

## Sermon to the Saints which are at Topeka, Kansas, Sunday, November 20, 2016

***"And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season. And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years." (Revelation 20:1-4)***

My mom called me up on a Saturday evening about two months ago. In her typically mild-mannered tone, she efficiently introduced herself. Then she asked: "When are you going to give me a sermon on the millennial reign of Christ?" She's forgotten more about the words of this blessed book of prophecy than I'm likely ever to learn; so it is a daunting proposition to suppose I can edify her on any matter. But, the Holy Ghost is in charge, so I committed to the labor with the hope that I would be given some helpful understanding of the matter to share with my beloved friends here for today and again next week.

As with any substantive part of Scripture, those to whom the following passage refers have done great harm to a sincere person's ability to understand -- to simply and helpfully understand -- this last dispensation of time before the general judgment:

***"But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." (2 Corinthians 4:3-4)***

These deceived souls create utter confusion, because they make everything written in this book about themselves! What does God offer them? What is God's plan for them? What lust-driven, covetous, contemptible, abominable interest of theirs is God going to serve? Yes! Whatever flag these infidels fly under, they everyone make mockery of God's word and attributes by dragging them down to the lust of their flesh, the lust of their eyes, and the pride of their lives (1 John 2:16). But, the next verse in the passage I just quoted states:

***"For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." (2 Corinthians 4:5)***

And you simply cannot preach "***Christ Jesus the Lord***" without talking about that coming dispensation when He will have fulfilled for Him -- as a covenanted act of God the Father -- the following promise:

***"Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." (Psalms 2:8-9)***

I recommend to you gentle souls in this house, and to any who may be listening abroad, that when you read any Scripture -- and most certainly when you read prophecy -- that you **fully** rid yourselves of two diabolical things: (1) what you **want** those words to say, and (2) any opinion or exposition that does not credibly make use of God's Word for its sole authority.

***"To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." (Isaiah 8:20)***

The moral law -- written on tables of stone and placed forever into the ark of the covenant -- and the comprehensive testimony of God about that moral law secured in this, our **"more sure word of prophecy" (2 Peter 1:19)**. We must be loathe to bring any other reference text to bear in support of our view or interpretation of what the Holy Ghost moved men to write for us. Some weeks back a man who follows our preachments on Twitter asked a couple of fantastical questions of me via the Direct Message option. The questions were about the delightful subject of the redeemed Jews. I assumed his questions were because he had listened to our two (then recent) sermons on that subject, so to be certain I asked him from whence his questions arose. He said: "Reading around on the internet".

Part of being **"a hearer of the word, and not a doer" (James 1:23)** is that you impudently leave off the fountain of living water and are left with **"broken cisterns that can hold no water" (Jeremiah 2:13)**. You need to read the Bible and compare spiritual things with spiritual (1 Corinthians 2:13). You also need to get your crooked backside to the church where sober-minded, grave-spirited elders will do the work in those Scriptures and feed the flock for free -- and where the co-elect faithfully minister to your spiritual and physical needs in delightful preparation for spending an eternity together.

There is a tremendous amount of prophecy recorded that references and copiously discusses this grand period of 1,000 years. I believe I can confidently say that every major and (nearly) every minor prophet wrote about the subject -- each with unique and overlapping treatments so that a critical eye will be capable of capturing a breathtaking view of this imperial management of both heavenly and earthly -- angelic and human -- animate and inanimate realms in an absolute and glorious expression of Christ's kingship:

***"The kingdoms of this world are [finally and fully] become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever." (Revelation 11:15)***

If any interested soul is going to be capable of enjoying the scope of this magnificent array of sovereignty, it is necessary to grab and hold firmly to an understanding of what is **not** involved in this period. In other words, we have to spend time -- as I try to do in each discussion from John's Revelation -- putting the event sequence in proper order so that prophecy about this millennial kingdom will not be confused with those events that necessarily precede and those that follow this dispensation.

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***"And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the***

***false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh." (Revelation 19:19-21)***

This passage marks the conclusion of the delirious period of seven years during which the earth's inhabitants resist Christ's claim to possession of the heavens, the earth, and the elect remnant. Following Antichrist and his ally the False Prophet, they have all consented to send their nations' armies into the "***valley of decision***", where they knew "***the day of the LORD [was] near***" (Joel 3:14). The decision was made ... and executed upon those armies with horrific finality. Every human that militantly rebelled against Christ and His army has perished.

