

The Coming Utopia

Wonderful World Tomorrow

Ever since the dawn of civilization, man has longed to live in a world where all his physical, mental and spiritual desires could be fulfilled! Your Creator has planned such a Utopia—and more important, He will soon establish that Utopia. Tomorrow's World is just around the corner—universal peace and prosperity, a world bubbling over with joy and happiness!

by Herman L. Hoeh

WHY SHOULD A UTOPIA BE IMPOSSIBLE? Why shouldn't we have a world at peace, filled with joy and prosperity, racial harmony and genuine love?

God has allowed a six-thousand-year period for mankind to rule himself apart from God if man so chooses. During this time, God has, in a sense, kept hands off the affairs of this world. Man has pursued the course that "seems right" to him.

But the new order—THE HAPPY WORLD TOMORROW—will soon be here. A thousand years of peace and prosperity are just around the corner.

In Micah, the fourth chapter, a graphic description is given us concerning the soon-coming Utopia.

Verse one shows an end to the present crisis. It portrays God's rulership established over the nations. Then what happens?

"And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain [government] of the Lord, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."

It is time you knew about the coming Utopia—a MILLENNIUM of abundant and happy living—free

from the fears of war, sickness and poverty.

What Do We Mean "Millennium"? Actually, the word "millennium" is derived from the Latin which simply means *a thousand years*. Instead of finding the word "millennium" in the Scriptures, you will read of the "thousand years." The *only* scriptures in all the Bible defining the numerical limits of this period of time are in Revelation 20:1-9.

Here is the *time setting* for the coming Utopia or millennium.

The Apostle John wrote that he saw an angel who "laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years. . . and set a seal upon him, that *he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled*" (Rev. 20:2-3).

During the millennium (the thousand years), the devil does not deceive the nations. This age we are now in couldn't be the millennium, because the devil *is still deceiving the nations*. Therefore the millennium must still be in the future.

Notice what else the Apostle John says about the thousand years. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and *shall reign with him a thousand years*" (Rev. 20:6).

So the millennium is a time when the saints reign with Christ. The saints help create the millennial Utopia. Who are the saints? Those who are qualifying now by obedi-

ence to the Law of God through faith in Christ.

Did you ever notice before that those *in the first resurrection* will reign with Christ a thousand years? (Rev. 20:4.) This means that the millennium can't begin until AFTER the first resurrection, because it is those *in the first resurrection* who do the ruling.

When Will the Millennium Occur? Now when does the first resurrection occur?

I Thess. 4:14-17 declares that the first resurrection occurs at the second coming of Christ. ". . . The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. . ."

This first resurrection occurs ". . . *at the last trump*: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed" (I Cor. 15:52).

Since the saints do not rise *until* the second coming of Christ, and since *they* rule with Christ during the millennium, then the thousand years must occur *after* the second coming of Christ, and NOT before. This is vitally important because there are some who teach that Jesus does not come until the end of the thousand years. But your Bible says Jesus comes *at the beginning* of the thousand years.

But what else occurs when the *last trump* sounds? In Revelation 11:15,

when the last or seventh trumpet blows, the dead are raised AND "the kingdoms of *this world* are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign forever and ever."

This is when that promised time of peace and prosperity begins! Christ is beginning His reign and the saints are already resurrected to rule with Christ.

But where shall the saints rule?

Where Will the Millennium Be Spent? The last phrase of I Thessalonians 4:17 tells us. After all the saints meet the Lord in the air, they shall "ever be with the Lord." Since the saints shall always be with Jesus Christ, then any scripture that tells us *where Christ will be*, will also explain *where* those resurrected saints *shall be* during the thousand years. Also a verse that says where the saints shall rule during the thousand years, explains the place where Christ must be ruling, too!

Now consider this. In order to reign during the millennium, there must be someone for the saints to reign *over*. Over whom does Christ give the saints power and authority to rule?

Notice Revelation 2:26-27. Jesus promises: "And he that overcometh . . . to him will I give power *over the nations*: and he shall **RULE** them with a rod of iron." So the saints will rule *over the nations*. And these nations will be ruled with a rod of iron.

