

**09 ET – From Christ To Eternity – the final leg of the journey! [SLIDE 1]**

If you have just joined us, there are some truly fascinating things that the Bible tells us about the period of time from the end from this age - the church age - [SLIDE 2] through to the consummation of all things in a coming time we refer to as eternity where there will be a new world.

**In previous weeks**, we have spoken of major events in this period of time. [SLIDE 3]

- **the rapture of the church**
- **the time of tribulation upon the earth**
- **the second coming of Christ**
- **and last week, the millennium**

Today we conclude this study by looking at the **closing events of the millennial kingdom** and, gleaning as best we can, something of what lies before us in ETERNITY.

**Basically, there are [three things](#) we need to consider today:**

1. The somewhat baffling concept that Satan will be released for a short time at the end of the millennium period
2. The last three ‘judgements’ which come after the millennium
3. Entry into the eternal state - or eternity

**[There is no doubt that the coming millennial kingdom will be incredible.](#)** [SLIDE 4]

This will be a time of unparalleled **peace and justice and righteousness and wonder** as Christ rules as King over all the earth from Jerusalem and we see **nature working in harmony and the nations living at peace.**

**So, it comes as something of a surprise** that, right at the end of this incredible time, and before the start of the eternal state, **a brief rebellion will break out led by Satan himself.** [SLIDE 5]

**READ: Rev 20:7-9**

Having been released from his prison, somehow **Satan is able once again to deceive a huge number of people** on earth at that time into rising up in rebellion against the Lord Jesus. **Undoubtedly the people involved are unsaved people** for, though they will have been born in the millennial period and outwardly will have participated in Messiah's Kingdom, their preparedness to turn their back on the Lord makes it clear they had never come to personal saving faith in Jesus.

- **Do you ever wonder why God does things like this?**
- **Why release Satan when it is so much a part of his nature to oppose God and to stir up rebellion in man?**

Well, we are not told why God allowed Satan to be released, but **notice two things**:

## **1. GOD DOESN'T DO THINGS THE WAY WE THINK HE SHOULD!**

**There is always a purpose somehow attached to God's glory and we do not fully understand the wisdom and ways of God!**

## **2. PERHAPS GOD WILL USE THIS TIME TO TEACH A FINAL, GREAT OBJECT LESSON CONCERNING THE DEPRAVITY OF MAN.**

**Would not the outbreak of rebellion in the midst of a righteous reign demonstrate that man's real problem in the millennial Kingdom, AS ALSO NOW, is really his sinful, unregenerate heart, not his environment or his circumstances?**

- The rebellious ones in Messiah's kingdom at that time will not be able to claim **lack of knowledge, injustice, war, poverty, oppression or any other adverse circumstance as a reason to rebel.**
- **The problem then, as now, lies in the sinful heart.**

This incredibly tragic event, though short lived and completely unsuccessful, underscores a basic truth in the nature of fallen mankind:

**when given the opportunity to rebel against the Lord, sinful man will do it every time.**

Of course, the rebellion is futile and is quickly crushed. And, as the sounds of rebellion go quiet, the penultimate phase before eternity begins - **three last judgements in the story of salvation.**

1. **The first judgement at this time is that of SATAN AND THE FALLEN ANGELS. [SLIDE 6]**

**READ: Rev 20:10**

Satan's fate has been a long time coming. Though defeated in his plans and purposes and humiliated at the Cross, the out-working of this judgement has come in several stages.

- **Halfway through the tribulation**, he will be cast out of heaven and confined to the earth (Rev 12:7-12).
- **Then, at the beginning of the millennial kingdom**, Satan will be bound and cast into the abyss.

- **At the end of the millennial period**, he will be released for a short period of time
- **And lastly, he will imprisoned forever in the lake of fire and brimstone** where the beast and false prophet are. Here his judgment will be final, eternal and with torment that will never end.

**As to the FALLEN ANGELS or DEMONS**, Peter writes, **[2 Pet 2:4]** “...*God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment..*”, and Jude teaches that **[Jude 1:6]** “... *the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day...*” and Paul asks the believers in Corinth, **[1 Cor 6:3]** “*Do you not know that we shall judge angels? ...*”

**2. The second judgement at the end of the millennium will be that of THE PRESENT HEAVENS AND EARTH. [SLIDE 7]**

Jesus anticipated this event, saying, **[Mat 24:35]** *"Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will by no means pass away."*

Peter writes, **[2 Pet 3:10]** *"...the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up."*

And in the revelation, John adds, **[Rev 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."*

Some would say this cleansing by fire must take place because there are remaining elements of the curse placed on creation along with the presence of sin in the universe.

Once the present heavens and Earth are destroyed, God will create a NEW HEAVEN AND A NEW EARTH. (Rev 21:1)

**3. The third judgement at the end of the millennium will be that of THE UNSAVED DEAD. [SLIDE 8]**

This is not a popular concept for many in our world today. Many believe that beyond this life they will be answerable to nobody.