***"And in that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness. The meek also shall increase their joy in the LORD, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel. For the terrible one is brought to nought, and the scorner is consumed, and all that watch for iniquity are cut off:" (Isaiah 29:18-20)***

In the midst of his discussion of the introduction to Christ's millennial kingdom, Isaiah here articulates the outcome at Armageddon. There is a marked transition, then -- from this atmosphere of instability and warfare to wholesale peace for those who inhabit the land where Christ will seat Himself for His earthly reign -- Jerusalem:

***"For thus saith the LORD of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the LORD of hosts. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the LORD of hosts. The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the LORD of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the LORD of hosts." (Haggai 2:6-9)***

The nature of that peace will be examined later, but it is important to understand that the time of open rebellion and resistance -- that marked the kingdom of that beast Antichrist -- has passed. We know this both because the Beast and False Prophet are said to have been "***cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone***", and because the energizing dragon (Revelation 13:4) himself has been bound with a great chain, has been cast into the bottomless pit, where he is shut up, and has had a seal placed upon him (Revelation 20:1-3). This prophecy is now fulfilled:

***"I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear." (Isaiah 45:23)***

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Before this time of Christ's kingdom arrives, the natural world -- earth, heavens, and sea -- have been violently shaken. In addition to the reference above (Haggai 2:6), there are many other Scriptural writings, both general and specific, that instruct us on this.

***"And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places." (Revelation 6:12-14)***

This collection of natural wonders captures the essence of the disruption to which I refer, but it is not the only phase of such trauma to the inanimate creation. In addition to the earthquake identified here, four others are expressly noted during the tremulous dispensation articulated in the Revelation: Chapter 8, chapter 11 (both pre- and post-advent), and chapter 16 (the greatest ever to hit the earth). Furthermore, the rivers and seas are turned to blood, the sun and moon lose portions of their light, and the atmosphere is violently roiled at the descent of the Heavenly Jerusalem as it settles above Mt. Zion.

Christ, in the flesh, also references the severity of the decomposition the natural world will endure as it is preparing for Christ's return, putting it in the same event order that John's faithful writings have it -- after the opening of the first seals, but before the return of Christ:

***"But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun shall be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, And the stars of heaven shall fall, and the powers that are in heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming in the clouds with great power and glory." (Mark 13:24-26)***

In addition, with two hundred million monstrous dragons turned loose to slay "***the third part of men ... by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths***" (Revelation 9:18), it is wholly logical to conclude that massive damage was likewise done to the surface of the earth over which these raging creatures held sway to perform their duty. We cannot but conclude that there was much surface alteration to the planet. However, it is this same earth that will be inhabited during the millennial reign. It is expressly reported -- after Christ's earthly reign concludes and Satan takes one last run at Him for usurpation of earthly monarchy:

***"And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. ... And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea." (Revelation 20:11, 21:1)***

So then, any representation of the period of Christ's millennial reign as being upon a new earth and under a new heaven is in error. Scripture will not bear it out. Scripture will certainly bear out that there are conditions in the land of the King's preferred subjects that are Eden-like -- which will be more fully fleshed out later -- but those are wrought upon this same earth we presently inhabit.

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By various processes of reasoning, there is embedded in Christian theology the notion that Christianity travels an evolutionary path to a "golden age" in which the world's inhabitants are brought -- through the missionary work of Christian leaders -- to a peaceful state of acceptance toward Christ and His

blessed word. This state is what they understand to be the period during which Christ reigns in a benign government, with super-Christians serving in high-profile positions to oversee the administration of a Christian theocracy. This is not Scriptural ... but the presence of such diabolical heresy in the bloodstream fairly requires consideration of the question relating to how properly to see the New Testament Church vis-a-vis the establishment of Christ's earthly kingdom. This is particularly true since it is expressly said to the **"angel of the church in Thyatira"**:

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

Without cavil, this is plainly telling the church that there will be those in their number who will be given power over the nations -- even as Christ received of His Father the same guarantee, as articulated in Psalms chapter two. Indeed, when you examine the contextual language of Revelation 20 -- which is describing the scene of Christ's millennial kingdom being set up -- you find this language:

**"and I saw the souls of them ... and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years."** (Revelation 20:4)

Certainly among those who are referenced in this passage are New Testament Church members -- Jew and Gentile, so we cannot deny the active involvement of these gentle souls in the administration of Christ's kingdom. The error, however, is in the notion that the New Testament Church still exists in the earth. It does not. When this body of believers is discussed in John's visions previously -- *including the participation they will have in Christ's earthly kingdom* -- there is a clear indicator they are not in the earth:

**"And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne."** (Revelation 12:5)

The woman is the redeemed Jewish remnant. The man child is the final Gentile church coming to the end of the church age, after which he -- at Christ's triumphant return under the seventh trumpet -- is **"caught up unto God, and to his throne."** So yes, those of God's elect who lived and died during the two thousand years of the New Testament Church dispensation will fully participate in the governance of Christ's millennial kingdom -- but **not in the earth!** There is no church in the earth. The church is in her perfected state -- which is the only way in which they could be said to **"live[] and reign[] with Christ"**, being that it is their **"souls"** that John references in his vision, not their earthly bodies.