In the last days of the kings or rulers of this present civilization, "shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people [not to human beings, rather to the sons of God], but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever" (Dan. 2:44).

Notice, that it is "in the days of these kings," not a thousand years later, that God sets up His kingdom under Christ—pictured by the stone that smote the image (Dan. 2:34, 35)—which "became a great mountain, and **FILLED THE WHOLE EARTH**." It doesn't fill heaven, *but it does fill the earth*.

To say that these nations are in heaven is absurd. Are there such

sinful nations in heaven that the saints have to rule them with an iron rod? Of course not. These are the nations *of this earth*.

Many scriptures tell us that Christ **WILL** rule on this earth. In Rev. 3:21, Jesus said: "To him that overcometh will I grant *to sit with me in my throne*, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." So the resurrected saints will sit with Christ *on His throne* while ruling the nations.

At the present moment Christ is sitting on His Father's throne in heaven (Rev. 3:21). He is **NOT** sitting on His own throne. But when Jesus leaves heaven (Acts 3:21) to come for the saints, they are promised a place with Him *on His throne*.

Where will Jesus' throne be?

The Throne of David Is not in Heaven! The throne of Jesus Christ could not be *in heaven* because the angel Gabriel said that "the Lord God shall give unto him *the throne of his father David*" (see Luke 1:30-33). So Jesus' throne will be *the throne of David*. David's throne is on this earth! (Jer. 33:17.) The Father's throne is in heaven. During the millennium, the saints shall sit with Christ on the throne of David in Jerusalem.

The Psalmist says: "Thou art my son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee *the heathen* for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with *a rod of iron*; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel" (Psalm 2:7-9).

Here the Bible says that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, will rule in virtually the same manner as the saints.

If all these scriptures are not proof enough that we shall reign with Christ *on this earth*, and not in heaven, during the millennium, then turn to Revelation 5:9. The proper translation of this verse, from the original Greek, is that Christ purchased with His blood "men of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation, and madest them a kingdom and priests to our God; and *they shall reign upon the earth*." (See the Revised Standard Version.)

How and When Jesus Returns to Earth. In Acts 1:9-11 the account of Jesus' departure over nineteen hundred years ago is given. "While they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men . . . said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, *shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven*."

How did Jesus leave? He ascended from the Mount of Olives and was received by the clouds of heaven. And He is going to return *in like manner*.

In Revelation 19 we read that, at the second coming of Christ, military contingents of all nations are gathered to battle against Jerusalem. This same time, the second coming of Christ, is described in Zechariah 14:1-3. It is in the Day of the Lord, when all nations are warring against Jerusalem.

"**THEN** shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations . . . *and his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives*" (Zech. 14:3, 4).

Notice it. Jesus is coming in the clouds of heaven (Rev. 1:7) and shall fight against the nations *and His feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives* which is *on this earth*. It does *not* say that Jesus will stand on the mount a thousand years later, *but in that day* as He returns to receive the throne of David and to rule the nations with a rod of iron.

He Remains on the earth. When Jesus returns to earth, the saints will be with Him—they will "ever be with the Lord." He comes in the clouds of this earth's atmosphere wherein they meet Him and then accompany Him *to this earth*. That is where the saints *shall be*.

Let's continue reading what Zechariah wrote. "And it shall be *in that day* [notice, it is still *the same general period of time*, not a thousand years later], that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem . . . in summer and in winter shall it be. And the Lord shall be king over **ALL THE EARTH** . . . all the land shall be turned as a plain . . . *and inhabited* . . . And men

shall dwell in it, and there shall be no more utter destruction; but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited" (Zechariah 14:8-11).

In the day (same general period) that Christ returns, not a thousand years later, the land shall be inhabited and *men shall live there*. And the Gentile nations, after their *entire armies* have been destroyed (Zech. 14:12-15), shall come to serve Jesus Christ. "And it shall come to pass, that *every one that is left* of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up *from year to year* to worship the King, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles" (Zech. 14:16).

