

Where Will the Millennium Be Spent?

In Heaven? or on Earth?

by **Herbert W. Armstrong**

WHERE are the saints of God going to REIGN for the coming thousand years?

Some say: "On the Earth!"

Others say, "Up in heaven! All unsaved people shall be destroyed by the brightness of Christ's coming. The earth will be desolate during this thousand years."

But **WHAT DOES THE WORD OF GOD SAY?**

Will you notice, now, Revelation 20:6: "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God, and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years."

This THOUSAND YEARS is commonly called "the MILLENNIUM." But the question we now want to settle—and settle it rightly out of God's Word—is, **WHERE shall we SPEND that thousand years? And over WHOM shall we reign?**

The facts of the resurrection and second coming of Christ are plainly expressed in I Thes. 4:14-17, and I Cor. 15:52. The dead in Christ are resurrected, and the living in Christ are translated, and all are caught up to MEET the Lord in the clouds, in the air of the earth's atmosphere. But the question is, **WHERE DO WE GO FROM THERE?**

Now, in order to reign, these saints must have someone to reign OVER. To rule is to RULE over. A king reigns over his subjects. The subjects are always of inferior station and power to the king. The king is in authority OVER his subjects. And so, whether in heaven or on earth, there will have to be someone of INFERIOR RANK—of LOWER POSITION, over whom the saints shall have POWER and AUTHORITY! Now WHO will the immortal saints reign over?

Notice Rev. 3:21 Jesus said: "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne." Jesus spoke those words. He says that He is, at this time, sitting in WHOSE throne?—notice it—He says "as I . . . AM set down with my FATHER in HIS throne." The Father's throne is in heaven. The heavens have received Jesus UNTIL the times of restitution of all things (Acts 3:21). During this dispensation He is sitting on HIS FA-

THER'S throne. And HIS FATHER'S THRONE IS IN HEAVEN! as the Scriptures plainly state.

TWO Thrones in Heaven?

Then, my friends, **WHERE WILL JESUS' THRONE BE**, when He LEAVES His Father's throne?—when the times of restitution of all things comes?—and when He sits on HIS OWN throne? He does not say that the saints shall sit with Him on the Father's throne *in heaven*. He says they shall sit with Him **IN HIS THRONE**. Will His throne, too, be in heaven? Will there be TWO thrones in heaven? Will Jesus have a throne there, competing with the Father? A Kingdom with TWO thrones is a kingdom divided, and Jesus said a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand. Jesus is not now, at this time, sitting on HIS own throne, but in HIS FATHER'S throne, reigning WITH His Father in exactly the same manner the saints shall sit with Him, in HIS throne, reigning with Him. Where, then, will HIS throne be?

Why, we read in Luke 1:30-32 that Jesus will be given the throne of DAVID. And DAVID'S THRONE IS ON THE EARTH! According to Ezek. 21:37, that throne, which will be located in the city of Jerusalem, ON THIS EARTH, is to be given to JESUS, whose right it is.

Now notice carefully. GOD'S throne is in heaven. DAVID'S throne is existing today on EARTH. At THIS time now, Jesus is on His FATHER'S throne, *in heaven*—but when the saints reign for a thousand years, they shall be sitting with Him, on HIS throne, the throne of DAVID, which throne is located ON THE EARTH!

Now notice Rev. 2:26-27: "And he that overcometh . . . will I give POWER over the NATIONS: and he shall RULE them with a rod of iron." Notice it!—these same overcomers who shall reign with Jesus ON HIS THRONE, are to be given POWER over other people. And the ones they shall RULE are THE NATIONS. The nations of THIS EARTH! Can you conceive of nations in heaven so sinful they need to be RULED with a rod of iron?

Then again, notice Luke 1:33: "And He—Jesus—shall reign over THE HOUSE

OF JACOB forever." It is the HOUSE OF JACOB—the nations of Israel and Judah—whom God has BLINDED during this time (Rom. 11:7-8), whose blindness shall be removed and who shall find salvation (Rom. 11:25-26), when God sets His Hand again the SECOND TIME to recover the remnant of His people Israel (Isa. 11:11), during the times of restitution of all things! What a glorious GOSPEL! What wonderful GOOD NEWS!

Now notice one more text which tells in the PLAINEST OF LANGUAGE *when* the saints shall reign. Remember they are to reign OVER—to rule the nations. They shall reign *a thousand years*. Now turn to Rev. 5:10, and let us see whether we shall be willing to believe the plain words of GOD. Here we read of a new song about Christ who redeemed "men of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation and hast made them unto our God kings and priests: and they shall reign ON THE EARTH!" There it is, properly translated and in PLAIN LANGUAGE. "They shall reign ON THE EARTH." God give us willingness to believe it!

