

Sunday April 26th 2015
From Here To Eternity
Part Twenty Four

1). Ge 1:26 ¶ *Then God said, "Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion....."*

a). God's stated purpose for creating Man is regal, it is for the purpose of rulership – and we, quite rightly, focus our attention on rulership within the 7th Day, the Millennial Kingdom, as this is scripture's focus and this is the purpose for our eternal salvation purchased by the blood of Christ – 1Pe 1:18 *knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things, like silver or gold, from your aimless conduct received by tradition from your fathers, 19 but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.*

b). But we should also keep in mind that rulership does not end with the conclusion of the Millennial Kingdom – rulership with respect to this present earth and the heavens associated with it does, but rulership within the setting of the billions of galaxies that comprise God's Universe will continue throughout the endless ages.

c). And so as we would come to the end of the Millennial Kingdom regality remains God's focus, but now it is regality within an eternal, universal context.

d). The purpose for eternal salvation prior to the Kingdom Age is to provide those who receive this salvation with the opportunity to participate in the regal activities of Christ during the Kingdom Age, and from a Christian perspective this would afford us the opportunity to become a joint heir with Christ - Ro 8:17 ¶ *and if children, then heirs--heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.*

e). And as we know our participation with Christ in His Millennial government of the earth is entirely dependent upon our faithful obedience during the present race of the faith - Php 2:12 ¶ *Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling;*

f). And as we also know, our faithful obedience is a matter of personal choice; the scriptures clearly teaching us that at Christ's Judgment Seat there

will be a separation of the faithful from the unfaithful, a separation of those who will rule and reign with Christ and those who won't, a separation of those who will have realized the reason for their eternal salvation from those who have rejected that reason – And there are many scriptures we can draw on that demonstrate this - Mt 7:22 *"Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' 23 "And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!"*

Mt 25:10 *"And while they went to buy, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went in with him to the wedding; and the door was shut. 11 "Afterward the other virgins came also, saying, 'Lord, Lord, open to us!' 12 "But he answered and said, 'Assuredly, I say to you, I do not know you.'*

g). Not only is there a separation, but also a chilling consequence for those Christians who have rejected the reason for their eternal salvation – Mt 25:29 *'For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. 30 'And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'*

h). And all of this of course is entirely Millennial in its scope – Millennial promises for those who are overcomers and Millennial consequences for those who have been overcome.

i). Now, I know that we know all of this and that we are familiar with it, but the reason for setting this out for us once again is so that we may fully understand the events that take place at the Great White Throne before the endless ages begin.

2). Re 20:11 ¶ *Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. 13 The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. 14 Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. 15 And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.*

a). At Christ's Judgment Seat we see both the faithful and the unfaithful, but no such distinction will exist at the Great White Throne – all those who appear there, from the whole of human history, will have rejected God's offer of eternal salvation. And in so doing they will have rejected the purpose for their creation, which is regal. Because of this they can have no part in the regality of God throughout the endless ages and will therefore suffer the consequences of their choice to reject the purpose for their creation.

b). And whereas the consequences for those who appear at Christ's Judgment Seat having rejected the reason for their eternal salvation are Millennial in their scope so those who appear at the Great White Throne will suffer the consequences for having rejected the reason for their creation which will be eternal in scope.

c). They can have no 'life' with respect to regality in the endless ages and nor can their works be of any value in delivering them from these consequences as it is only the finished work of Christ that can accomplish this – and this work they will have rejected.

3). Re 21:1 ¶ *Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. 2 Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. 3 And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people. God Himself will be with them and be their God. 4 "And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away." 5 Then He who sat on the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." And He said to me, "Write, for these words are true and faithful." 6 And He said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. I will give of the fountain of the water of life freely to him who thirsts.*

a). Revelation Chapter 21 takes us into the beginning of the endless ages and the first 6 verses set out for us the entirety of the matter, giving us a broad over view of the conditions that will exist not only in the beginning, but throughout the endless ages. And the first thing that we see with respect to this is a new heaven and a new earth which will replace the present heaven and present earth. The present heaven and the present earth have to be replaced as both of these realms have been impacted by the introduction of sin – Job 15:15b *And the heavens are not pure in His sight,* Ge 3:17b...."*Cursed is the ground for your sake;*

and although cleansed to allow proper rulership during the Kingdom they can have no place when God makes all things new – their association with Satan’s introduction of sin both prior to the restoration of the earth in Genesis Chapter 1 and following the restoration in Genesis Chapter 3 precludes them from this.

b). And then in order to rest on the new earth we see the New Jerusalem ‘coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride for her husband’.

