

Revelation
A Wednesday Night Bible Study

Lesson #67b and #68
2/06/2008

Following Armageddon Comes The Millennium: Part 3b and Part 4
19:21-20:10

Since the previous lesson, #66, brought us to verse two and told us about Satan being bound and cast into a **“bottomless pit for one thousand years,”** we need to recognize that the removal of Satan from the affairs of this earth for **“one thousand years”** is directly related to **the King of Kings** setting up His **Millennial Kingdom** on this earth for **“one thousand years.”** Having briefly introduced the **Millennial Kingdom** in the previous lesson as something anxiously awaited by Jews, it is appropriate that we pause to acquire a more complete understanding of God's preparations for this long awaited **Millennial Kingdom**. By His use of the word **teleo** (5055) in 20:3 (translated **“fulfilled”**), **God** tells us that we should thoroughly search His Word to discover truths concerning this **“thousand year”** period, **His Millennial Kingdom**, i.e., that some things are to be fulfilled which He has previously revealed to us about **His Theocracy or Sovereign Rule**.

The very word **“kingdom”** cannot be understood apart from the matter of rule, and in this case, a **Theocracy** in which **the King of Kings** rules over all that is on this earth with a strong and dictatorial hand. God's way of providing for man and governing His creation is always through **His Theocracy**. In such a form of government over His creation God is able to provide blessings for man which are not available through any other form of government. As we study this subject we will learn that God offered man the benefits of **His Theocratic Rule** at various times, the last of which being **His Millennial Kingdom** which we shall study once we have covered some of the Scriptural background and God's preparations for this wonderful time.

God's Theocracy in the Garden of Eden was the first institution of God's Theocratic Rule on this earth. God instituted a **Theocracy**, His absolute rule over all of His creation. He exercised it by His direct command or by the delegation of His authority to Adam as His representative. Adam knew that he was God's chosen representative and that he had no independent authority of his own, but that all of his authority to act in any matter was derived from **God's sovereign Theocracy**. He was required to submit to God's authority and to His standards and structures in life.

Before God created this world and the Garden of Eden, there had been a challenge to God's authority by one of His created angels, Lucifer. Isaiah 14:12-17 tells us of the rebellion of Lucifer against the sovereign rule of God. His five **“I wills”** in that passage describe Lucifer's rebellion. In the Garden of Eden Satan appeared in the body of a serpent to challenge **God's Theocratic Rule** over His creation. God's interpretation of what happened when Satan seduced Eve in following him in rebellion and through her Adam (Genesis 3:1-7), is given in two New Testament passages.

Revelation 20:2 And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years,

Revelation 20:3 and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he might not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were ended. After that he must be released for a little while.

Revelation 20:4 Then I saw thrones, and seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was committed. Also I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, and who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

Revelation 20:5 The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended. This is the first resurrection.

Revelation 20:6 Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a thousand years.

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The first passage is found in 1 Timothy 2:14 and tells us: *“And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.”* God’s statement here may seem to lay more guilt upon Eve by telling us that she was *“in transgression,”* i.e., she allowed herself to be deceived by Satan and *“stepped over a known line of right and wrong.”* The absence of qualifying adjectives in God’s statement about Adam does not indicate a lack of guilt. Rather it can be assumed that any student of the Scriptures is aware of Adam’s role in the Garden of Eden as God’s representative in **His Theocracy**. It is implied that *Adam’s decision to join with Eve was nothing less than a willful rejection of God’s Theocracy and an intentional reproduction of Satan’s rebellion* against the **Sovereign Theocratic Authority of God**. As such, Adam’s guilt was greater than Eve’s since she was deceived, but his act was an expression of clear rebellion against God’s authority.

The second passage, found in Romans 5:12-19, does not even mention Eve, lays the full blame on Adam alone for the consequences of his rebellion against the **Theocracy of God**: *“Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned”* (5:12). The passage goes on to contrast the *“sin,”* i.e., **disobedience/rebellion of Adam**, with the *“obedience of Christ”* and thereby highlighting the critical issue of submission under authority: *“Therefore as by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous”* (Romans 5:18-19). Because Adam chose not to submit to **the Theocracy of God’s sovereign rule** in the Garden of Eden, he introduced *“sin and death”* into man’s experience, i.e., his rebellion separated him and all of his descendants from submission to **God’s Theocratic Rule** and fellowship with his Creator as well as the benefits which result from **God’s Theocracy**.

A consequence of Adam’s rejection of God’s Theocracy was that Satan became known as *“the god of this world”* (2 Cor. 4:4) *“who blinded the minds of those who believe not”* as well as *“the prince of the power of the air (atmosphere of the earth), the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience”* (Eph. 2:2), or *“obstinate opposition to the divine will”* (Strong’s Lexicon).

