

Revelation
A Wednesday Night Bible Study

Lesson #73
3/12/2008

Following Armageddon Comes the Millennium: Part 9
19:21-20:10

In our efforts to understand what God tells us in Revelation 20:3 where He says that an angel bound Satan **“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”** we have focused on the phrase **“TILL THE THOUSAND YEARS SHOULD BE FULFILLED.”** We have attempted to discover in the Scriptures that to which our Lord was referring. Knowing that the **“thousand years”** is another way of describing the **Millennial Rule and Kingdom of our Lord** on this earth, we have discovered that our Lord established **His Theocracy** on this earth several times, beginning with the Garden of Eden. Seeing this, we are now in the process of extracting key factors from each of those **Theocracies** to see what they tell us about what is **“FULFILLED”** during **“the thousand years Satan is bound”** and our **Lord rules in His Theocracy** on this earth.

In Lesson #71 we reviewed the following things which we had extracted from these Theocracies:

God's Theocracy in the Garden of Eden

In the perfect environment of God's Garden of Eden we found five axiomatic, unchanging principles which will once again be fully expressed and function perfectly in our **Lord's Millennial Kingdom:**

- 1) God is the source of all created elements and things;
- 2) God expressed the authority of **His Theocracy**;
- 3) The relationship between the Creator and created man was defined and established as man being submissive to and dependent upon the Creator in all things;
- 4) The purpose and function of each part of the created world was described and defined; and
- 5) The relationship between each of the created parts was established.

Each of these axiomatic principles, at the present time distorted by the presence of Satan and sin, will be restored to their original purity and characterize the Millennial Kingdom.

God's Theocracy expressed in the delegation of His authority to man to rule over himself

One key principle was extracted from this form of God's Theocracy: Human life was given a place of supreme value above all other forms of created life when God instructed man to exercise capital punishment for anyone who took the life of another.

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God's Theocracy expressed in His covenants with Abraham

Genesis 12:1-3 tell us about these unconditional, eternal covenants which God made with Abraham and his descendants and focus on:

- 1) The **seed**, both spiritual, i.e., the Messiah-Savior, and physical, i.e., the nation that was to evolve from Abraham's descendants;
- 2) The **land**; and
- 3) **Blessings**.

Extracting principles from this form of **God's Theocracy**, we have discovered some key factors that will play a prominent role in the **Millennial Kingdom**:

- 1) The **nation and the land**;
- 2) The **organizational structure** for the nation and for the Millennial Kingdom:
 - a. The family of Israel;
 - b. Jerusalem;
 - c. The Temple;
- 3) The **law and the commandments**;
- 4) The **holiness of God** pictured in **the role of the priests** and the *"peculiar treasure, a holy nation, a kingdom of priests."*

Each of these aspects expressed in the fulfillment of the Abrahamic covenant will have a vital role in characterizing the **Millennial Kingdom**, **emphasizing the role of the nation of Israel in the Kingdom**.

The next form of God's Theocracy expressed on this earth was in the form of the Judges. God's rule through His priests, designed to present His holiness, was perverted by those very same priests. As a result the nation digressed into the anarchy of self-centeredness in which *"each man did what was right in his own eyes"* (Judges 17:6; 21:25) because when the assigned role of the priests was perverted, they also rejected God's holiness. The rejection of God's holiness produced an extremely destructive time of chaos for the nation of Israel.

God then provided His leadership and blessings through men (one woman was included when there was a lack of usable men) whom He called **Judges**. In **the Millennial Kingdom**, God will once again assign some to be **Judges** and bring fulfillment to this form of **His Theocracy** (Matthew 19:28; Luke 22:30; Rev. 20:4).

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God's Theocracy on this earth was next expressed through **David's Throne and the Davidic Covenant**. **There must be a throne in the Millennial Kingdom from which Christ asserts His rule**. To present an earthly prophetic picture of **His Throne in the Millennial Kingdom God chose the throne of David**.