With this idea in mind, [Lou Nicholes from the Word of Life Fellowship in NY](#) writes:

I once heard of an agnostic farmer who wrote to the editor of his local newspaper, who was a Christian. He said; "In defiance of your God I ploughed my fields this year on Sunday, I disked and fertilized them on Sunday, I planted them on a Sunday, I cultivated them on Sunday, and I reaped them on Sunday. This October I had the biggest crop I have ever had. How do you explain that?"

**The editor replied: “God does not always settle his accounts in October.”**

**There is wisdom in that reply... for the Scriptures reveal that all people, believers and unbelievers, are accountable to God for their actions and words.**

We have already considered the time when **believers will come to be evaluated according to what they've done since they have received Christ at the judgement seat of Christ.**

But the **unsaved dead of all generations have a time of judgement standing before them at the close of the millennial period that will be very different indeed.** This last judgement is commonly referred to as the **GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGEMENT.**

**READ: Rev 20:11-15**

The clear teaching of Scripture is that anyone whose name is not written in the Book of Life – who had never been redeemed by the blood of

Christ (all unsaved people) from every age of man - will at this time be resurrected and stand before Christ to be **judged according to their works, NOT as to salvation but as to the sentence of judgement!**

**READ: John 5:22, 26-29**

Jesus Himself gives this resurrection another name – the **resurrection of condemnation** – and the end of the judgement is everlasting punishment.

**This is the time when all the terrible crimes that horrify us will be accounted for**

- Political murderers like **Hitler, Stalin, Pol Pot, Idi Amin**
- and other killers like **Ted Bundy and Charles Manson** will all have to face the judge whose judgement is JUST AND SURE!.

Because we struggle to judge all things rightly, God tells us in His word:

**[Rom 12:19]** *Beloved, do not avenge yourselves, but rather give place to wrath; for it is written, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay," says the Lord.*

And since each one is judged individually, according to their own deeds, **it is evident there will be degrees of punishment (Matt 11:22-24)**, just as for the Christian there are differences of reward. **BUT, Christ will be the just judge of all! (John 5:22).**

**At this point we must think very soberly about our lives for Jesus warned that HELL is a place to be avoided at all costs (Matt 5:22, 29-30). This will be a place of separation from Jesus forever and a place of terrible torment. I sincerely pray none who hear this message will take the warnings of Scripture lightly for our eternal destiny is before us!**

**AND NOW, with all these things dealt with and judgement are complete in all realms, the Bible tells of the **ETERNAL STATE**. [SLIDE 9]**

**READ: Rev 21:1-5**

... then a reflection of **God's Grace** in His warning, for again we are reading these warnings on the EARTHWARD side of ETERNITY...

**READ: Rev 21:6-8**

Then a clearer description of the New Jerusalem...

**READ: Rev 21:9b – 11a**

**[SLIDE 10] Some believe this CITY will be suspended above the earth during the Millennial period and then it will descend to the NEW EARTH as we enter the eternal state.**

What we are then told is so amazing, I want to pick up on some thoughts here from **Paul Benware** in his book **"Understanding End Times Prophecy"**. In his final chapter on the Eternal State, he writes:

**"There are some things that the mind of man finds difficult, if not impossible, to fully comprehend.**

We are, for example, given numbers and figures on a variety of subjects and often find it hard to really grasp what is being communicated to us. We are told that the nearest star is 4.3 light years away (a light year being about 5,880,000,000,000 miles); a computer chip the size of a thumbnail can contain 3 to 4 million words; the human mind can store an estimated 100 trillion bits of information; and the human eye has 130 million light sensitive rods and cones that transmit 1 billion electrical impulses to the brain every second. This kind of information is disclosed to us, but understanding these facts is difficult for most of us because of the sheer magnitude of the numbers involved.

Eternity is something like this. We can speak of timelessness but find it hard to identify with the idea because that has not been our experience. We can discuss never ending existence, but all we really know are beginnings and endings.

**[SLIDE 11] The idea of eternity is simply beyond our full comprehension. So it is with a certain sense of inadequacy that we discuss the forever fate of mankind.”**

While we don't know exactly how it all fits together, the **[SLIDE 12] NEW JERUSALEM** will be a place of exquisite beauty and glory where fellowship with God is unending.

**READ: Rev 21:11 – 22:20 (selected vv)**

**[SLIDE 13] (Rev 22:20) He who testifies to these things says, "Surely I am coming quickly." Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!**

I want to close this morning with an expression of deep Worship to our GREAT GOD as we ponder His glory. The scene on the VIDEO we are about to see is in the market place of life, just one month ago. As you observe, I encourage you to respond together in the appropriate way!

HALLEUJAH CHORUS:

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SXh7JR9oKVE&feature=player\\_embedded](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SXh7JR9oKVE&feature=player_embedded)