

## **CHAPTER 72 : THE MILLENNIUM, A RESTORATION OF THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION**

In Old Testament history, after the fall of Babylon, there was a Restoration of the Jews to their land, and the Jewish nation was re-born. It was a re-entrance into the Promised Land for the people of God. What's more, the gross idolatry of the Old Judah was removed in the New Judah, especially under Nehemiah's leadership. So too we have reason to hope God will give the world a Restoration of the Protestant Reformation, after its many years of "Babylonian Captivity".

In all likelihood the "millennium" will begin at the conclusion of the sixth millennium from the creation of the world, so as to occupy the seventh millennial "day" of world history. Since in prophetic time "one day [is] with the Lord as a thousand years", the millennium of Revelation would thus fall on the old earth's Sabbath "day".

During the millennium the nations shall become Protestant Christian (Revelation 11:15 and 20:4) and no longer deceived by the beast (Revelation 20:3). In this respect, the Protestant Reformation is a fore-taste and type of the much grander reformation that will accompany the millennium. In the millennium, "the kingdoms of this world" will more fully become "the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ."

Isaiah 49 presents a glorious picture of this coming Restoration:

"Listen, O isles, unto me; and hearken, ye people, from far; The LORD hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name...And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldst be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth...Thus saith the Lord GOD, Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people: and they shall bring thy sons in [their] arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon [their] shoulders. And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers: they shall bow down to thee with [their] face toward the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet; and thou shalt know that I [am] the LORD: for they shall not be ashamed that wait for me..."

So the nations of the earth during the millennial restoration will protect and defend Christ's Biblical church from her enemies. This means they will suppress the heresy, idolatry, and other wickedness that has afflicted the church in prior ages.

Meanwhile, in heaven the martyred saints will rule with Christ:

"And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and [I saw] the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received

[his] mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. (Revelation 20:4)

Jesus Christ's rule during the millennium will be a spiritual rule from heaven; He will not be physically present on earth. And the saints of Jesus Christ that have previously died will spiritually rule with Christ, they being in heaven with Christ.

But for all that, humanity on earth will return again to its wicked ways, probably within several generations, as a dog to its vomit. In all likelihood, the term "millennium" is used typologically (just as so many other terms in the prophecy of Revelation are symbolic and typological), to represent and point to its antitype, the new heaven and new earth, which will be the eighth millennial day- the eternal Sabbath day. So it is doubtful that the millennium will last a literal thousand years. Rather, men will probably behave as they so often have in the past. They will most likely behave even as the Israelites when they had entered into the Promised Land:

"And the people served the LORD all the days of Joshua, and all the days of the elders that outlived Joshua, who had seen all the great works of the LORD, that he did for Israel...And also all that generation were gathered unto their fathers: and there arose another generation after them, which knew not the LORD, nor yet the works which he had done for Israel. And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD..." (Joshua 24:7-11)

Too, the Jews of the Restoration within several generations had turned from serving the Lord in truth. As we read, "ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation" (Malachi 3:9).

Such a people will prove easy prey when at the end of the "millennium" Satan is released on earth to deceive:

"And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom [is] as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city..." (Revelation 20:7-9)

It would seem a vast mass of humanity will then have joined arms with Satan to seek to persecute Christ's church yet once again in history, just as the people of God in the Old Testament era were attacked by Antiochus Epiphanes following the Restoration.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church* (Logos Research Systems, Inc.: Oak Harbor, WA, 1997). (see electronic version at <http://www.ccel.org/s/schaff/history/About.htm> )

J. Parnell McCarter, *Sabbath Bible Survey Tests and Assignments* (PHSC: Grand Rapids, MI, 2003). (see electronic version at <http://www.puritans.net/curriculum/> )

J. Parnell McCarter, *Let My People Go* (PHSC: Grand Rapids, MI, 2003). (see electronic version at <http://www.puritans.net/curriculum/> )

The on-line resources of Historicism Research Foundation at <http://www.historicism.net/> also proved invaluable for my understanding of Biblical prophecy. Biblical prophecy concerning Christian church history, especially as revealed in the book of Revelation, serves as the foundation upon which all church histories should be based.