

## **From Where Does Jesus Reign in the Millennium?**

Daniel 12:1-3; Revelation 20:4-6

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The future millennial reign of Jesus Christ as King of kings in bringing all rulers and all nations to Himself to worship and serve Him is a certain hope we have given to us in Scripture. Then will be realized the Great Commission of Jesus Christ in Matthew 28:18-20.

The absolute authority of Christ over all nations as King of kings, and the hope He gives to us that He will be with us until that is accomplished, bears us up and encourages us not to despair at this present time of corruption, godlessness, and persecution within nations that have been deceived by Satan, for the Prince of Peace (Jesus) and the Gospel of Peace will overcome all enemies. Satan will be bound so that he cannot deceive the nations any longer during Christ's millennial reign, and at the same time, the saints (rulers and nations) throughout the world will flow into the Church of Jesus Christ.

King Jesus has already legally overcome all His enemies through His death, resurrection, ascension, and coronation at God's right hand, and He will bring that worldwide victory to pass in history. And so we press on in faithfulness and in love to our great King, for His millennial reign may be just around the corner.

In the previous sermon, we answered these questions: (1) Is the Millennium Literally 1,000 Years? We answered, it is most likely a symbolic number for a very long time. (2) When Does the Millennium Begin: Past or Future? We answered, it will begin in the future after the destruction of the Civil Beast and the Papal False Prophet who are confederated against King Jesus. The millennium will be cotemporaneous with the restraint of Satan from deceiving the nations of the world.

We now proceed to two more questions: (1) From Where Does Jesus Reign in the Millennium—From Heaven or From Earth? (2) Where Do the Saints Reign—In Heaven or on Earth?

### **I. From Where Does Jesus Reign in the Millennium—From Heaven or From Earth?**

A. Though the worldwide reign of the saints with Christ after the defeat of the Papal King is not specifically mentioned between Daniel 12:1 and Daniel 12:2 (though I submit it is implied), nevertheless, it was specifically mentioned earlier in Daniel 7:25-27 (just as we have seen in Revelation 19:19-Revelation 20:1-6). Thus, Christ's millennial reign is not excluded between Daniel 12:1 and Daniel 12:2, but is necessarily inferred to come after the destruction of the Papal King (Daniel 11:45).

B. As we consider the question above, remember that Jesus will spiritually come riding upon a white horse crowned with many crowns and will smite His enemies (especially the Civil Beast and the Papal False Prophet) by the sharp sword of His Word that proceeds out of His mouth (Revelation 19), but the text does not speak of Him bodily reigning from earth upon the throne of David in Jerusalem in Revelation 19-20.

1. If Christ's coming in Revelation 19 is a spiritual coming in judgment upon His enemies, where is His resurrected body? It's seated at the right hand of God (as we shall see).

2. But doesn't Revelation 20:4 clearly state that the saints that are raised will reign "with Christ" for a thousand years? Does that not indicate that both Jesus and the saints are reigning together bodily upon the earth? No, it does not necessarily mean that Jesus is bodily with the saints on earth during His millennial reign. He may be in heaven while the saints are upon earth. He will be present spiritually with the saints on earth, but I submit He will be bodily at the right hand of God (Genesis 5:24; Genesis 6:9; Hosea 11:12; 1 Corinthians 3:9). So likewise, Jesus does not have to be present upon earth bodily for the saints upon earth to reign with Him. They will spiritually reign with Christ upon earth while Jesus is bodily seated at the right hand of God in heaven.

C. Turn with me to the most quoted Psalm in the New Testament: Psalm 110. From where is Jesus reigning? Clearly, it is from heaven.

1. David prophesies that the Father (the LORD) would seat His Son (my Lord) as King at His right hand and that at the same time Jesus (the Messiah) would be made a Priest after the order of Melchizedek (a Priest/King). This mediatorial reign of Christ as Priest/King officially began at His ascension (Acts 2). This is also confirmed by Peter (Acts 5:31) and by Paul (Hebrews 8:1).

2. David further prophesies in Psalm 110 that Jesus would remain seated at God's right hand until His enemies are destroyed. When will Satan be destroyed? After the millennium (Revelation 20:7-10). Paul states the last enemy King Jesus will destroy is death, 1 Corinthians 15:25-26). When will death be destroyed? After the millennium (Revelation 20:14). Since all Christ's enemies will not be destroyed until after the millennium, and since Christ is to remain at God's right hand until all His enemies are destroyed, King Jesus will remain enthroned at God's right hand, reigning from heaven during the millennium. He began His reign at God's right hand at His ascension and continues it during the entire Gospel Age (the millennium is a part of the Gospel Age and comes at the end of it as was demonstrated in the previous sermon).

D. Turn with me to Acts 2:29-36 (Peter's sermon on the Day of Pentecost—Peter is explaining to the multitudes the gift given to the apostles of speaking in languages of nations that they had never learned—Peter makes clear that this is the gift of King Jesus).

