



LESSON 3: YOUR FIRST THOUSAND YEARS WITH JESUS

WHEN HE COMES

Suppose you'd been living a thousand years. That means you would have been born a couple hundred years before the Magna Carta was written, four hundred years before the printing press was invented at about the time Leif Eriksson reached America. Think of all the history you would experience in a thousand years! Everything from the sailing of Columbus to men exploring space!

Imagine the people who would be your contemporaries. Ghengis Khan, Marco Polo, Leonardo de Vinci, Beethoven, George Washington, Adolph Hitler, Martin Luther King, Mikhail Gorbachev and on and on! What do you suppose you'd pick as the most significant events during a lifetime that long? The establishment of the Mongol dynasty, the tearing down of the Berlin Wall or the discovery of a polio vaccine?

It's hard to imagine living a thousand years. Yet the Bible talks about a thousand years as the mere beginning of eternity. In fact, it devotes a whole chapter, Revelation 20, to describing the first thousand years of eternity.

THE BEGINNING OF THE 1000 YEARS

What event marks the beginning of the thousand years? 1 Thessalonians 4:16 (first part)

Don't you like those words, "The Lord Himself will descend"? The visible personal presence of Jesus marks the beginning of eternity.

In a previous Bible lesson, you learned about several events that take place at Christ's second coming:

- a) The righteous dead are resurrected. 1 Thessalonians 4:16, last phrase.
- b) The living righteous are caught up in the air and go to heaven with Jesus. 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17; John 14:3.
- c) The bodies of all the righteous are changed. Philippians 3:20-21.
- d) The living wicked are killed by the power of His coming. 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9; Revelation 6:15-17

There is one more event which you haven't studied before in these lessons.

What is it? Revelation 20:1-3

Satan is bound. What does that mean? If the righteous are all in heaven with Christ and the wicked are all dead, what is there for Satan to do? There is nobody to tempt, the earth is desolate and he's imprisoned in solitude. He's bound by circumstances.

DURING THE 1,000 YEARS

What will the earth be like during the 1,000 years? Jeremiah 4:23

Revelation 20:3 describes the desolation of the earth as a "bottomless pit" or "abyss."

Where will the wicked be? Revelation 20:5 (first part) and Jeremiah 25:33

What will Satan be doing? Revelation 20:2-3

What will you, and all the righteous, be doing? Revelation 20:4-6

You'll be in partnership with Christ, reigning and judging with Him. But what does it mean to be judging?

Hasn't everybody's case already been decided and the reward of heaven given to the righteous and the reward of death given to the wicked?

Even in today's courts there are two kinds of judging; judging to determine guilt or innocence, and judging to give out the sentence. Because only God can read hearts, He decides (judges) before His second coming, who gets eternal life and who gets eternal death. But He lets you join Him in looking over the books. This will be your opportunity to see that He has made no mistakes. He has been fair.

What will you learn about God? 2 Peter 3:9

What else will you learn about Him? Psalm 89:14

As you live and reign with Christ for the first thousand years of eternity, you'll be able to study the leading of God throughout history as He worked to save people. What will be the conclusion you and all the righteous will reach concerning God's dealings with people? Revelation 15:3

THE ENDING OF THE 1,000 YEARS

What events mark the close of your first thousand years with Christ?

1. Revelation 20:5

2. Revelation 20:3,7

3. Revelation 20:8

4. Revelation 21:2

5. Revelation 20:8-9

6. Revelation 20:9-10,14-15

7. Revelation 21:1

After your first thousand years with Jesus, there stretches an eternity with Him! What will you do all that time? The next lesson uncovers Bible clues on what heaven will be like.

THE ONE THOUSAND YEARS OF REVELATION 20

Beginning Events

- Christ comes
- Righteous dead resurrected
- Living righteous taken to heaven
- Bodies of righteous changed
- Living wicked killed
- Satan bound

Events During the 1000 Years

- Earth desolate - bottomless pit
- Wicked all dead
- Satan confined to earth
- Saints reigning and judging with God

Ending Events

- Wicked resurrected
- Satan loosed
- Satan deceived nations
- Holy City descends
- Wicked surround city
- Wicked destroyed
- New Earth

ASK YOURSELF

Am I looking forward to spending eternity with Jesus? What is one of the first things I want to say to Him? Who are the other people I hope to see there?
