

CHAPTER 20B

GREATER MEMPHIS COMMUNITY BIBLE STUDY

Characteristics of the Millennium Isaiah 2:2-4

Now it will come about that In the last days The mountain of the house of the Lord Will be established as the chief of the mountains, And will be raised above the hills; And all the nations will stream to it. And many peoples will come and say, "Come, let's go up to the mountain of the Lord, To the house of the God of Jacob; So that He may teach us about His ways, And that we may walk in His paths." For the law will go out from Zion And the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And He will judge between the nations, And will mediate for many peoples; And they will beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning knives. Nation will not lift up a sword against nation, And never again will they learn war.

- **There will be a temple**
- **There will be nations who will worship in a temple**
- **The Lord will judge and rebuke**
- **There will be political peace**

Characteristics of the Millennium

Isaiah 11:6-9

And the wolf will dwell with the lamb, And the leopard will lie down with the young goat, And the calf and the young lion and the fattened steer will be together; And a little boy will lead them. Also the cow and the bear will graze, Their young will lie down together, And the lion will eat straw like the ox. The nursing child will play by the hole of the cobra, And the weaned child will put his hand on the viper's den. They will not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain, For the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord As the waters cover the sea.

- There will be animals who no longer prey on each other
- There will be children and child-rearing
- The earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord

Characteristics of the Millennium

Isaiah 65:20

No longer will there be in it an infant who lives only a few days, Or an old person who does not live out his days; For the youth will die at the age of a hundred, And the one who does not reach the age of a hundred Will be thought accursed. They will build houses and inhabit them; They will also plant vineyards and eat their fruit. They will not build and another inhabit, They will not plant and another eat; For as the lifetime of a tree, so will be the days of My people, And My chosen ones will fully enjoy the work of their hands. They will not labor in vain, Or give birth to children for disaster; For they are the descendants of those blessed by the Lord, And their descendants with them.

- There will be very slow aging and death
- There will be those with a sin nature
- There will be construction, agriculture, and work

Chapter 20

Verse 4- *Then I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark on their foreheads and on their hands; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.*

and they sat on them- Thrones are mentioned 47 times in the book, three of which are for Satan and the beast. Are they for the 24 elders representing the church (Revelation 4:4), the apostles (Matthew 19:28), or all the saints (1 Corinthians 6:2-3)?

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judgment was given to them- The saints will rule over the earth.

Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? 3 Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life? 1Corinthians 6:2-3

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reigned with Christ- The martyrs of the church age/tribulation are not the only ones who will rule with Christ. Otherwise, martyrs would be the only ones who will return with Christ in the millennial kingdom.

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beheaded- (*pelekizō*) Occurs only here in the New Testament. The binding of Satan in the previous passage is the fulfillment of the promise to those who have been faithful in the tribulation unto death (6:9–12).

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Verse 5- *The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection.*

rest of the dead- The faithful followers of God through the ages will experience the first resurrection. Those who die in their sins are resurrected at the end of the millennium:

First Resurrection

- Jesus' resurrection- the first fruits of what is to come for us (1 Cor. 15:20)
- Some believers rise from the grave at the time of Jesus' resurrection as a sign of the first fruits (Matthew 27:53)
- The resurrection of all believers at the Rapture (1 Thessalonians 4:13-17)
- The Two Witnesses resurrected in the Tribulation (Revelation 11:9–12)

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Verse 6- *Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and will reign with Him for a thousand years.*

1. "Blessed is the one who reads aloud the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear, and who keep what is written in it, for the time is near." (Rev. 1:3)

2. "And I heard a voice from heaven saying, 'Write this: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.' 'Blessed indeed,' says the Spirit, 'that they may rest from their labors, for their deeds follow them!'" (Rev. 14:13)

3. "Behold, I am coming like a thief! Blessed is the one who stays awake, keeping his garments on, that he may not go about naked and be seen exposed!" (Rev. 16:15)

4. "And the angel said to me, 'Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.' And he said to me, 'These are the true words of God.'" (Rev. 19:9)

5. "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." (Rev. 20:6)

6. "And behold, I am coming soon. Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book." (Rev. 22:7)

7. "Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life and that they may enter the city by the gates." (Rev. 22:14)

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Verse 6- *Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and will reign with Him for a thousand years.*

the second death- The first death is physical death. The second death is the lake of fire.

“Born twice (physical/spiritual), die once (physical).
Born once (physical), die twice (physical/spiritual).”

