



Churches Of God Outreach Ministries
People working together to proclaim the Gospel

"The Churches of God Outreach Ministries provides leadership, information, and biblical teaching in spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Matthew 28:19-20"

1-800-611-8080 / www.cgom.org
PO Box 54621, Tulsa, OK 74155-0621

The Millennium...

fact and fiction

What will our world be like in the coming 'millennium'?
by James McBride

Universal peace, at last. No disease. No famine. No poverty. No crime. That's what Christians expect under the sovereign reign on Earth of Jesus Christ. It is the kind of world every sane person desires

But how will that happy state come about? Will Jesus simply 'wave a magic wand'? Will, suddenly, beautiful glistening cities materialize, earth produce in super abundance, all military academies and all hospitals instantly slam shut their doors, all mankind be 'converted'? Many Christians hold this picture as their vision of the future. Reality may be different.

God's revelation, the Bible, gives us some clues. We can tease out some foundation principles:

- God's end purpose will remain unchanged: He will continue to prepare Family members for His Kingdom
- His calling will at that time be open to everyone
- access to God's Family will be on the same terms as now
- basic human nature will be the same as today
- the option to 'choose life' remains
- the present malign influence of the Adversary, Satan, will be restrained
- untamed human nature will be controlled via the legal process

World in Chaos

Human activity will in the last days all but destroy the planet—through war, disease, pollution and even religious persecution—and kill literally billions. Powerful natural seismic disasters will occur. The horrific events of that time will derange multitudes, leave many more unable to cope with non-existent infrastructure, unavailable power, scattered family and with other support systems non-existent. An anguished and dispirited remnant of mankind will creep from their 'holes in the rock' to face the terrible sight of an upside-down world. Into this chaos will step Jesus Christ.

Jesus, however, will not return as the meek and mild Saviour. At *'the last trumpet blast'* (1 Corinthians 15:52) he will enter our world accompanied by powerful spirit

beings and equipped with awesome spiritual authority and strength. The world's united nations will, from their military base in northern Israel and directed from the political power-base in Jerusalem, oppose Jesus with all their deadly weaponry.

To no avail. In that time *'...his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives'* and he will begin to reign as King over all existing earthly authority. Ahead is the awesome task of restoring Earth to its pristine best.

Time to Reconstruct

Into such a world, then, will Jesus arrive to begin Earth's reconstruction. He will establish his power-base in Jerusalem having overthrown the 'king of the North'. Bearing in mind the above principles, the following will require time to achieve or overcome. There will be no 'magic wand'.

- rotting corpses of animals and men will have to be buried to prevent disease
- cities destroyed by war and natural disaster will be painstakingly cleared and re-built to divine specifications
- there will be conflict during the early part of the millennium, and after the end
- hostile armies will for a time be maintained
- lost soil fertility needs time and hard work, with careful husbandry, to be restored
- water sources will become purified and safe, with proper sewerage
- there will, to eliminate disease, be a universal education program on the laws of health and hygiene
- many nations will resist the authority of Jesus to scrap their ancient belief systems; they will be replaced by the one true faith
- nations beyond the boundaries of the restored Israel will be evangelized by the risen 'saints'
- an inspired justice system, based on divine Law, will be universally introduced for all nations

Unchanging Purpose

Near the end of his life Jesus, in Matthew 25, explained an

The Millennium

important principle of his coming millennial rule. First, some background.

For the past six thousand years or so God has been preparing a people fit to live eternally in His company as part of the divine Family, and to ultimately colonize and inhabit the far reaches of the Universe. Until the return of Jesus they have lived as physical human beings but with the added 'ingredient' of the influence of the Spirit of God. At his return, all those with the Spirit—alive and dead—will join him as spirit members of that Family, no longer flesh and blood but resurrected to unending spirit life. Together with the angelic hosts they will join with Jesus in Earth's reconstruction.