A critical factor needs to be noted. Before the creation of this world, Satan challenged the authority of **God's Throne in heaven** with his five "**I wills.**"

"For thou hast said in thine heart, I WILL ascend into heaven, I WILL exalt my throne above the stars of God: I WILL sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I WILL ascend above the heights of the clouds; I WILL be like the most High" (Isaiah 14:13-14).

As noted previously, in their role as spiritual leaders of the people, the priests perverted their assignment from God and failed to present His holy nature to the people. Then Samuel, the last of the Judges and the first of the prophets, also failed to properly represent God to the people. This is seen in the actions of his sons (1 Samuel 8:3). The people of Israel then demanded a "**king to judge us like the other nations**" (1 Sam. 8:5).

When it came time for God to delegate **the authority of His Throne** to man for the exercise of His heavenly authority on the earth as a king, that man became a special target of Satan. Almost as soon as Saul became the first king of Israel, Satan appealed to his pride and he succumbed to Satan's temptations to reproduce Satan's rebellion against God. Saul abused his role as a king and rebelled against God by refusing to submit his will to the authority of God. God then rejected him as a king. Saul's rebellion against God made it impossible for God to exercise **His Theocracy** through Saul.

"And Samuel said to Saul, Thou hast done foolishly: thou hast not kept the commandment of the Lord thy God, which he commanded thee: for now would the Lord have established thy kingdom upon Israel forever" (1 Sam. 13:13).

God then chose a man who would faithfully represent His Theocracy on this earth. The key would be for God to find a spirit of submission in that man. God found such a man in David.

"But now thy kingdom shall not continue: THE LORD HATH SOUGHT HIM A MAN AFTER HIS OWN HEART, and the Lord hath commanded him to be captain over his people, because thou hast not kept that which the Lord commanded thee" (1 Samuel 13:13-14).

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The phrase, *“the Lord hath sought Him a man after His own heart”* is the key for our understanding — it could be paraphrased as **“the Lord hath sought a man who understands authority and submission to God’s authority and has a spirit of submission to authority.”** David had such **a spirit of submission.** It ruled his life. He lived with a deep sense of fear and respect for the authority of **God’s Throne** and ruled Israel in a manner that exemplified that fear and reverence for God’s authority.

He did sin, for all men are sinners. However, when confronted with his sin (2 Samuel 12:7-13; 24:10) he repented with a broken heart, casting himself upon God and seeking God’s forgiveness (Psalm 32:1-5; 51:1-19). When repenting of his sin, he clearly recognized God’s authority to punish and chasten him. With a submissive spirit, he submitted himself to God for God’s appropriate judgment upon him (2 Samuel 24:11-17). The response of David to God’s authority sharply contrasted with that of Saul, who, rejecting God’s authority, attempted to substitute his own standard in the place of the will of God, justifying himself according to his own standard of authority. **David’s spirit of submission was more important than his acts of submission.** This is a very important principle that will be amplified in a later lesson. **It was his spirit of submission that made him a “man after God’s own heart” and one to whom God could delegate His authority.**

“And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee being king” (1 Samuel 15:22-23).

As we examine David’s Throne and the covenant God made with David, we recognize that, in some ways, it is an extension and amplification of the Abrahamic Covenant. We will also see that it has a critical relationship with the Millennial Kingdom.

Because of David’s spirit of submission to God’s Throne of authority, God made a covenant with David, found in 2 Samuel 7:12-16:

“And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. He shall build a house for my name, and I will establish the throne of his kingdom forever. I will be his father, and he shall be my son. If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: But my mercy

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shall not depart away from him, as I took it from Saul, whom I put away before thee. And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established forever before thee: thy throne shall be established forever."

Notice some key words:

- 1) **Seed;**
- 2) **Throne — Kingdom;**
- 3) **House;**
- 4) **Forever.**

God used these words in an inter-dependent manner, to emphasize the critical points of **His Covenant with David**.