The people *that shall be left* are going to worship the Lord year by year in Jerusalem, which is on this earth, not in heaven. The Lord shall be King over all *the earth* (Zech. 14:9). Verses 17 to 19 show Him punishing nations for disobedience. As they sit with Jesus on His throne, the saints are also going to judge and correct the nations.

None of these events can occur *before* the thousand years, and none can occur in heaven because there are no disobedient nations there.

And except for a brief period at the conclusion of the thousand years (Rev. 20:7-9), neither will disobedient nations be in the New Earth *after* the millennium. Therefore these events must happen *during the millennium and on this earth*. **The Earth Is Not to Be Desolate.** Some misinterpret Isaiah 24 in a feeble effort to contradict the Gospel and the plain statements of Scripture. The time setting of this chapter is just prior to the *beginning* of the millennium period. The first verse is often quoted as: "Behold, the Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down. . . ."

Just quoting this much, one is left with the impression that there are no inhabitants on the earth, that the millennium will be a period of complete desolation. But why not quote the whole verse? What does God mean by the earth being made empty? Did He mean that there are *no* inhabitants?

Not at all! Let's not stop at this verse, but continue reading this entire chapter.

What will God do? He "scattereth abroad *the inhabitants thereof*. And it shall be, as with *the people*, so with the priest, as with the servant, so with his master. . . . The *land* shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled . . . the haughty *people of the earth* do languish . . . *they that dwell therein are desolate*: therefore *the inhabitants of the earth* are burned, and **FEW MEN LEFT.**"

Read this *entire* twenty-fourth chapter of Isaiah. It shows the punishments to be meted out on this earth just prior to the *beginning* of the thousand years—the complete destruction of civilization and "*few men left.*"

Remember also what Zechariah said about *those who shall be left*. They shall go up to Jerusalem from year to year and worship the Eternal, who shall be King over all the earth. Isaiah says that those few who are left "shall lift up their voice, they shall sing for the majesty of the Lord [Isa. 24:14] . . . when the Lord of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem" (verse 23). Yes, Christ will reign on earth from Jerusalem, not heaven, and there will be inhabitants who shall *repopulate* the earth.

Again Jeremiah 4:23-31 is also lifted out of its historical context and misapplied to the thousand years. If you will study the book of

Jeremiah from the beginning, you will notice that these verses are NOT referring to the thousand years. The prophet warns Judah that Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon is coming "to make *thy land desolate*; and *thy cities* shall be laid waste, without an inhabitant" (verse 7). This is speaking of Judah, not the whole earth. "The *whole land shall be desolate*; yet will I not make a full end" (verse 27).

This chapter shows that there are Gentiles still on the earth who will *not* be allowed by God to make a full end of Judah, even though they desolate the *land* completely. Verse twenty-nine shows that not a man shall dwell in the cities. Why? Because there are no human beings on the earth? No! But because *whole cities shall flee* before the horsemen of the Gentiles.

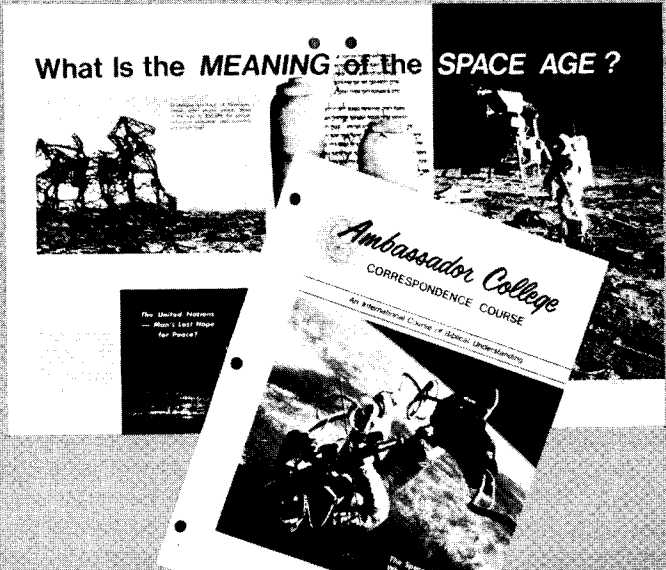
This prophecy is NOT referring to the millennium.