How Jesus Will Return to Earth!

Let us see now HOW Jesus will return to earth. In Acts 1:9-11, we read: "And when He (Jesus) had spoken those things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven."

We know He shall return at the close of this age, just prior to the battle at Jerusalem which climaxes this world's defiance of God's rule. His coming is described in the 19th chapter of Revelation, beginning the 11th verse. All nations are gathered against Jerusalem for this great battle, their armies having previously assembled at Armageddon (notice also Rev. 16:13-16). This same battle is described in the 14th chapter of the Book of Zechariah.

Notice it: "Behold the day of the

habited from that time on for a thousand years? Notice verse 10: All the land shall be turned as a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem: AND IT SHALL BE LIFTED UP, AND INHABITED." And again notice in the 16th verse, those left of the heathen, *Gentile nations* whose people were not destroyed in the battle at Armageddon, "shall even go up FROM YEAR TO YEAR to worship the KING, the Lord of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles." Here we find the picture of these nations being ruled over WITH A ROD OF IRON—notice verses 17-19—when Jesus is KING over all the earth (verse 9), sitting on David's throne, and when the resurrected and immortal saints are reigning WITH Him a thousand years, ON THE EARTH, ruling

THESE NATIONS *from year to year*—notice it—from YEAR TO YEAR, from the time of the second coming of Christ! How plain!

And notice, too, that the nations which come from year to year are not altogether obedient—observe, in verse 17-19 how God will punish those who will refuse to obey. So these are not immortal saints. They are GENTILES. And notice carefully that these mortal sinning Gentiles shall be required to come up TO JERUSALEM—and Jerusalem is ON THE EARTH. And it is AT THE TIME when Jesus Christ has returned to rule as KING of kings, and LORD of Lords—yet future. It cannot be BEFORE the millennium. It cannot be AFTER it. It MUST be *during* the millennium. And the place is ON THE EARTH. Here, my friends, are unanswerable Scriptures!

Will Israel Ever Accept Christ and Be Saved?

Now what about the JEWS? What about ISRAEL? Has God cast them eternally away? Some seem to think so. What do the SCRIPTURES say?

Back in the 26th chapter of Leviticus we read how God warned His chosen race that IF they would not obey Him, He would PUNISH THEM—for a duration of 2520 years! Not with eternal loss of salvation—but a duration of 2520 long years—the prophetic "seven times" mentioned in verses 18, 21, 24, 28. The children of Israel became divided into TWO NATIONS—one called the House of Israel, the TEN Tribes,—the other the House of JUDAH, consisting of Judah and Benjamin, called the Jews. Israel sinned first, and was driven among the Gentiles, losing their identity. The world today commonly believes they are Gentiles. Then Judah sinned worse than Israel, and the Jews were taken to Babylon B.C. 604-585. God took away national dominance from Judah, and turned it over to the Gentiles.

Now I want you to study carefully one of the most wonderful, important chapters in all the Bible—the eleventh of Romans. Notice the question in verse 1: Has God cast away the Israelites? In verse 2 Paul says "NO!" Study verses 7 and 8. A few of them accepted salvation, but the rest were BLINDED—and—note it—GOD *blinded them!* Notice verse 11. They have not stumbled that they should FALL, or lose salvation, but salvation has come to the Gentiles—WHY?—to provoke Israel to JEALOUSY, so they, too, will turn. Notice verse 15—they are to be received again—and as life from the dead. Verse 23 says those who abide not still in unbelief shall YET receive salvation. Now study carefully beginning verse 25: "Blindness in part is happened until Israel"—HOW LONG? Forever? No—note it—"UNTIL

Lord cometh . . . for I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle" (Zech. 14:1-2). This can be only the last battle of the great day of God Almighty, for it is the only time described in Scripture where ALL NATIONS are to be gathered against Jerusalem for battle, prior to the millennium. Now notice the 3rd and 4th verses: "Then shall the Lord go forth"—second coming of Christ—"and fight against those nations . . . and His feet shall stand *in that day* upon the Mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east." Notice it—Jesus' feet shall stand upon the Mount of OLIVES—WHEN? It says "IN THAT DAY"—not a thousand years AFTER that day when this battle is being fought, but IN *that day*.

