

## Will Christ Have a Physical Earthly Reign?

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### INTRODUCTORY MATTERS

Possibly one of the most popular doctrines in regards to eschatology (end time studies) is the doctrine that Christ will once again come to this earth and establish a physical earthly throne upon which He, with the saints, will reign for 1000 years.

There may be different “flavors” such as pre-millennial or post-millennial and so forth (in fact one article has suggested that there are as many as 20 different brands of premillennial thinking) but regardless of the variations all are agreed that Christ will reign upon a physical earthly throne.

An article “The Millennial Kingdom Reign of Jesus Christ, which can be found at [www.matthewmcgee.org](http://www.matthewmcgee.org), and is written by Matthew McGee presents the following common premillennial view.

After the rapture of the church, after the seven year tribulation (the pre as opposed to post millennial view, mph), and after the second coming, Jesus will reign in His Kingdom.

He cites Revelation 20:1-10 as his proof text stating that “One of the most concise and informative passages on the kingdom occurs in Revelation.”

He then proceeds to claim (base upon this as his foundational text) the following, that during that time animals become peaceful (Isa. 11:6-9), life spans increase (Isa. 65:20-25), there will be an end to wars (Mic. 4:3; Isa. 2:4), He will exercise judgment over the nations (Rev. 19:15), He (Christ, mph) will during that physical earthly reign restore the judges to Israel (Isa. 1:26; Mat. 19:28), the feast of the tabernacles will be observed by the Gentiles (Zech. 14:16-19), they will need to travel to Jerusalem in order to do so (Eze. 43:7), the temple and the law will be restored along with the sacrifices and the priesthood (Eze. 40-44), there will be “tremendous” geographical changes to Israel — an earthquake will split the mount of Olives in two (Zech. 14:4-5), and there will be “living waters” flowing out of Jerusalem from two directions (Zech. 13:1, 14:8; Eze. 47:1-7). He then warns against an allegorical interpretation of any of these passages.

The fallacies of the above and the misuse of the scriptures are too many to deal with in one singular lesson, however note what is said in an article entitled “The 1000 Year Reign” found on The Bible Research Library Topic page located at <http://members.aol.com/OpenBible/655.html>;

The thousand years appears nowhere in the sixty-six books, 1,189 chapters, 31,173 verses of the Bible except in this one passage where it occurs six times in six consecutive verses. It is not solid study to build an entire system of beliefs about the end of the world, and the status of the kingdom on such a highly symbolic passage. More especially when that interpretation conflicts with other plain passages of scripture.

In an article found at [www.preteristarchive.bravepages.com/preterism/dennis-todd\\_p\\_03.html](http://www.preteristarchive.bravepages.com/preterism/dennis-todd_p_03.html), entitled "There Is No Thousand Year Reign of Christ on Earth," the author, Todd D. Dennis cites two basis upon which this teaching (premillennialism) is derived.

1. The promises to the Jewish nation are unfulfilled and
2. The promises of an everlasting land of possession relate to the temporal land of Palestine.

There is also a third basis upon which this false doctrine is predicated. It is the belief or premise that Christ failed during His advent to establish the promised kingdom because of the rejection of the Jews. Gene Fadely writes;

Many people teach that Christ did not usher in His reign in the first century as He and the Apostles taught He would. They teach that, because of the rejection by the Jews, God became angry and He postponed His plans. Their teaching is that Christ set up the church as an afterthought until He can come back to set up his kingdom. (Fadely, 1)

Solomon wrote there is no new thing under the sun (Ecc. 1:9) and that is certainly true in this case. A man named Cerinthus who was a contemporary of John the Apostle was the first to espouse the idea that Jesus would return to establish an earthly throne. An interesting article entitled "History of the Millennium" recounts an interesting piece of history concerning this apostate and the apostle John whose writings purportedly support this doctrine.

Cerinthus lived in the days of the apostle John. We will now call your attention to the attitude of the beloved apostle toward this millennial teacher. Irenaeus, who was born about 120 AD and was acquainted with Polycarp, the disciple of John, (Eusebius's Eccl. Hist. V. 24) states that while John was at Ephesus, he entered into a bath to wash and found that Cerinthus was within, and refused to bath in the same bath house, but left the building, and exhorted those with him to do the same, saying, "Let us flee, lest the bath fall in, as long as Cerinthus, that enemy of the truth, is within." —Eusebius's Eccl. Hist. III. 28. Let this be a rebuke to modern Millennial advocates. They claim their doctrine is well founded in the Apocalypse of John. But John called the founder of their theory "that enemy of the truth." (Riggle)

Mr. Riggle continued to point out in his article that according to Gregory and Ruter's church history, Cerinthus taught his followers to obey the Mosaic, yet to regulate their lives by Christ's example and that after the resurrection Christ would reign upon this earth, with His faithful disciples, a thousand years, which would be spent in the highest sensual indulgences.