Together with these two misquoted texts, some turn to II Thessalonians 1:8 and 2:8.

The first of these verses is speaking of angels who will take vengeance on those that know not God and obey not the Gospel. It is *assumed* that this text says that *all people* will be destroyed, but it *doesn't* say that. It is *only* those who refuse to obey that will perish.

The other verse often mentioned

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(II Thess. 2:8) nowhere speaks of ALL THE WICKED. It mentions "THAT WICKED" whom Christ shall destroy, "even HIM, whose coming is after the working of Satan" (verse 9). So it is not all wicked people but *one specific individual* that is to be destroyed.

None of the preceding texts describes an earth without inhabitants for a thousand years.

What Will the Millennium Be Like?

Isaiah 11 tells of the millennium. The Gentiles are going to seek God (verse 10) and Israel and Judah are going to be gathered *the second time* from the heathen nations (verse 11). This could not be speaking of any "spiritual Israel." The last verses in this chapter speak of men crossing rivers and highways as they leave the Gentile nations and return the second time to the land of promise.

This is the time spoken of by Paul. "Blindness in part is happened to Israel, *until* the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: for this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins" (Romans 11:25-27).

Here is GOOD NEWS! Here is part of the Gospel message. Blindness is happened to Israel, *not forever*, but *until* the full number of Gentiles who are to be converted in this age comes into the Kingdom. Then Israel shall be forgiven and the vast majority of Gentiles shall seek God.

Returning to Isaiah 11, verse 4: Christ "shall smite the earth with the *rod* of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked." At this very time *when* He is punishing the wicked and "reproving with equity the meek of the earth"—at this very time, notice it—"the wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid... and a little child shall lead them... and the lion

shall eat straw like the ox. And the *sucking child* shall play on the hole of the asp, and the *weaned child* shall put his hand on the cockatrice' [adder'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).

This is a real Utopia. This can't be in heaven. There are no human beings in heaven. Children are not being suckled and weaned in heaven.

And this can't be in the New Earth because there will be no wicked persons there (Rev. 21:1-4, 8, 27). These events must occur *on this earth* during the millennium. It can't happen in heaven, nor in the New Earth, nor during this age before the millennium begins. Who is going to tame wild, carnivorous animals so they eat straw like the ox before the 1000 years? This prophecy is for the millennium. What a wonderful world! And each of us can have a part in preparing the way for this glorious age.

Satan to Be Bound. The Bible teaches that the millennium is the reign of the Kingdom of God ON THIS EARTH. The millennium is not the Kingdom; it is merely the first thousand years' reign of that Kingdom on this earth. Physical people will populate the earth during this new age.

Satan is taken from the people and bound LEST he should deceive the nations. If there were no nations left to deceive, he would not have to be *bound and shut up in a place of restraint* (Rev. 20:1-3).

When Satan and his demons are restrained from their work of deception, the earth shall at last have its millennial "sabbath of rest." The resurrected saints will judge the world with Christ and all nations shall finally have peace, because they will for the first time be following that law which "shall go forth out of Zion."

Will the Dead Be Resurrected During the Millennium? Some understand that the millennium will occur on this earth. But they teach that there will be resurrections during the entire period. Is this true?

They have on occasion claimed that Revelation 20:5 is not a part of the Bible. This verse says: "*but the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished.*"

This text belongs in the Bible. It is found in the overwhelming majority of Greek manuscripts. Serious Bible scholars do not even question its authenticity.

It is *after* the millennium (Rev. 20:11-15) that the rest of the dead are raised. If they were raised from their graves during the millennium, there would be no need of a time of resurrection after the thousand years.

Yes, a Utopia is coming—the wonderful World of Tomorrow is just around the corner. To find out more about this new age write for our FREE booklet, *The Wonderful World Tomorrow—What It Will Be Like*.

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