

God's reign and kingdom existed prior to the cross of Christ. Before Jesus was betrayed He spoke how "all things have been delivered to Me by My Father" Matthew 11:27. This certainly included the reign and kingdom of God, for when the Lord rose from the tomb, He said "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth" Matthew 28:18. If we believe the Lord, then we must believe that He has had all authority delivered to Him by His Father; a reign that is not from the literal city of Jerusalem, but a reign that extends through the heavens and the earth. The fact that Christ took the reign at His resurrection is evident in other places as well, like when He said to His apostles, "there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom" Matthew 16:28, Mark 9:1. A crucial text is in Luke 17:20-21, when Jesus is asked when the Kingdom of God would come (isn't that exactly our question too?). The Lord's answer is that the Kingdom is not something to be seen with eyes, but it is spiritual: "the kingdom of God is within you." It is evident that the New Testament church understood the reign of Christ as something that has already happened, such as in Colossians 1:13, when in the past tense, Paul states that the Christians have already been "conveyed into the kingdom of the Son." And consider how John speaks to his brethren as "companions" in the "kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ" Revelation 1:9. And when Paul calls Jesus "the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords" 1 Timothy 6:16.

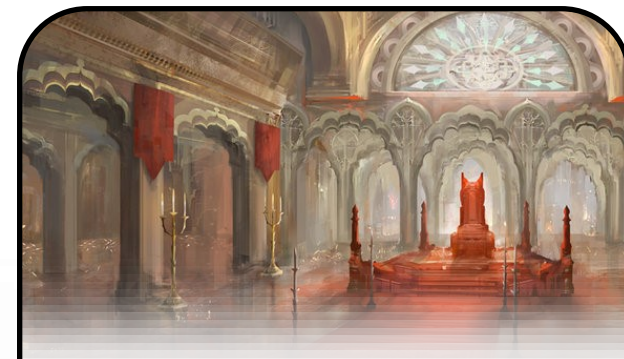
Jesus is King now; He rules now. This is a great message of God's word, that is lost in the flood of false teaching about a short future reign of Jesus. But when will His reign conclude? Well, the reign of God has never ended and will never end; however, the scriptures do speak of the Lord giving the kingdom back to the Father at a specific time. In 1 Corinthians 15, Paul speaks in detail of the

final day, the day of resurrection. In verses 24-28, He explains that, on that day, Christ will deliver the kingdom to the Father. It is also noted that God the Father is the exception to all things that are made subject to Christ during His reign. So the biblical timeline is this: Christ arose from the dead with all things delivered to Him by His Father, He then had all authority in heaven and on earth, and, as He is Spirit, so His kingdom is a spiritual one, and not to be likened to the weaknesses of a physical reign. He remains in that position still today, as the resurrection of the dead is still a promise in the future. But when the resurrection occurs, He will deliver God's kingdom back to the Father. This timeline is estranged from the "end times" theology today, which teaches that, at the rapture (see our tract on the Rapture), the righteous will be resurrected and be with the Lord in the heavens; then, after seven-years (see our tract on the Seven-Year Tribulation), Jesus will return and begin His reign for 1,000-years in an earthly kingdom. But how can this be accurate if the scriptures plainly teach that at the resurrection, Christ gives the kingdom back to God? So, one is telling us that Christ reigns in a spiritual kingdom from His resurrection to the Day of Judgment, while another is telling us Christ begins to reign in an earthly kingdom after the resurrection. The two could not be more contradictory. We must rest our hope in the Word of God and have faith in His will, not the fantasies of men.

Friend, I thought you'd benefit from this. Contact me if you have any questions.

Name: _____

Phone: _____



The 1,000 Year Reign of Christ

What details does the Bible give concerning the reign of Christ?

This is the final tract addressing the “end times” doctrine, if you missed any of the previous ones, please ask for a copy. So far, we have assessed each point of the doctrine against the word of God and have found the following views to be lacking in consistency with what the Bible teaches: (1) Signs of the End. (2) Rapture. (3) and the Seven-Year Tribulation. Now we will examine the next era of the “end times” timeline, the 1,000-year reign of Christ on the earth, reigning from the physical location of Jerusalem.