And so we see Jesus shall so come in like manner as He went, just as the Scriptures say. When He went, He was standing on the Mount of Olives. He was visibly caught up. A cloud received Him out of the disciples' sight. As many Scriptures affirm, He shall COME with clouds. And in the very DAY of the battle before Jerusalem, Jesus' feet shall stand once more on the Mount of Olives! Yes, He is coming AS HE WENT. He WENT from the Mount of Olives, and He shall RETURN to the Mount of Olives!

Now will He *remain on the earth* from that time, or immediately return to heaven? Notice verse 8: "And it shall be IN THAT DAY, that living waters (salvation, thru the Holy Spirit) shall go out from Jerusalem . . . in summer and in winter shall it be." Beginning from that very day when He comes, this event, the work of the times of restitution of all things, shall continue on thru SUMMER, and thru WINTER!

Shall the land be desolate and unin-

the fulness of the Gentiles be come in"—the end of this age during which God is calling a people from among the Gentiles to bear His name (Acts 15: 14). And so, says verse 26, "all Israel SHALL BE SAVED:"—how? "As it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob." The Deliverer, Jesus Christ, is coming again!

When He comes, the Gentile times will be over—the BLINDNESS will be removed from the Israelites—and their opportunity—their FIRST chance—of salvation will then come to those whom God had blinded! This is at the time when He comes to REIGN on HIS THRONE—the throne of David, with the saints made immortal reigning and ruling with Him—and the time is DURING THE THOUSAND YEARS! Notice verse 31. These blinded Israelites have not now, in this age, received mercy, that thru the mercy of the Gentiles saved in this age, they MAY, THEN, obtain mercy and salvation. How? Because these saved Gentiles will then be kings and priests, assisting in this wonderful work!

WHAT Will the Millennium Be Like?

Now compare what we read with the wonderful 11th chapter of Isaiah. This is the time when, verse 11, God is going to set His hand again the SECOND TIME to recover the remnant of HIS PEOPLE, who have been dispersed around the world. It is the time when they shall be regathered to the Holy Land—a time yet future. Observe verse 1: the Branch is Jesus Christ.

Observe that He shall, at this time, RULE, and REIGN, verse 4. Now when is this time? Verse 6: the time when wild animals are so tame that wolves and lambs play together—when leopards lie down peacefully with little kids—the calf and the young lion—and a little child shall lead them, unharmed. Verse 7, the lion will no longer eat raw meat—but HAY like the ox. Now wild animals will not be this tame BEFORE the millennium. It will be during, or AFTER the thousand years, then. Will these wild animals be taken to HEAVEN?—or will this take place ON EARTH?

Observe the 8th verse: there will be NURSING babies, and weaned babies there unharmed as they play with the most deadly snakes. At this time, then, BABIES ARE BEING BORN. Will there be NURSING babies IN HEAVEN? Will there be nursing babes in the promised NEW EARTH—after the thousand years? THINK! Will babes be playing, without harm, with deadly snakes BEFORE the millennium? No, this MUST be during the thousand years, and it MUST be ON THE EARTH!!

Now come to verse 9. Animals will

not be killing one another for food, and the WHOLE EARTH will then be FULL of the knowledge of the Lord!

That cannot be PRIOR to the millennium. The earth could not be full of the knowledge of the Lord if it were then desolate, and without an inhabitant! This proves the place of the thousand years is ON THE EARTH!!

And now notice, in THAT DAY—the very same day when wild animals are tamed—when children are still being born—and when the EARTH is full of the knowledge of the Lord, and when the Lord is reigning and ruling with a rod of iron—verse 11 says that in THAT DAY—that very same time—the Lord shall set His hand again the SECOND TIME to recover the remnant of His people, Israel!

And in THAT SAME DAY (verse 10) the Gentiles shall seek Christ the "root of Jesse"—and so there will be GENTILES present, seeking the Lord and His salvation! Study verse 12. Jesus shall assemble the outcasts of Israel, and gather the dispersed of Judah. It is the time of the great REGATHERING OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH! And notice verse 14—during this same time the Israelites shall *spoil*, or conquer the nations of the east, and lay hands on the Edomites, the Moabites, and the Ammonites!

The End of HUMAN Reign

After the national punishment of the Jews, God turned the reign of world government over to a succession of GENTILE kingdoms. There were to be just FOUR great universal world-ruling kingdoms—The Chaldean Empire, called "BABYLON"; the Persian Empire; Alexander's Grecio-Macedonian Empire with its four divisions; and the ROMAN EMPIRE, which has had six past revivals and is destined to arise once more as a union of ten *fascist* dictator nations in Europe—ruled over by a great religious power (Rev. 17:12).