Further, during the terrible times prior to his return many thousands from the nations of Israel will accept Jesus as the Messiah, together with *'an innumerable multitude'* from every other nation. These will enter the new Earth as physical human beings, but begotten by the divine Spirit, to live out a life of testing—just like Christians in this age.

Jesus Enthroned

Notice that the time setting of Matthew 25:31-46 is *'when the Son of man comes in his glory and all the angels with him then he shall be seated on his throne of glory'*. Elsewhere we are informed that he will be accompanied by the previously resurrected Christians from down the ages. The time, clearly, refers to the beginning of 'the millennium'. In this passage Jesus is setting out his plan for the ensuing thousand years—how everyone will be judged.

He describes *three* classes of people: the *'sheep'*, the *'goats'* - and *'my brothers'*. How everyone (the 'nations') treats those men and women converted during the thousand years is the standard of judgment. Elsewhere (*eg ch 12:48*) Jesus defines his 'brothers' as *'whosoever shall do the will of my Father'*.

Treat well those who will follow Christ and *'you are not far from the Kingdom of heaven'* and on the path to salvation. Treat them badly, showing a disdain for the things of God, and you will—unless repentant—be adversely judged accordingly. That's because Jesus Christ through his Spirit will dwell in each of his 'brethren. As now, how you will treat them is a sign of how you will treat the Saviour—and your Creator—himself.

To follow Jesus Christ and his principles of living—the Law of God—brings untold material and spiritual benefit, especially at that time when the world's culture is weighted in his direction, as in the coming millennium. The 'sheep' will voluntarily turn to Christ and have the divine Law *'written in their hearts'* through the indwelling holy Spirit.

(There will be no coercion, but all will have freedom to choose.)

Those, however, labeled as 'goats' will continue to reject his teachings and will experience the dire consequences. As the prophet Isaiah points out, during that time *'...the sinner will be struck by the curse at a hundred [years old]'* (Isaiah 65:20). Even under the benign and perfect government of Jesus Christ there will still be those, though surely a minority, who reject God's invitation and give in to human nature.

Perfect Justice

Note that under the millennial reign of King Jesus *'...from Zion the Law [Torah, instruction] of the Lord shall go forth and the Word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He shall arbitrate between the nations and decide disputes for many peoples'* (Isaiah 2:3). Human nature will continue to be active! There will, for all successive generations, be a perfect universal legal system based on the divine principles. The judicial authority of Jesus will, from Jerusalem, embrace the entire world. Clearly there will be a powerful need for it!

From the Matthew 25 passage we can see that some (even among God's people) will, at least through part of the thousand years, experience hunger, illness, imprisonment, poverty. How they are treated is a factor that will determine the fate of all Earth's inhabitants.

The Future is Bright

The Millennium is a time when the nations and most individuals will come to lay down their arms and begin to learn God's ways—in personal and international relationships, in agricultural practice, in healthy eating, in hygiene, in their families. The divine Law will be fairly and consistently implemented, and with due mercy.

The world will become super-productive in every sphere of human existence. Sound education will universally flourish. In every corner of the globe destructive religious practices will wither. Economically, 'boom and bust' will cease and there will be equal opportunity for all according to their natural abilities. The world will be healed and at rest.

Above all, the vast majority from every nation, and from every faith, will turn to Jesus Christ and become part of the divine Family. His 'church' will fill the Earth and very fraudulent faith will fade.

All that will take time. Just as the incoming tide covers the sands God's way will come to cover the entire Earth—every culture, every nation, every individual. Man's universal dream of health, peace and prosperity will become reality.

Published by:

The Churches of God Outreach Ministries

PO Box 54621

Tulsa, OK 74155-0621

©2005 The Churches of God Outreach Ministries

www.gom.org

This article may be freely copied and distributed as long as it is done in its entirety, including this notice, and is given away free, without any charge to the recipient.

Write us for a free catalog of other free articles we have to offer.