly and progressively manifested throughout the earth during the Millennium (Hab. 2:14; Isa. 11:9).
 - a. At this time the Kingdom of God will be openly manifest worldwide, affecting every sphere of life – political, social, agricultural, economic, spiritual, and educational, law enforcement, family, media, arts, technology, athletics, environment, social institutions, etc.
 - b. The result will be a 1,000-year period of unprecedented blessing for the whole earth as Jesus establishes righteousness and prosperity, and restores agriculture, the atmosphere, and animal life to some of the conditions that were seen in the Garden of Eden (Rev. 20:1–6; Isa. 2:1–4; 9:6–9; 11:1–16; 51:1–8; 60 62; 65:17–25; Ps. 2:6–12; 110:1–7; Deut. 8; 28; Matt. 5:5; 6:10; 17:11; 19:28; 28:19; Acts 1:6; 3:21).
 - c. During the Millennium, the natural dimension on earth will not be suspended but instead it will be enhanced by the supernatural dimension operating in the midst of the natural and earthly realm.
4. In the Millennial Kingdom, all the kings of the earth will be saved and worship Jesus and base their national governments on God’s Word (Ps. 72:11; 102:15; 138:4; 148:11; Isa. 62:2; Rev. 21:24).

F. The Purpose of the Millennial Kingdom

1. At the core of God’s eternal purpose is for Him to live together with His people on earth forever. God’s purpose has always been to live together with His people face-to-face in the natural realm on this earth (2 Cor. 6:14 – 7:1; Rev 21:3).
 - a. In Gen. 2 – 3, God walked with Adam in face-to-face fellowship as spiritual and natural realms operated together. The OT saints understood the final abode for humanity to be on earth. They believed that God would come to dwell with humans rather than being translated to heaven to live with God (Rev. 21:3).
 - b. God dwelling with man in the natural realm is the most difficult yet ultimate reality that God determines to accomplish through Christ. The dilemma is

that God's blazing holiness consumes all that is unholy and God will not violate man's free will to establish this.

2. The centrepiece of God's eternal purpose is to bring the heavenly and earthly realms together. The fullness of God can only be expressed when these two realms come together (Eph. 1:9–10, 22–23; 3:19; 4:13; Col. 19–20; 2:9–10).
3. Jesus comes back to fully establish His Kingdom rule over all the earth as He joins the heavenly and earthly realms together. This is the interpretive key to understanding the Millennial Kingdom. Without this foundational revelation, confusion is inevitable (Eph. 1:9–10).
4. God purposefully created the universe in two distinct realms — the Heavenly and the Earthly realms.
 - a. Heaven speaks of the supernatural realm where God's presence is openly manifested.
 - i. It is the place believers go to for the last 2,000 years (i.e. from the Cross until Jesus' Second Coming) as a "temporary holding place" for disembodied spirits. The saints do not have a resurrected body in heaven because they do not need one to relate to the environment of heaven.
 - ii. When the New Jerusalem comes to earth, it is referred to as heaven. Scripture says that our reward is in heaven, or in the New Jerusalem as "heaven on earth."
 - b. Earth speaks of the material physical realm as the place where natural processes, human emotion and physical sensation reach full expression, thus, requiring a physical body.
5. The fullness of God's personality and purposes can only be expressed when the spiritual and physical realm come together. The highest level of encountering Jesus is in both the natural and spiritual realm (Eph. 1:22–23; 3:19; 4:13; Col. 1:19–20; 2:9–10).
 - a. Ancient Greek Philosophy (i.e. Platonism) viewed the spirit realm as good and the material realm as bad. This philosophy continues in the western Church today. It leads many to think wrongly about heaven on earth.
 - b. However, Jewish understanding emphasizes the importance of all three realms — body, soul and spirit (1 Thes. 5:23).
6. In the Millennial Kingdom, Jesus' primary mandate is to prepare the earth for the Father's coming by bringing the nations to mature righteousness.

Righteousness will be substantial in the Millennium and perfect afterwards in the New Earth. The earth will be fully purged with fire at the end of the Millennium to fully prepare for the coming of the Father (1 Cor. 15:24–28; 2 Peter 3:10–13; Rev. 20:11).