Further evidence that the Church is transformed into her glorified state -- is in her description in the previous chapter of Revelation as she is presented to Christ as His bride:

**"Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints."** (Revelation 19:7-8)

These white garments are identified throughout the prophecies of eschatology in representation of the saints of God in their perfected, glorified state, clothed eternally in the righteousness of Jesus Christ (e.g., Revelation 3:4-5, 18; 4:4, 6:11; 7:9, 13-14; 15:6; and 19:14). The Church is not in the earth during this time, my friends. She is present with Christ, but ensconced in her Heavenly Jerusalem that hovers the earth over His earthly throne in the Mt. Zion -- extending up into space 1,500 miles, and extending 750 miles north, east, south, and west:

***"And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs [1,500 miles]. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal." (Revelation 21:16)***

More importantly, however, is the necessary conclusion that this time of earthly kingship was set in providence for the fulfillment of a promise to Abraham, that ***"[I]n thee shall all nations be blessed."*** (Galatians 3:8) making it quite incongruent to bring into the earthly kingdom those very Gentiles over whom they are to rule:

***"And all nations [i.e., heathen or Gentiles] shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the LORD of hosts." (Malachi 3:12)***

and

***"And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts". (Zechariah 14:16)***

There are no Gentiles set up to rule in this earthly kingdom. I have more to offer -- later in this sermon -- about the significance of this period to the Abrahamic covenant, but for now please simply know that there are no churches, pastors, ordinances, or other accoutrement related to the earthly ministrations of and to Christ's bride.

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And while we're on the subject of religious expressions, there are at least two good reasons to conclude that there are no false religious systems in existence during this thousand years. We will examine later the affirmative promulgation of righteousness, but briefly about the establishment of any false doctrines or heresies consider this:

***"And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more," (Revelation 20:2-3)***

We know, as his name implies and his ministrations since he was first cast down and imprisoned within the confines of this world, that Satan is the spring source of all false religion. From the beginning it was so:

***"And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil."  
(Genesis 3:4-5)***

He is the god of this world that ***"hath blinded the minds of them which believe not"*** (2 Corinthians 4:4), and the deceitful, lying spirit ***"that now worketh in the children of disobedience"*** (Ephesians 2:2) to form these false religious systems. But he is imprisoned, and can no more deceive until his temporary parole is granted. He concentrated all of his powers and hopes into energizing Antichrist and the False Prophet -- and they were fully put down. He knew before that great battle at Armageddon that ***"he hath but a short time"*** (Revelation 12:12), and now that time has passed and his mission has failed. Now the earth is quieted from his wicked influences -- spiritual and physical.

Further, we know from Holy Scriptures that before Antichrist was put down, he himself put down every other form of religious system that existed outside of the worship of himself as the consummate champion of humanism. I did an extensive piece of work both on the Antichrist and the False Prophet - - to which I will simply make reference for those here who would desire to more fully examine their rise and their dismantling of all things religious in the earth. To put it simply, consider these two passages in summation:

***"And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire."*** (Revelation 17:16)

and

***"Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her."*** (Revelation 18:8)

False religious systems have all been removed from the earth at the time Christ's kingdom is established ... though as we will examine more closely later, there is unbelief and rebellion against him, seething just below the surface of compelled obedience.

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***"When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats:"*** (Matthew 25:31-32)

We know this blessed passage of scripture, as part of the eschatological prophecies and parables Christ loaded upon the heads of his Apostles as he spake with them ***"privately"*** (Matthew 24:3). Here is the beginning of his exposition of what is known as the Great Judgment Day. Because of the fluid form of Christ's words -- spoken of Himself in third person narrative -- this passage is misconstrued by many as indicating that His millennial reign is contemporaneous with the general judgment. If there were no other passages to help on this analysis, I could certainly understand why a passing examination of Christ's

words as recorded by Matthew would lead to that conclusion. But, we are not left with only this passage. Consider the words of John's Revelation:

***"But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished." (Revelation 20:5)***

and

***"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works." (Revelation 20:12-13)***

And, if you are not satisfied with the writings of John on this point, consider these colorful and creative words of the minor prophet Micah that gives us this same sequence:

***"According to the days of thy coming out of the land of Egypt will I shew unto him marvellous things. [i.e., Jewish remnant restored miraculously, as when they were called out of Egypt] The nations shall see and be confounded at all their might: they shall lay their hand upon their mouth, their ears shall be deaf. [i.e., Christ's ruling with redeemed Jews on thrones with Him astonishes the rebel nations] They shall lick the dust like a serpent, they shall move out of their holes like worms of the earth: they shall be afraid of the LORD our God, and shall fear because of thee. [i.e., the damned are called forth from the earth to judgment]" (Micah 7:15-17)***

So, the passage in Matthew is comfortingly precise -- in that the sequence is in order. The Lord will in fact sit upon His throne of glory, for a thousand years. Then, when ***"the thousand years [are] finished"***, those whose bodies are returned to dust and whose souls are possessed in Hell awaiting the final determination of their eternal residence will come forth to be separated ***"one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats"***. Those living who are without grace, but who were not slain at Armageddon, will live and (as appointed in providence) die during the period of Christ's earthly reign; where they'll await the general judgment with those who have likewise departed the flesh in former dispensations. But the reign of Christ in the earth is not to be confused with His final reigning for eternity upon the final judgment of the human creation.

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***"Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore? And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." (Matthew 19:27-28)***

Christ had just intimated to the Apostles that the most seemingly impossible thing to the human creation has no impact on God's capacity to call forth those upon whom He chooses to bestow grace, faith, and the promises made in the Covenant of Grace. He then explains to the twelve that they will have a

position in Christ's millennial government wherein they will "preside over with the power of giving judicial decisions" (the meaning of "judging") among the regenerated Jewish population.

This requires, then, a framing of what we can discern from Holy Writ about the state of the Jews who are alive when this exciting time comes -- both those who are regenerated and those who are not. We cannot examine Christ's earthly kingdom without including the activities of those about whom it is expressly written: "***I saw ... [them] which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ***". (Revelation 20:4) Therefore, the real question in this introductory framing is whether there is a single living reprobate Jew on this landscape? Did the assault of Antichrist upon earth's rebellious Jewish population include the slaughter of every last one of them? We know that Isaiah and Jeremiah both proclaim that the slaughter that will take place will leave Israel "***without inhabitant***" (Isaiah 6:11; Jeremiah 33:10). The minor prophet Amos is more explicit:

***"Behold, the eyes of the Lord GOD are upon the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from off the face of the earth; saving that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, saith the LORD. For, lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth. All the sinners of my people shall die by the sword, which say, The evil shall not overtake nor prevent us."*** (Amos 9:8-10)

To come to a sound conclusion on this question, it is necessary to put into your focus that the restoration of the Jewish remnant is not -- and has not been since the beginning -- a unilateral operation. It is interesting that we speak so plainly about this in our signs to this generation; but I wonder if it has actually, substantively landed on the hearts of those in this house why it is that we must be so plain -- and bold! Let me clarify this, for any who are not paying close enough attention to get it. Is Christ only promising to restore 144,000 Jews, and leave the rest for indeterminate resolution at that hour? Or, does Scripture tell us that He is going to verily destroy every unregenerate Jew from off the earth -- every man, woman, child and suckling? It's about the covenant, sweet friends!

***"Have we not all one father? hath not one God created us? why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother, by profaning the covenant of our fathers? Judah hath dealt treacherously, and an abomination is committed in Israel and in Jerusalem; for Judah hath profaned the holiness of the LORD which he loved, and hath married the daughter of a strange god. The LORD will cut off the man that doeth this, the master and the scholar, out of the tabernacles of Jacob, and him that offereth an offering unto the LORD of hosts."*** (Malachi 2:10-12)

and

***"Therefore now thus saith the LORD, the God of hosts, the God of Israel; Wherefore commit ye this great evil against your souls, to cut off from you man and woman, child and suckling, out of Judah, to leave you none to remain; In that ye provoke me unto wrath with the works of your hands, burning incense unto other gods in the land of Egypt, whither ye be gone to dwell, that ye might cut yourselves off, and that ye might be a curse and a reproach among all the nations of the earth?"***  
(Jeremiah 44:7-8)

About the underlined portion of this latter passage, Gill offers: *"hereby they provoked the Lord to anger, to cut off the men that offered incense to idols; and the women their wives, whom they allowed so to do; and their children, who were brought up in the same practices; so that they would have none to succeed them, to bear their name, and inherit their land; unless God should be merciful, and not deal according to their deserts; for such was the nature of their crime, as to deserve an utter extirpation [meaning 'to remove or destroy totally; do away with; exterminate'] of them."*

The period of time after Christ returns and takes His bride to her glorified home is **all** about the covenant! Antichrist is raised up to bring the covenant to bloody issue at Armageddon! If you are a Jew who despises and profanes that covenant, your end is to be slaughtered when the nations are dispatched by a raging, offended husband to deal with your treachery! If you are a Jew whose heart is turned toward the covenant, you will see the fulfillment of it under the theocracy of Christ's rule. I believe that we are compelled to the conclusion that there will be no unregenerate Jews alive during this millennial period.