In 1645 Robert Baylie, a minister at Glasgow wrote a book entitled, *A Dissuasive From the Errours Of the Time: Wherein the Tenents of their principall Sect, especially of the Independents, are drawn together in one Map, for the most part, in word of their own Authours, and their maine principles are examined by the Touch-stone of the Holy Scriptures*. Chapter XI of this book is subtitled "The thousand years of Christ his (sic) visible Reign upon earth, is against Scripture" He writes;

Our brethren's mind in this point, as I conceive, they have Printed; is this, That in the year 1650, or at furthest, 1695, Christ in his human nature and present glory is to come from heaven unto Jerusalem where he (sic) was crucified; at that time the heaven and earth and all the works therein are to be burnt and purged by that fire of conflagration, mentioned by *Peter, 2 Epistle, Chapter 3*. AT the same time all the Martyrs, and many of the Saints, both of the Old and New Testament are to rise in their bodies; The *Jews* from all the places where now they are {225} scattered shall return to *Canaan* and build *Jerusalem*: in that City Christ is to reign for a full thousand years; from thence he (sic) is to go our in person to subdue with great bloodshed by his own hand all the disobedient Nations; when all are conquered, except some few lurking in corners, then the Church of *Jews* and *Gentiles* shall live without any disturbance from any enemy, either without or within; all Christians then shall live without sin, without the Word and Sacraments or any Ordinance: they shall pass these thousand years in great worldly delights, begetting many children, eating and drinking and enjoying all the lawful pleasures which all the creatures then redeemed from their ancient slavery can afford. In this Earthly happiness shall the Church continue till the end of the thousand years when the relics of the Turkish and Heathenish Nations shall besiege the ne Jerusalem, and Christ with fire from heaven shall destroy them: afterwards (sic) followeth the second resurrection of all the dead good and bad for the last judgement. Thus far the Independent Preach and Print: further *Cerinthus* himself went not, if you will except the Polygamy and sacrifices of the old *Israelites*: What truth may be in these things, let argument which are usually brought, either *pro* or *contra* declare. (Page numbers unknown)

We will present in the balance of this paper two arguments to show that Christ will not establish, because He will not need to, a physical earthly kingdom. The first will be the argument that Christ did not fail, but that He established His kingdom and therefore His reign. The second will be the argument that there will be nothing remained of the physical realm for Christ to establish a kingdom upon when He returns.

### CHRIST DID NOT FAIL

One of the first things that we need to understand is that the Kingdom promises did not have to do with an eternal earthly kingdom. On at least two different occasions the scriptures make it very clear to us that it was not Jesus' intent or purpose to establish an earthly kingdom.

The first time is after he fed the 5,000, (John 6:14-15 KJV) "Then those men, when they had seen the miracle that Jesus did, said, This is of a truth that prophet that should come into the world. {15} When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force, to make him

a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone." The question that the premillennialist must deal with in this case is this. If it were Jesus purpose to establish an earthly kingdom then why did He not take the excellent opportunity that was laid before Him at this time. Remember the argument is that He failed because of rejection. He was certainly not being rejected here. In fact he intentionally departed to avoid such an event.

The second is found when He is before Pilate, (John 18:33-36 KJV) "Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art thou the King of the Jews? {34} Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of me? {35} Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me: what hast thou done? {36} Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence." Here Jesus makes it perfectly clear to all posterity that His kingdom was not of this world. Had it been the intent of Christ to establish an earthly kingdom, it is ludicrous and even disrespectful to God to suppose and suggest that He would fail upon the basis of the whim of men.

In this passage He makes it quite clear that had His kingdom been of this world then His servants would have fought, but notice what He told Peter at His arrest, (John 18:10-11 KJV) "Then Simon Peter having a sword drew it, and smote the high priest's servant, and cut off his right ear. The servant's name was Malchus. {11} Then said Jesus unto Peter, Put up thy sword into the sheath: the cup which my Father hath given me, shall I not drink it?", (Mat 26:51-52 KJV) "And, behold, one of them which were with Jesus stretched out his hand, and drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high priest's, and smote off his ear. {52} Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword."

Christ makes it very clear that He had no intent of setting up an earthly throne/kingdom, yet when His cousin John began to "prepare the way" for Jesus, his preaching was a message of the kingdom of Heaven being at hand. (Mat 3:1-2 KJV) "In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, {2} And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Jesus message also was that the kingdom was at hand, (Mat 4:17 KJV) "From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.", (Mark 1:14-15 KJV) "Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, {15} And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel."

When Jesus sent the disciples out, the message that they were to preach was that the kingdom was at hand, (Mat 10:5-7 KJV) "These twelve Jesus sent forth, and commanded them, saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: {6} But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. {7} And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand."