c). We see that ‘the tabernacle of God is [now] with men’ and that former things, death, sorrow, pain, crying have passed away, God having made all things new. That which had existed throughout the 6000 years of Man’s Day and the 1000 years of the Lord’s Day no longer exists during the endless ages.

d). And this is confirmed in v6 where it is stated, ‘It is done’ [literally, ‘It has been done’] – a translation of one word in the Greek language, a verb in the perfect tense, showing that all has been accomplished and will continue in this completed state throughout the endless ages.

e). This is the same verb tense used of the Lord on the cross when He cried out - Joh 19:30 *So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!"* [literally, ‘It has been finished’]

This is Christ’s finished work on the cross, completed in time past and continuing to exist in this completed state from that point onwards.

f). And this is the same verb tense used with respect to eternal salvation in - Eph 2:8 *For by grace you have been saved through faith,*

g). In using the perfect tense in this way we are told that nothing can be added to or taken away from that which exists in this finished state.

h). All that God has set in motion that will take place during Man’s Day and the Lord’s Day, throughout the whole 7000 years will now have been brought to pass – God’s redemptive work seen throughout Man’s Day will now be past; the purpose for the only begotten Son’s 1000 year reign, bringing all in subjection to Him, will also now be past.

i). And the way things are described in the first 5 verses of Revelation Chapter 21 as the Day of God begins, immediately before the announcement is made that, ‘it has been done’, in v6 is the way in which these conditions will exist throughout the endless ages which are to follow.

j). What we see then in these verses will continue, literally forever and ever.

k). There now follows a parallel section of scripture, taking us from Revelation 21:9- 22:5, which drops back to give more detail on that which we

have just seen – but before we go there, let's just look at something with regards to the eternally saved.

4). Firstly, to refresh our memory and to provide us with context we will draw on some familiar verses - 1Co 3:15 *If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.*

Re 20:5 *But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished.*

Mt 12:32 *"Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man, it will be forgiven him; but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit, it will not be forgiven him, either in this age or in the age to come.*

Mt 22:13 *"Then the king said to the servants, 'Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'*

a). Eternal salvation is just that! All the eternally saved are saved with respect to eternity and specifically with respect to issues of regality during the endless ages – this has been given as a free gift and can never be taken away.

b). If we go back to Revelation 21:4 *"And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away."*

We can equate the death, sorrow, crying and pain referenced in this verse with the experience of the unfaithful Christian cast into the outer darkness where 'there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth'.

c). We know from 1 Corinthians 3:15 that the unfaithful Christian although suffering the loss of his soul for the Kingdom Age, 'will be saved', will experience salvation with respect to eternity.

d). And to add to this we know from Revelation 20:5 that the unfaithful Christian will 'not live again until the thousand years were finished'.

e). And so those that we see in Revelation 21:4 are the unfaithful, those who through their actions were not found worthy to have life with respect to rulership in the Millennial Kingdom – but here in this verse is a scene of restoration and reconciliation – the former things have passed away. Beyond the Millennial Kingdom issues of faithfulness and unfaithfulness cease to exist.

The separation that took place between these 2 groups will now be over and no distinction of this kind will continue into the endless ages.

f). It is here then, in the endless ages, that all of redeemed Man, not just a segment of it as in the Kingdom Age, will fulfill the purpose for their creation – to have dominion.

g). So then, the ‘scoffers’ of 2 Peter 3:3, the ‘apostates’ seen in Jude, those pictured through the foolish virgins will be reconciled to God and in this sense will now be no different to those who ruled and reigned with Christ during the Kingdom Age.

h). This of course is wonderful and incredible, righteous and just, but before we may begin to think that because of the end result missing out on the Kingdom may not be so bad, let’s just remember again the words used to describe the experience of the unfaithful – death, pain, sorrow, crying – an experience that will continue night and day for the full 1000 years. It is not until the full 1000 years are completed that the unfaithful will ‘live again’ and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.

i). It is not just for effect that we are told not to neglect ‘so great salvation’.

j). Now, although we know that those found to be unfaithful do not receive the salvation of their souls with respect to the Millennial Kingdom we also know that in the endless ages there is no more death because there is no more sin. This being the case it is a self-evident truth that those who had previously been unfaithful at this future time can no longer possess a sin nature – this would also be one of the ‘former things’ that have passed away.

k). However, before we jump to conclusions about when and how their sin nature is dealt with, let’s just stick to what the scripture shows us – and it shows us that at the beginning of the endless ages those who previously were seen as unfaithful are now completely apart from sin – and that of itself is where we need to leave it.