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The final preparatory discussion that I believe is critically necessary for a hearty view of this exceptional epoch of Christ's kingship is to obtain a proper view of the time; a thousand years. With six times the word "*chilioi*" (khil'-ee-oy) being utilized to define the period, it would be irresponsible to disregard that descriptor and opt for a less-distinct concept of "a long time". Besides, there are good things to be grasped about it being a period of a thousand years -- which just simply could not be grasped otherwise.

An examination of the use of this word in Scripture reflects that other than when it is used in Revelation 20, the term "thousand years" ("*chilioi etos*") appears only one other time; in this instructive one-verse-oracle passage:

***"¶ But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." (2 Peter 3:8)***

For many years I took this passage to merely reflect the obvious truth that the God of Scripture "***inhabiteth eternity***" (Isaiah 57:15), so that time is a non-binding concept since He is "***Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.***" (Revelation 22:13). But the language is not that open, since "*chilioi*" simply means "thousand" and "*etos*" simply means "year", turning plural only because of the qualifier. Why would this distinct period of time be referenced?

Peter, in the context of the previous passage, was addressing the destruction of the earth -- a thing that is apparently defined as occurring at the close of Christ's millennial reign:

***"And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them." (Revelation 20:7-9)***

So, it would be altogether fitting for Peter to be articulating not only the conclusion of this earth's existence, but intimating that it would be coming at an appointed period that was a division of a thousand years, since after making this cryptic statement, he assures us:

***"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." (2 Peter 3:9-10)***

So the business of bringing all of His saints to repentance, and the business of bringing the heaven and earth to its final demise (see Revelation 20:11) are wrapped up in this promise that is attenuated to a thousand-year marker -- called in God's parlance "**a day**". So, with that foundation on which to build your analytical structure, it is instructive to examine the words of the prophet Hosea about the restoration of the Jewish remnant and that remnant's dwelling with Christ:

***"Come, and let us return unto the LORD: for he hath torn, and he will heal us; he hath smitten, and he will bind us up. After two days will he revive us: in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight." (Hosea 6:1-2)***

Just before this passage, Hosea prophecies about Christ's departure from the rebellious house of Jacob -- as well as the hellish miasma into which they were cast in His indignation (see Hosea 5:14-15). So, the "**after two days**" is a time measurement during which the Jews will be in darkness, before Christ comes to "**revive**" them "**in the third day**" after which he allows them to "**live in his sight.**" This prophecy is wholly consistent with what Christ said to the raging Jews when He addressed them during His first advent -- and very shortly before they took Him to crucify and kill Him!

***"Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." (Luke 13:35)***

Taking all of these prophecies in balance, the picture is painted of a time of two thousand years (two days) during which the Jewish nation is left in the darkness to which Paul references they are placed until the "**fulness of the Gentiles be come in.**" (Romans 11:25) Then, a third day dawns during which those redeemed Jews are with Christ -- the third thousand years (or day) -- the millennium about which this sermon is preached.

One last point, to close the loop on this time analysis. If a thousand years is, in God's parameters, one day, what can we learn about these "days" that might help us to find greater comfort and knowledge, so that we, "**brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief.**" (1 Thessalonians 5:4)

***"For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it." (Exodus 20:11)***

The hebdomadal cycle of time -- seven -- is embedded in the human existence because of this commandment in accordance with God's exercise of power in His creation. No other explanation for the period of time we call a week. No other explanation for the simple and compelling reality that the word "seven" represents completeness or fullness in this blessed Word. Seven days -- the seventh "thousand years" -- therefore answers perfectly to the prophetic writings about when this amazing millennium will dawn, and what will be the prevailing nature of Christ's kingdom: Blessed.

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So, a foundation is laid for us to take up a closer examination of the period of final rest and beauty that holds so much attention from the prophets who were moved to write this blessed book to which we look to guide our lives. Next week I will turn to the work of opening the display for you; with the sincere hope that you will be filled with joy in anticipation of our participation therewith, as it is written:

***"It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: If we suffer, we shall also reign with him:" (2 Timothy 2:11-12)***

I love you all. Amen.