The concept of the 1,000-year reign stems from a statement in Revelation 20:4, where it speaks of those who died faithful to the Lord during the great tribulation (the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70), and it is said that “they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.” A few things are troubling about accepting the “end times” theology based on this scripture. For one thing, this scripture does not say, nor suggest, that the reign of Christ would be from the earth. Rather, the context of these words suggests that this is a heavenly reign, in that these faithful are already dead, and the Lord Himself ascended into heaven in Acts 1. So then, if all parties involved have already left this earth for thrones beyond the imaginations of this world’s kings, then it would be much safer to assume that this is a spiritual reign. Another concern is the direct use of 1,000-years as a literal period of time. Those who take the 1,000 years to be literal do not consistently use all the numbers in the book of Revelation literally. It seems to be common practice to make the numbers in the book either literal or figurative depending on what is the best fit for one’s particular beliefs. It is not within man’s power to decide their own interpretation of what the Creator has communicated to the creation. What God has said, is what will be, and we must honor His will. The reason we cannot accept a literal 1,000-years is because it is not al-

lowable by the very words of the book of Revelation. The book began with an explanation that this is a revelation of Jesus that had been “signified” to John. This word means to communicate through signs. There are a few numbers that God uses in this book that are used elsewhere in the scriptures and their meanings are relatively simple with a good understanding of the rest of the bible. God uses numbers like 7, multiples of 10, and multiples of 12. Seven is used throughout God’s word as a number whereby God accomplishes a specific purpose. Multiples of 10 are used in the Bible to identify the completion of any given matter; the higher the multiplication, the more God desires to show the completeness of a matter. Twelve is both the Old and New Testaments number for the people of God.

Now, for a moment, let’s imagine that the 1,000 years is literal, what do we have then? Well, according to the text, we still don’t have a 1,000-year reign of Christ! The text specifically said, “they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years,” and “they shall be priest of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.” The text does not even address the length of Christ’s reign, it only addresses how long these martyrs will reign with Christ. Even in the old days of sons beginning to reign with their father, the length of the son reigning with their father does not indicate how long their father had reigned. So, again, if one insists on taking the 1,000-year reign literally, they could only conclude that the martyrs reigned for 1,000-years, and not Christ. It is also important to note that there is no mention of Christ having a physical reign, nor that it would be in the physical Jerusalem, nor that it would take place in our future. All of this must be imagined in order to place our faith in today’s “end times” theology.

Coming back to the substance of the text, what then is the 1,000-years? The context is deal-

ing with Satan’s defeat in his cause to dissolve the church during the great tribulation of the fall of Judea (this was a first century event, after all, the book said these are the “things which must shortly take place,” 1.1; 22:6). With the complete failure of Satan’s plan (as signified by Him being cast into the bottomless pit), we see, in perfect contrast, the complete victory of the Lord’s faithful. This is signified by the 1,000-year reign. As 10 is identifiable as completeness, so 10x10x10 describes the intensity and certainty of the victory here in this text. So, the number 1,000 is not in reference to an amount of time, and neither are the other numbers in the book. The 1,000-years do not convey a time period, but they convey an idea of the exceedingly great victory of those who remained faithful to the Lord, even to death.

We have seen that the end of the book of Revelation does not teach a 1,000-year reign of Christ, whether literally or figuratively. So then, what is the truth about the reign of Christ? Do we know when it will be, and its duration? Absolutely! The Lord has left us with a vast amount of information about His reign, all of which is much easier to understand than the book of Revelation, and still continues to deny the doctrine of a future 1,000-year reign of Christ in the physical city of Jerusalem.

The first thing to note about God’s reign is that it has always been, and always will be. The thought of a 1,000-year reign in foolishness in light of the scriptures which declare the God who reigns forever and ever. Even before Christ came to the earth, the scriptures teach “The LORD has established His throne in heaven, And His kingdom rules over all” Psalm 103:19. And when Jesus was on the earth, but had yet to die as our sacrifice, He said “And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force” Matthew 11:12. So,