Adam was the first man to demonstrate the reproduction of Satan’s open rebellion against **the Theocracy of God**. Such rebellion is reproduced countless times and in countless ways by Adam’s descendants. The

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Theocracy of God in the Garden of Eden produced the only perfect, blissful and totally fulfilling environment man has experienced on this earth. Disregarding God's blessings, Adam rejected **God's Theocracy** and chose servitude to Satan which resulted in pain, trouble, trauma, sickness, heartache, chaos and death rather than the serenity and fulfillment offered by **God's Theocracy**.

It is the explanation for all that is wrong in our world today. **The cause of all of man's problems is man's rebellious rejection of God's Sovereign Rule.** Any alternative to **God's Theocracy** produces a world of chaos, pain and death. However, knowing before He created this world that such would happen, God already had a plan to deal with the problems resulting from man's rejection of **His Theocratic Rule**.

God's first Theocracy on this earth was in the Garden of Eden and His final Theocracy on this earth will be His Millennial Kingdom. In between these two **Theocratic Administrations of God's Rule**, down through the ages, God has offered man various opportunities to benefit from **His Theocratic Rule**, with each offering being received in a response like unto Adam's. That is what brings us to the **Millennial Kingdom, God's Theocratic Rule** over all of His creation.

Before we return to Revelation twenty and the **Millennial Kingdom**, let us review some of those opportunities God provided to man in offering him the benefits of **His Theocracy** since some of those offerings have significant relationships to **His Millennial Kingdom**.

First, God offered Theocratic rule to man through human government (Genesis 9:1-7). Satan countered God's offer with his own offer at the Tower of Babel and men, under the leadership of Satan's man, Nimrod, once again rejected God's ways, **His Theocracy** and His blessings (Gen. 11:1-9).

Second, God called Abraham out of paganism to use as His instrument through which He would offer His Theocratic Rule, and through it provide for man the best living environment possible on this earth.

God had offered to man all of His blessings and benefits through **His Theocracy** in the Garden of Eden, but man rejected God's blessings which could only come into man's life when man chose to live under **God's Sovereign Rule**. Then, evidently desiring to bless man, but having had His blessings rejected by Adam in the Garden, God acted again. This time, in order to have an environment in which He could bless man, God selected and called a man out of paganism, Abram (later known as Abraham), a sinner

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and the son of an idolmaker, to use in bringing into existence a whole new race of people, the Jews through whom He intended to make Himself known and through whom He planned to pour out His blessings upon mankind. Though He no longer had a perfect, sinless environment, such as the Garden of Eden, and a sinless man with which to work, God did have something — a people through whom He could act to shower man with His blessings.

To activate His plan of implementing the offer of the benefits of **His Theocracy**, God made **unconditional promises, known as covenants**, to Abraham and his descendants, known as the patriarchs and the nation of Israel. In these covenants God promised to bless them and use them in very special ways for His glory and for their benefit. Through these covenants, and their applications to life, God set forth the particulars of how **His Theocracy** was to be implemented in Abraham's life and the lives of his descendants who became known as the nation of Israel. These unconditional covenants, well documented and amplified throughout the Old Testament, are known as follows:

1) The Promise of a National Land (Gen. 12:1; 13:14,15,17; 17:8)

Abraham and his immediate descendants, because of their disobedience, never did fully possess all of the promised land — never occupying more than a tenth of what God had given to them. Though God has used other nations to discipline Israel by removing them from their land, His promise regarding the land was unconditional. Because of Israel's repeated rebellion and refusal to submit to God's rule, they have not yet possessed all of the land God promised them. It is only in **God's Millennial Kingdom** that this unconditional promise of the land will be fully realized (Deu. 30:3-20; Eze. 20:33-44).

2) The Promise of a Nation (Gen. 12:2a; 13:16; 17:2-7,9-10)

God began to multiply and grow Abraham's family into a nation of people during their time of bondage in Egypt. Through Jacob's twelve sons who, along with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, became known as the patriarchs, God began to promulgate and structurally organize the family to function as a nation.

Jacob described how this was to be carried out with his prophecies regarding the destiny of each of his sons (Gen. 49:1-28). Utilizing the characteristics of each of the twelve sons, God predetermined the role each family would play in **His Theocracy**, both at that time, through their descendants, and reaching even unto **His Theocracy in His Millennial Kingdom**.

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Note specifically God's plans for Judah and his descendants as described in Genesis 49:10: ***"The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be."***

The ***"scepter"*** referred to the regal position of authority that the Messiah, Christ Jesus, would fulfill, first as ***"Lord"*** activating **His Spiritual Theocracy** in the hearts of men, and second, as **the King of Kings in His Millennial Kingdom**.