5). Having set out for us the conditions that will exist during the endless ages, including the reconciliation of those who had previously been unfaithful, Revelation 21:7-8 then take us back to the Millennial Kingdom, focusing on the one who will overcome - Re 21:7 *"He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. 8 "But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."*

a). Why put these 2 verses in here concerning participation in the Kingdom in the midst of information about the endless ages? Well, simply I think to draw our attention back to that which needs to be uppermost in our minds, being found worthy at Christ's Judgment Seat that we might 'inherit all things' by becoming God's son.

b). And to provide us once again with the warning of what awaits those Christians whose practices are categorized in v8 – that they 'shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death'.

c). The contrast presented here is an obvious one – receiving an inheritance as a joint heir with Christ, being adopted as a firstborn son of God or a part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone'.

d). And again I think to draw attention to that which must be experienced by the unfaithful before the reconciliation that takes place at the beginning of the endless ages.

e). Don't miss the contrast and don't miss the Kingdom.

6). As we continue in Revelation Chapter 21 we now come to the parallel section of scripture to that which we saw in v1-6 - Re 21:9 ¶ *Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls filled with the seven last plagues came to me and talked with me, saying, "Come, I will show you the bride, the Lamb's wife." 10 And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, 11 having the glory of God. Her light was like a most precious stone, like a jasper stone, clear as crystal. 12 Also she had a great and high wall with twelve gates, and twelve angels at the gates, and names written on them, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: 13 three gates on the east, three gates on the north, three gates on the south, and three gates on the west. 14 Now the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. 15 And he who talked with me had a gold reed to measure the city, its gates, and its wall. 16 The city is laid out as a square; its length is as great as its breadth. And he measured the city with the reed: twelve thousand furlongs. Its length, breadth, and height are equal. 17 Then he measured its wall: one hundred and forty-four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of an angel.*

a). At the beginning of Chapter 21 the Apostle John sees the New Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God as a bride prepared for her

husband. Here in v9 – 10 we see an angel, one of the angels having the 7 bowls, carrying John ‘away in the Spirit’ to ‘a great and high mountain’, symbolism that can only point to the great and high Kingdom of God that will exist in the endless ages. And once there John again sees the New Jerusalem, ‘the great city, the holy Jerusalem descending out of heaven from God’, but on this occasion we are given a wealth of intriguing description for this incredible city.

b). And I think the association of the city with the Bride comes from the fact that it will be from this city that the Bride, as Christ’s Wife, will reign with Him during the Kingdom Age.

c). We see that the city has ‘the glory of God’, again an allusion to the regal nature of the city and that the light of the city is like a most precious stone, a jasper stone, clear as crystal.

d). We see that the city has a great and high wall all the way around it and in the wall are 12 gates – 12 will immediately draw our attention to government, and it will of course be from this city that God will administer His government of the universe – through these gates then God’s universal rule will go forth.

e). On each of the gates is the name of a tribe of Israel and an angel is assigned to each gate – and the gates are equally distributed in each of the 4 walls facing east, north, south and west.

f). We also see in v14 that the wall has 12 foundations and on these foundations are the names of the 12 apostles of the Lamb – again 12 gives us the number of government, and universal government is the foundation for the city’s purpose.

g). And as we read this we might be reminded of that which we saw in the Book of Ephesians concerning those who will occupy this city during the Millennial Kingdom - Eph 2:19 *Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, 20 having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, 21 in whom the whole building, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, 22 in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.*

Here is the Bride of Christ.

h). If we now go back to Revelation 21:15 *And he who talked with me had a gold reed to measure the city, its gates, and its wall. 16 The city is laid out as a square; its length is as great as its breadth. And he measured the city with the reed: twelve thousand furlongs. Its length, breadth, and height are equal.*

Here we find the angel with 'a gold reed' with which he measures the city and what this recorded measurement shows is truly remarkable.

i). Firstly we see that the city's length, breadth and height are all equal and the measurement for each is said to be 12000 furlongs, which would be close to 1400 miles.

j). So the New Jerusalem, the same New Jerusalem from which the faithful will rule with Christ during the Millennial Kingdom, is 1400 miles long, 1400 miles wide and 1400 miles high – this is enormous.

k). And the size of the New Jerusalem may give us some indication that the new earth is going to have to be very much larger than the present earth in order to accommodate this great city and provide the necessary space for those who are going to live on it during the endless ages.

l). And as we marvel at the size of the New Jerusalem, let's remember that God the Father will dwell in this city, along with all those who will administer His universal Kingdom with Him – not just Christ and those who made up the Bride, but also the host of angels who will work on their behalf as well as the 4 living creatures and the cherubim etc.

7). We will however continue to look at the details of the New Jerusalem and what we might also know of the endless ages next time – if the Lord is willing.