G. What will Happen in the Millennial Kingdom

1. There will be two broad categories of people in the Millennial Kingdom.
 - a. People with resurrected bodies (1 Cor 15:40–42, 50–52; Rev. 20:4–6)
 - i. These consist of the faithful saints in the past who have died but who will be resurrected at the last trumpet (1 Thes. 4:13–18);
 - ii. It also includes the faithful and overcoming saints who are alive during the Great Tribulation and who will be raptured at the Second Coming of Jesus (Rev. 11:15–18; 20:4–6).
 - b. People with non-resurrected and natural bodies
 - i. These are the unsaved survivors of the Great Tribulation who refused to worship or follow Antichrist and may also include believers who were not raptured.
 - ii. Those who are unsaved will be given the chance to accept Jesus. They will have natural bodies during the Millennium (Isa. 4:3; 10:20; 11:11; 49:6; 65:8; 66:19; Jer. 31:2; Ezek. 20:38–42; 36:36; Amos. 9:9–10; Joel 2:32; Zech. 12:14; 13:8; 14:16).
2. The saints will rule with Jesus as kings and priests during the Millennial Kingdom to establish a godly social order across nations (Rev 20:4–6).
 - a. The two functions most emphasized for the saints are priests and kings (Rev. 1:6; 5:10; 20:6).
 - b. Jesus as King of kings will govern a worldwide Kingdom in partnership with kings and rulers over nations. (Rev. 1:5–6).
 - i. Saints with resurrected bodies will be made kings and/or rulers over different spheres of life (Matt. 19:28; 20:21–23; 25:23; Luke 19:17–19; 22:29–30; 1 Cor. 6:2–3; 2 Tim. 2:12; Rom. 8:17).
 - ii. Only the saints who are counted worthy or considered faithful during their life on earth will be made kings or rulers in the Age-to-come (2 Thes. 1:10–11).
 - c. There will be an establishment of a godly social order that will transform every sphere of life:

- i. To restore cities and infrastructure (Isa. 62:8–9; 65:21–23; Jer. 31:5; Ezek. 48:18–19);
 - ii. To restore agriculture, the atmosphere and animal life according to God’s order; i.e. like in the Garden of Eden (Isa. 2:1–4; 9:6–9; 11:1–16; 51:1–8; 60 – 62; 63:17–25; Ps. 110:1–7; Deut. 8:28);
 - iii. To re-structure the economic system and to re-establish businesses to generate financial resources (Isa. 4:1; 35:1–2; 30:23–25; 62:8–9; 60:1–14; 65:21–23);
 - iv. To restore justice over every sphere of life and to oversee the establishment of judges and governors (Jer. 30:21; Isa. 9:7; 10:22; 11:3–5; 24:23, 28:17; 32:1,16; 42:1–4; Ezek. 45:8–9; Matt. 19:28; Luke 19:12–28; 22:30);
 - v. To oversee the establishment of a world government under Jesus (Zech. 14:9; Ezek. 37:13–28; Rev. 19:16).
3. Natural processes of life will continue on earth during the Millennial Kingdom.
- a. Jesus will rule the Millennial earth with natural processes not suspended but significantly enhanced by the supernatural dimension.
 - b. The lifespan of mankind will be restored to that before the flood in Noah’s time (Isa. 65:20–25).
 - c. Animosity between animals as well as animosity between humans and animals will be removed (Isa. 11:6–9).
 - d. The natural processes of life will continue as infrastructure is established for every sphere of life in every city and village throughout the earth (Jer. 1:10).
 - e. It will take 1,000 years to spread, mature and establish righteousness in every area of every nation. Jesus’ government will progressively spread to all nations (Isa. 9:7).
4. The Great Commission will be fully fulfilled.
- a. The Great Commission is a call to fully disciple nations. Jesus commissioned the Church to disciple all nations or to establish righteousness in every sphere of life in every nation (i.e. political, agricultural, economic, educational, family, media, technology, environment, social institutions, etc.).

- b. It is common to confuse the Great Commission with the divine mandate to give a witness of the Gospel of the Kingdom to every nation; i.e. evangelistic outreaches, etc. (Matt. 24:14).
- c. A nation is not fully disciplined until every sphere of life in that nation obeys all that Jesus commanded. Thus, the Great Commission will not be fully completed until the end of the Millennium.
- d. During the Millennial Kingdom, Jesus will rule all the nations from David's throne in Jerusalem (Luke 1:32–33; Jer. 3:17).
- e. Nations will come to learn from Jesus how to walk in His ways (Isa. 2:2–4).
- f. It will take 1,000 years to progressively establish mature righteousness in every area of life in every nation. Jesus' rule will progressively increase as all the institutions of the nations are increasingly disciplined by His teachings (Isa. 9:7; 16:5; 60:3; Jer. 23:5; Ps. 89:4; 132:17–18).
 - i. Governmental leaders from the Antchrist's worldwide government will be replaced with new people at every level of public life in every city.
 - ii. Life support systems, building projects, economic systems, education, law enforcement; agriculture, media and arts, technology, environment, social institutions, etc. will all be disciplined and aligned to Jesus' ways.

H. Conclusion

1. When we understand where we are heading in human history and what the Millennial Kingdom is all about, it puts our current lives into perspective.
2. We have something concrete and tangible to look forward to which goes beyond our lives in this present age and our traditional understanding of "heaven".
3. We will see the Kingdom of God progressively manifested here on earth as it is in heaven during the Millennial Kingdom, and if we are faithful, partner with Jesus in His discipleship of the nations.