

# Your QUESTIONS About Prophecy

## ANSWERED Part 15 By Larry G. Jaffrey

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# Why Must Jesus Come Back to Reign as King?



Recently, while taking questions in a Sunday School class, the following question was asked: “Why must there be a Millennium? Why doesn’t God just institute the “new heaven and new earth” right after the Tribulation? Why is the 1000 year Millennium needed?”

The word Millennium comes from Revelation 20:1-6 where the Apostle John is told that Jesus will reign for 1000 years or a millennium. This is the length of time the Messianic Kingdom will last with Jesus sitting on the throne of His ancestor David and ruling here on earth. The previous chapters in Revelation describe what the seventieth week of Daniel (the Tribulation) will be like. They reveal an age with natural and supernatural disasters and political intrigue, and they reveal the forces behind all that will happen. What are most intriguing are the images of Jesus. Whereas most of the New Testament emphasizes Jesus’ functions as prophet and priest, the book of

Revelation focuses on Jesus as judge and king. He will come and defeat His enemies, bind them or destroy them and then set up His kingdom where righteousness will reign.

*The book of Revelation is not the sole scripture reference to this future kingdom. Chuck Missler in an article on the Millennium writes:*

*The Old Testament is replete with commitments for a literal Messiah ultimately ruling the world through Israel from His throne in Jerusalem. There are at least 1,845 references in the Old Testament and 17 books give prominence to the event. The ancient rabbinical aspirations were dominated by it. In fact, this obsession obscured their recognizing the Messiah when He made His initial appearance.*

*There are at least 318 references in 216 chapters of the New Testament and 23 of its 27 books give prominence to the event.”<sup>1</sup>*

This Messianic Kingdom has been the hope of the Jewish nation as they suffered under tyrannical foreign rulers through the ages. When the Messianic kingdom would come “all existence would be reshaped to respond to the heart’s desire, and in which every grief would be assuaged, every hunger would be stilled, and every moral value be made triumphant.”<sup>2</sup> Sadly, an over emphasis on the kingdom by the Jews in Jesus’

day led many to reject Jesus as the Messiah. Why? They were not looking for a suffering Messiah but a King Messiah to sit on David’s throne. Even today many Jews have difficulty seeing Jesus as the Messiah because, if He is Messiah, He would bring peace through his Kingdom. Often when I ask a Jewish person

<sup>1</sup> Chuck Missler, Koinania House Online, <http://www.khouse.org/articles/2002/395>

<sup>2</sup> Nathan Ausubel, *The Book of Jewish Knowledge* (Crown Publishers, 1964) p. 282

how they would recognize the Messiah, the response is that he will bring peace (through his kingdom) and rebuild the temple.

As an over emphasis on the Kingdom led many of the Jews to reject Jesus, a misinterpretation of Kingdom theology in the Church has led to anti-Semitism by those who claim to believe in Jesus.

The following is an excerpt from Hal Lindsey's book "The Road to the Holocaust."

*"The man most responsible for changing the way the Church interpreted prophecy was Origen. He was a leading teacher of theology and philosophy at the influential catechetical school of Alexandria, Egypt, at the beginning of the third century...But because of his desire to harmonize the New Testament with the philosophy of Plato, he powerfully introduced, taught, and spread the allegorical [to reveal the hidden meaning] method of interpreting the Scriptures, particularly in the area of prophecy..."*

*...Using this method of prophetic interpretation, Church theologians began to develop the idea that the Israelites had permanently forfeited all their covenants by rejecting Jesus as the Messiah. This view taught that these covenants now belong to the Church, and that it is the only true Israel now and forever. The view also taught that the Jews will never again have a future as a Divinely chosen people,*

*and that the Messiah will never establish His Messianic Kingdom on earth that was promised to them...*

*...But it was Augustine who systemized the allegorically based teaching into a cohesive theology that would dominate the Church for over a thousand years... The Roman Catholic Church, using Origen's system of interpretation and Augustine's theology, soon applied and instituted the teaching that they were the inheritors of Israel's promises-that they were the inheritors of the Kingdom promised to Israel."<sup>3</sup>*

The Reformation, under the influence of Martin Luther and others, brought a return to the authority of scriptures and salvation through faith alone. Unfortunately the Reformation did not revisit the issue of eschatology (study of prophecy) but accepted what began with Origen and Augustine. Lindsey goes on in his book to point out how this errant theology led to anti-Semitism in Europe during the Middle Ages and eventually led to the Holocaust with Hitler and his followers using Luther's teachings to support the elimination of the Jews.

In the August 2008 issue of this newsletter, we discussed the need to understand God's plan for the Jews. We mentioned that a future kingdom where Jesus would reign here on earth was part of that plan. It was pointed out that even Jesus' disciples expected Him to establish His kingdom (Acts 1:6).

The early church looked longingly for His promised return as their "Blessed Hope" to rid their desperate world of its evil rulers. They were looking for a physical kingdom here on earth and not a spiritual kingdom that was in heaven.

If we believe there will be a future kingdom where Jesus will sit on the throne of David, we still have the question "why is the kingdom necessary?" There are three reasons why the Messianic Kingdom must be established: (1) it was promised, (2) it is legally required, and (3) it lays the groundwork for the Great White Throne judgment.

### **The Kingdom was promised**

A study of the Messianic Kingdom prophecies reveals several characteristics of this future time period on earth.

- 1. It will be a time when Jerusalem will be the center of the world and disputes between nations will be resolved without war.**

*Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the LORD 'S house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow to it. Many people shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths."For*

<sup>3</sup>Hal Lindsey, "The Road to the Holocaust" (Bantam Books, 1989) pp 7-9

out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. He shall judge between the nations, and rebuke many people; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.” (Isaiah 2:2-4 NKJV)

**2. It will be a time when there is peace even in the animal kingdom.**

“The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play by the cobra's hole, and the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper's den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.” (Isaiah 11:6-9 NKJV)

**3. It will be a time when the Messiah sits on the throne of David.**

*For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end, upon the throne of David and over His kingdom, to order it and establish it with judgment and justice from that time forward, even forever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this.* “(Isaiah 9:6-7 NKJV)

**4. It will be a time when the nations go up to Jerusalem to worship.**

*And it shall come to pass that everyone who is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the Feast of Tabernacles. And it shall be that whicsoever of the families of the earth do not come up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the*

*LORD of hosts, on them there will be no rain.* (Zechariah 14:16-17 NKJV)

**5. It will be a kingdom that will last for a thousand years.**

*And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.* (Revelation 20:4 NKJV)

The Messianic Kingdom is a major theme in the Old Testament. The New Testament, specifically Revelation, reveals the events of the Last Days just before the Kingdom is established, the length of the Kingdom and what will follow the Kingdom.

Next time we will look at the legal requirement for a Messianic Kingdom.

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