This Gentile reign, and its END, is pictured in Daniel 2, and 7. You are probably familiar with the dream IMAGE of Nebuchadnezzar, described in the prophecy of Daniel 2.

At the END of this Gentile reign, what is to happen? Notice Daniel 2:44: "And IN THE DAYS OF THESE KINGS (not a thousand years *after* their reign) shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom . . . but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand FOREVER."

Now where will that Kingdom be? The dream, interpreted by this verse, says: "the stone that smote the image"—Christ and His Kingdom, which consumes these Gentile kingdoms (I Cor. 10:4), "became a great mountain (nation), and filled THE WHOLE EARTH."

And in Daniel 7:27, we read: "And the KINGDOM (God's Kingdom) . . . *under* the whole heavens, shall be given to the people of the SAINTS." Not IN heaven, but UNDER it! Now WHEN? The "little horn" (a persecuting religious power) of this prophecy in Daniel 7, "made war with the saints, and prevailed against them UNTIL the Ancient of Days came, and . . . the saints possessed the Kingdom." The leader of this persecuting power is called the false prophet (Rev. 19:20), and he lasts UNTIL we reign UNDER the whole heaven. This prophecy positively precludes any 1,000 year reign IN HEAVEN!

Three Misunderstood Texts

Now consider three texts that are often woefully misinterpreted to reject the undeniable truth of other Scripture.

II THESSALONIANS 2:8: This is the text supposed to teach that all wicked people will be destroyed by the brightness of Christ's coming.

Notice verse 3. His coming will not occur until the MAN OF SIN is *revealed*. Who is the man of sin? The same as the false prophet for he does the same deeds. Now notice verse 6—he is to *be revealed* in his time.

Continue into verse 8: "And when shall THAT Wicked *be revealed*, whom the Lord shall . . . destroy with the brightness of his coming: EVEN HIM, whose coming is after the working of Satan" (Verses 8 and 9.)

Note it! Does this say ALL the wicked and unsaved people shall be destroyed by the brightness of Christ's coming? No, the Bible does NOT say that—it says THAT Wicked person who is to BE REVEALED—"EVEN HIM"—just *one man!* He is the FALSE PROPHET, and his destruction is also described in Rev. 19:20. How plain!

JEREMIAH 4:23-27: This is wrongly applied to the WHOLE earth during the millennium.

Study the book of Jeremiah from the first chapter. God commissioned Jehovah to WARN JUDAH to turn from their sins. If they did not, Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon was to bring his armies against them, make THEIR LAND desolate, their cities empty, and carry the Jews to Babylon as slaves.

Note Chapter 4, verse 5: Nebuchadnezzar, "the destroyer of the Gentiles" (verse 7), is on his way "to make THY LAND DESOLATE; and *thy cities* shall be laid waste without an inhabitant." This is the cities of Judah. Study verses 13-17. It is only the cities of JUDAH, verse 16, to be made waste. Notice verse 30—"When thou"—the Jews of Jeremiah's day—"art spoiled, what wilt thou do?"

This passage has no reference whatsoever.
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earth. We are to meet Him IN THE CLOUDS, and airplanes fly higher than that every day. That same day we come on down WITH HIM upon the Mount of Olives (Zech. 14:4, 5). "That where I am, THERE ye may be also." After Jesus receives us unto Himself, He will remain here on this earth. We shall ever BE with Him. We shall sit with Him IN HIS THRONE—which is the throne of David ON THIS EARTH. The places prepared are positions of responsibility in the KINGDOM He went to receive (Luke 19:12 and Mat. 25:3—note the kingdom is PREPARED, and its PLACE is the earth!). The place will also be the CAPITAL of that kingdom, the NEW JERUSALEM, which comes down FROM GOD, *out* of heaven, down to this earth, PREPARED (Rev. 21:2). What glorious Good News—WE SHALL REIGN ON THE EARTH DURING THE MILLENNIUM! (4 Rev. 5:10).

Millennium— where will it be spent?

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ever to the thousand years, or to the whole earth, but the land of Palestine ONLY, and during the sieges of Nebuchadnezzar, 604 to 586 B.C. The original Hebrew word for "land" in this chapter is the *same* word which is wrongly translated "earth." Jeremiah was speaking of the whole *land*!

JOHN 14:1-3: This text is also used as a proof-text for going to heaven. Jesus said "If I go, I WILL COME AGAIN, and receive you unto myself." He receives us unto Himself WHEN HE WILL HAVE COME AGAIN—right here in the