Seed — Throne - Kingdom — House — Forever

It has been widely understood that “seed” has **two meanings**:

- 1) **David's sons, i.e., his male descendants; and**
- 2) **To refer to Christ as a spiritual fulfillment of “seed.”**

In referring to David's male descendants, God told David that there would always be one who “*shall be of thy sons*” (1 Chron. 17:11) which “*shall proceed out of thy bowels*” (2 Sam. 7:12). God supernaturally acted to secure this part of His covenant.

Athaliah, the mother of King Ahaziah and daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, passionate about continuing the worship of Baal and desiring to become the ruler of Judah as a successor to her son when he was killed, attempted to destroy all of the royal seed of David and almost succeeded. She brought the lineage of David to the brink of extinction by killing every male descendant of David, or so she thought: “*And when Athaliah the mother of Ahaziah saw that her son was dead, she arose and destroyed all the seed royal. But Jehosheba, the daughter of king Joram, sister of Ahaziah, took Joash the son of Ahaziah, and stole him from among the king's sons which were slain; and they hid him, even him and his nurse, in the bedchamber from Athaliah, so that he was not slain. And he was with her hid in the house of the Lord six years. And Athaliah did reign over the land*” (2 Kings 11:1-3).

God used the heroic actions of Jehosheba, Athaliah's daughter, to save one male descendant of David and preserve His covenant with David that one “*of his sons*” would always sit upon the throne, thwarting Satan's efforts to break God's covenant.

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In Psalm 89:3-4, 34-36 God confirmed His Covenant with David and pledged the integrity of His Word as a guarantee to David that His Covenant would never be abrogated, would stand forever. Many other references can be found in God's Word that make it very clear that a physical descendant of David would continue to sit upon his throne, even in **the Millennial Kingdom** (Jeremiah 33:14-17; Ezekiel 37:24-25; Hosea 3:4-5).

God's statement about David's "**seed**" applies also to the Messiah, Jesus Christ, as the "**seed of David according to the flesh**" (Rom. 1:3) for the angel announced that Jesus would "**sit upon the throne of His father David**" (Luke 1:32). The lineages of Jesus presented in both Matthew and Luke carefully trace His ancestry back to David, identifying Jesus as a physical descendant of David in accordance with God's prophetic revelation (Matthew 1:1; Luke 3:31).

In Peter's sermon at Pentecost, preached under the direct inspiration of the Holy Spirit, he identified and presented Jesus, the promised Messiah and deliverer of the Jews, as fulfilling the prophecy of the One Who, in the lineage of David, would sit upon his throne (Acts 2:30-34). The Old Testament is full of Scriptures indicating that the Messiah, the son of David, will sit upon David's throne in **the Millennial Kingdom**. Expressions such as, "**THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS**" found in Jeremiah 23:5-6 and the well-known passage in Isaiah 9:6-7 (often quoted at Christmas) make it clear that Christ fulfills the promise of the "**seed of David**" sitting upon his throne "**forever.**"

In presenting His prophecies about the "**house of David,**" **the Kingdom and the Throne of David**, God often used words and phrases such as "**forever,**" "**an everlasting dominion that shall not pass away**" and "**his kingdom shall not be destroyed**" (2 Sam. 7:16; 1 Chron. 17:14; Jer. 23:6; Dan. 7:14) suggesting that, while the Millennial Kingdom is for "**a thousand years**" and not "**forever,**" there could be a picture of the eternal heaven presented in what God is telling us about David's throne.

Even as many questions about heaven abound in our minds it may well be that God has provided answers to these questions, answers which we have not yet discovered. When we take God at His Word, and we certainly must, then His statements about "**forever**" and "**everlasting**" surely seem to point beyond this physical world and may help us learn more about heaven. As we continue to pursue God's secrets which He has hidden in His Word it is likely that we may discover answers to many of our questions.