1. Peter cites Psalm 110:1. He makes clear that Psalm 110:1 and the Messianic reign of Christ is not to begin in the future, but began after Christ's resurrection/ascension (though Christ's millennial reign is yet future—it's a greater expression in history of His Messianic reign).

2. When Jesus was officially by divine right exalted to God's right hand as King, He was also seated on David's throne to reign as King of the saints and as King of the nations (Acts 2:30,34-36).

3. Once again, Jesus is reigning from heaven until all His foes are defeated (which will not occur until after the millennium when Satan is cast into the Lake of Fire, Revelation 20:10, and death is destroyed, Revelation 20:14).

4. I submit that Scripture teaches Jesus is now reigning at God's right hand upon the throne of David in heaven. His mediatorial ministry as King and Priest in heaven and from heaven is ongoing throughout the Gospel Age (the millennium is a part of the Gospel Age and comes at the end of the Gospel Age). But what distinguishes Christ's millennial reign from His present reign at God's right hand is not from where Jesus is reigning (He is presently reigning from heaven and will do so in His millennial reign), but what distinguishes His millennial reign from His present reign will be the degree to which Jesus will show forth His mighty power in His millennial reign in drawing all rulers and all nations and all peoples to serve Him by means of the gospel and His Spirit.

## **II. Where Do the Saints Reign—In Heaven or on Earth?**

A. Revelation 20:4 speaks of the "souls" of the faithful martyrs and witnesses of Christ.

1. These souls are those who have been slain for their faithful testimony in standing for the doctrine, worship, and practice of Christ's truth. These are mentioned in Revelation 6:9-11 (those martyred for Christ by the pagan Roman emperors of the first three centuries) and in Revelation 11 (symbolized by the two witnesses who faithfully proclaim their testimony against the Civil Beast and the Papal False Prophet).

2. The souls of the martyrs in heaven are said to be waiting for judgment upon their enemies in Revelation 6:9-11. When will they receive that judgment over their enemies? In the millennial reign of Christ at the first resurrection (Revelation 20:4-5).

3. These souls of the faithful martyrs and witnesses of Christ are not upon earth but in heaven—these have died for Christ. And yet they are said to partake in the first resurrection and to reign with Christ a thousand years. Since souls in heaven are never said in Scripture to partake of any resurrection in heaven, where does Scripture teach that the first resurrection occurs? The reigning with Christ and the first resurrection occur upon earth (Revelation 5:10; Revelation 11:15; Daniel 7:26-27). The souls of the faithful martyrs and witnesses of Christ will be raised/resurrected to reign with Christ here upon the earth (we will

explore this further next Lord's Day, God willing).

4. The very purpose of Satan being bound from deceiving the nations of the earth for a thousand years is so that the nations of the earth might come to Christ and reign upon earth. If Satan's binding pertains to this earth, so does the reigning of the saints with Christ.

5. Moreover, the millennial reign of the saints will come to an end when the restraint of Satan is lifted—then Satan will go forth to deceive the nations upon earth once again (Revelation 20:7-9). But certainly the souls in heaven do not reign for a thousand years and then have it interrupted by the loosing of Satan. Thus, Jesus reigns from heaven in the millennium with such power through the sword of His mouth (through His Word and by His Spirit) that the saints on earth will reign with Him in the first resurrection (which we will yet address).

#### B. Application

1. Let us not only be amazed at the mighty resurrection power that Jesus shall exercise in crushing His enemies and in bringing the nations to Himself and fail to realize that same resurrection power indwells all of us who trust in Christ (Ephesians 3:20-21). That resurrection power of Jesus is especially revealed in our human weaknesses and frailties. Paul said Christ's strength was made perfect in his weakness and that he therefore gloried in weaknesses because it was at that time that the power of Christ might be revealed in him (2 Corinthians 12:9-10). We are more than conquerors through our union with Jesus Christ in His death, resurrection, and ascension. Temptations, sins, and fears are constant battles we face in this life, but they do not have dominion over us. The same power that rules the world and will bring all nations to Christ rules in you. It is not a question of the reality of that truth; it is a question of the application by faith of that truth.

2. Jesus does not call us to act/think like escape artists—that He will remove us from every trial or difficulty now or in the future. He may do so, but more often than not, Jesus gives us the perseverance to be faithful to Him in our faith, love, hope, and obedience until He calls us home. We are to think long term by way of our plans for us, our children, and our church. We are to equip our families to endure hardships and trials, to be tough-skinned, but tender-hearted. The world is filled with snowflakes that melt under pressure. God calls us to be overcomers who will not quit or surrender. What we need more than earthly/material preparation is the spirit of the faithful martyrs and witnesses of Jesus from the past. What we need most to leave to our children and grandchildren is a legacy that our covenanted forefathers have left to us. As Jesus said, "He that endures to the end shall be saved."

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