Even though God used Jacob's twelve sons as the organizational structure for the nation of Israel, it was not until after the period of time in Egypt that God actually organized His Chosen People into a ***"peculiar people"*** to live under **His Theocracy** as a unique nation distinct from all other nations. Through Moses, at Mt. Sinai (Ex. 19:1-31:18), God gave Israel specific directions for the functioning of Israel under **His Theocracy**. He guided Israel with His specific laws which were applied by priests serving as His delegated authorities over the people. The books of Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy detail how God's the laws were to be applied to His Chosen Nation of People, emphasizing how special they were in His plans for all of mankind. In his address to those who were to enter the land of promise, Moses stressed the uniqueness of Israel in their relationship to God and how submission to God's authority and obedience to the laws of **His Theocracy** would result in great blessings for them as a nation (Deu. 4:1-40).

Notice, that, even though God knew the people of Israel would not be submissive to **His Theocracy** and would refuse to obey the guidelines of His unconditional covenant, God inserted a reminder of the eternal nature of His unconditional covenant with them:

"But if from thence thou shalt seek the Lord thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul. When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, even in the latter days, if thou turn to the Lord thy God, and shalt be obedient unto his voice; (For the Lord thy God is a merciful God;) he will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers which he swore unto them" (Deu. 4:29-31).

Even though Israel entered the land with the supernatural guidance, protection and provisions of God under **His Theocracy**, their rebellion soon surfaced and characterized their relationship with Him.

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Thus, Israel's rebellion against **God's sovereign Rule** made it impossible for them to receive the blessings of **God's Theocracy**. However, God's unconditional promises to Abraham, not dependent upon the response of the people, will be fulfilled, but the complete fulfillment of those promises will not take place until Israel is in **the Millennial Kingdom**, living under **God's Theocracy** (Eze. 37:1-23; 39:21-29) where God will bless them mightily.

3). The Promise of Israel being a blessing, specifically a spiritual blessing to all mankind (Gen. 12:3; 22:18; Jer. 31:31-36; Gal. 3:14-16).

Under **His Theocracy** God intended to bless all the nations of the earth through the blessings He would give to Israel. Had Israel been willing to accept the holy commandments God gave to them as a people (Rom. 3:1-2). By submitting to His authority and obeying His commandments they would have benefitted greatly as a people and would have been admired by all of mankind (Deu. 4:5-8; Mal. 3:12). However, Israel's rejection of God's sovereign rule brought trauma, pain and captivity to them and made them a curse to other nations. **In the Millennial Kingdom, under God's Theocracy**, after God has cleansed them of their sin (Ex. 37:21-23), this will be reversed and Israel will become a blessing to other nations and fulfill the promise God made to Abraham (Zech. 8:1-13).

This promise of God to Abraham embedded much more than earthly and material blessings. God's promise to Abraham included His plans, designed before the creation of the world, to send a Savior for all mankind. Through the substitutionary and priestly work of the Savior, God planned to create a whole new spiritual family, a new race of people, each of whom would have God living inside of them and exercising **His Theocracy** in each of their lives (Gal. 3:13-14,29; 4:4-7; 6:15; Eph. 2:11-15). Israel would be the channel through which God came, incarnating Himself as the God-man, and identifying Himself as the Jewish Messiah or Christ.

Of course, God accomplished His plans and we know that the Savior came into our world as a Jew. However, as a nation of people, Israel rejected the Messiah. In spite of Israel's rejection God still accomplished His plan for the Savior to fulfill His promise of One through Whom **"all of the nations of the earth"** were to be blessed as God had promised Abraham.

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Even though most of the people of Israel, and the nation as a whole, rejected God's offer of a Savior to redeem them from their servitude to Satan, God will still fulfill His promise to Abraham regarding Abraham's seed being such a blessing to his descendants. However, the realization of that fulfillment will have to wait until the **Millennial Kingdom** and will be fulfilled on an individual basis. God strongly affirmed His plans in Jeremiah 31:27-37 and Hebrews 8:7-11. In Jeremiah 31:35-36 He made it clear:

“Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The Lord of hosts is his name: If those ordinances depart from before me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before me forever.”

It is clear that God intends for the nation of Israel to fill a very special role in the **Millennial Kingdom**. In this lesson we have only begun to present a very small portion of what God has told us about Israel's role in the **Millennial Kingdom** as well as how God has tried to pour out His blessings upon Abraham's descendants through **His Theocratic Rule**.

In the lessons before us we shall examine more of God's revelation about His actions of kindness towards this special nation in addition to how God desires to bless all men who will chose to receive His blessings by submitting to **His Theocracy**, His rule in their lives. As we study what God has told us about the many times God has already offered His blessings to man, we shall learn more about what to expect from **His Theocracy in His Millennial Kingdom**.