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Verse 7- *When the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison,*

be released from his prison- What effect will a thousand years have on Satan? None. Penitentiaries (penitent- “to feel remorse”) were built to reform those who have committed crimes. Hell only hardens those in it. God had an angel cast him into hell, and now he is only released by the decree of God.

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Verse 8- *and will come out to deceive the nations which are at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war; the number of them is like the sand of the seashore.*

deceive the nations- Our world today is filled with that which is false- false religion, false morality, false government. Even though Christ will have established perfect rule for a thousand years, people will once again be quickly deceived all over the earth.

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Verse 8- *and will come out to deceive the nations which are at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war; the number of them is like the sand of the seashore.*

Gog and Magog- Magog was the grandson of Noah (Gen. 10:2), and Gog was the descendant of Reuben (1 Chronicles 5:4). These men lived hundreds of years apart, and this is the only verse that mentions them together except for Ezekiel 38:2, which refers to “Gog of the land of Magog.” These are ancient enemies of God and are used as prophetic symbols of the forces of Satan opposed to God and His people in this final battle.

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Verse 9- *And they came up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and fire came down from heaven and devoured them.*

camp of the saints- *parembolēn para-* alongside, *ballo-* to throw- to throw alongside (the battle)- A military encampment. The capital of the kingdom will be in Jerusalem, and God's people will want to be alongside where He is.

the beloved city- This is the city of Jerusalem.

fire came down- "coming up" is often used of demonic activity (from the pit), and "coming down" is used for God's judgment.

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Verse 10- *And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.*

thrown into the lake of fire- The devil will now join his followers who were thrown into the lake of fire before the millennium (19:20).

forever and ever- This verse is in direct contradiction to the idea of *annihilationism*, the idea that unbelievers will be "extinguished" after death (e.g., Seventh Day Adventists, Jehovah's Witnesses).

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Verse 11- *Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled, and no place was found for them.*

Then I saw- We see this repeatedly in the book- (19:11, 17, 19, 20:1, 4, 11, 12, 21:1). It is the next vision in a series of visions.

great white throne- John uses the word “great” (*megas*) eighty times in Revelation. The color white denotes holiness and victory. This is a throne of judgment outside of the universe that is now gone. God will first renovate the earth and then destroy and recreate it because every part of it is affected by sin (fallen).

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Verse 12- *And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds.*

the dead- These are those who died in their sins (John 3:36) who are now resurrected to be judged (the second resurrection).

great and the small- People of renown and the unknown through the ages have one thing in common- they are reunited with their physical bodies to be judged for their unbelief.

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books were opened- Daniel saw this same vision (Dan. 7:10)- The first book contains the deeds of those at the judgment (Rev. 2:23; 18:6; 22:12; Ps. 28:4; 62:12; Rom. 2:6).

The second book (the book of life) contains the names of those who have trusted Jesus to save them. It is a citizenship roll of heaven.

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book of life- Mentioned six times in Revelation (3:5; 13:8; 17:8; 20:12, 15; 21:27). Instead of resting on the atoning work of Christ, they will face judgment on their own actions, which will condemn every one of them because perfection is the standard of heaven.

James 2:10- *For whoever keeps the whole Law, yet stumbles in one point, has become guilty of all.*

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Verse 13- *And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them; and they were judged, each one of them according to their deeds.*

gave up the dead- The remains of the physical bodies of those who died at sea are reunited with their soul resurrected from hell at the Great White Throne Judgment.

Death and Hades- The physical world no longer exists, so this is the end of death (a state of being) and the abode of the dead (a place) waiting for eternal judgment. They both are soon to be cast into the lake of fire.

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Verse 14- *Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire.*

Death and Hades- This reminds us of the beginning of the book when the fourth seal of the scroll was opened (6:8) and Death and Hell rode in on the fourth (pale) horse following the Antichrist, War, and Famine.

the lake of fire- The term “lake of fire” occurs six times, only in the book of Revelation (19:20; 20:10, 14 [2 times], 15; 21:8) and is also known as the “second death.”

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Verse 15- *And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.*

written in the book of life- Those whose names are in this book will not be thrown into the lake of fire. This shows the complete victory of Jesus over sin and evil at the end of time and the beginning of eternity. It is a final restatement of what John saw in verses 12 and 13.

Next week...

Chapter 21-
“The New Heaven, Earth, and the
New Jerusalem”