During Jesus' ministry He called people to Him, along with His disciples and told them that they needed to take up their cross and follow him (Mark 8:34-35) and that some of them would not die

until they saw the kingdom come with power, (Mark 9:1 KJV) "And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power." (Mat 16:28 KJV) "Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom."

An interesting thing to notice about the passage in Matthew is that this was said immediately following His promise that He would build His church, that the gates of hell would not prevail against it and then told Peter that he would be given the keys to — note this now — the kingdom. It should be easy to see the connection at this point between the church and the kingdom.

Another thing that must be clear is that if the kingdom is not yet established and is yet some time in the distant future, there must be somewhere in the world people who are nearly two thousand years old. This is more than twice the age of Methuselah the oldest person in history. If there are not then either Jesus was a false prophet and a liar, or the kingdom already exists and has done so since the time of those disciples to whom He was speaking.

It is of course the latter that is true, there are no two thousand year old people today and Christ established His kingdom just exactly the way He intended and said He would. Note the following scriptures.

1. (Col 1:12-13 KJV) "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: {13} Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:"
2. (Col 4:11 KJV) "And Jesus, which is called Justus, who are of the circumcision. These only are my fellowworkers unto the kingdom of God, which have been a comfort unto me."
3. (1 Th 2:12 KJV) "That ye would walk worthy of God, who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory."
4. (Heb 12:28 KJV) "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear:"
5. (Rev 1:9 KJV) "I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ."

Every one of these passages refer to a kingdom that existed in the first Century that the authors and readers alike were part of. That same kingdom exists today and its citizen's are all those that have been added to the body of Christ by Him as a result of their obedience to His will, (Acts 2:47, Col 1:18, Eph 1:22-23, Mat. 7:21).

We are taught by the scriptures that Christians comprise a holy nation, (1 Pet 2:9 KJV) "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye

should show forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:"

Further study reveals to us that Christians are to be found in the church, (Acts 2:47 KJV) "Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."

It should be relatively easy to see then that if Christians are an holy nation and that Christians are in the church that the church and the nation (kingdom) are one and the same.

We also need to recognize that Christ NOW has all the powers and authority of a potentate and is not waiting for a kingdom to rule, but is already ruling in a kingdom.

1. (Mat 28:18 KJV) "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth."
2. (Col 1:18 KJV) "And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence."
3. (Eph 1:22-23 KJV) "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, {23} Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all."

Christ did not fail, but accomplish just exactly what was intended from before the foundation of the world, (1 Pet 1:18-20 KJV) "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; {19} But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: {20} Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you," He established His kingdom!

(Eph 1:3-12 KJV) "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: {4} According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: {5} Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, {6} To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. {7} In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; {8} Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; {9} Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: {10} That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: {11} In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: {12} That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ."

### **NOTHING WILL BE LEFT TO ESTABLISH THRONE UPON**

Christ will not establish an earthly throne upon His return because there will be nothing left in this physical realm at His return.

We are told that the saints will ascend to be with the Lord, (He will not even set foot upon the earth), (1 Th 4:13-18 KJV) "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. {14} For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. {15} For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. {16} For 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: {17} Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. {18} Wherefore comfort one another with these words." Actually a search of the scriptures will reveal that no where in the Bible does it ever indicate that Christ will set one foot on this earth again. The saints will have to rise in order to meet Him.

Upon His return, and I believe in conjunction with it, the physical realm will cataclysmically cease to exist. Note Peter's words in this regard. (2 Pet 3:3-14 KJV) "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, {4} And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation. {5} For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: {6} Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: {7} But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. {8} But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. {9} The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. {10} But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. {11} Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, {12} Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? {13} Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. {14} Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless."

Note the following that is learned from this passage;

1. God is outside of time and does not look at it as we do.
2. Our Lord is not slack concerning His promise of coming back (John 14:1-3), but is giving men every opportunity to repent and turn to Him.
3. His return will be unexpected.

4. At His return the heavens will pass away with a great noise.
5. The elements will melt with fervent heat.
6. The earth and her works will be burnt up, (a word that means to consume wholly).
7. The heavens shall be dissolved and the elements will melt.

Please note that the concept of the word dissolve involves a breaking down into component parts. This of course indicate that everything will be reduced to the basic elements of which they are made, then those elements themselves will melt. The word used for melt is one that means to completely burn up. These elements will burn with a fervent heat.

The dead saints will rise, the live saints will rise, then this physical realm will quite literally cease to exist. There is obviously not going to be anything upon which to establish a throne nor to reign over in this physical realm.

Christ will not establish an earthly throne, because He will not did to. He did not fail, but established His kingdom the first time just and He and His Father, our Father, intended.

It is a holy nation that consists of those who have committed their lives fully, wholly, and completely to Him in obedience to His will. It is a kingdom, which as has already been noted, Christians have been translated into. It is a kingdom that you can and should be part of if you are not.

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