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THE MILLENNIUM

By Harold Turner

Within recent years a word that has become quite popular and of common usage is the word 'millennium'. This word has become of great importance and influence within many religious circles. Multitudes are looking for the coming of the 'millennium', which is believed to be a period of peace and tranquillity, where righteousness reigns within all, and a period wherein there is no wickedness. This word is not found within the Bible, but is used to refer to the period of one thousand years mentioned in Revelation 20.

Though the millennium is used to refer to the same period of time, there are numerous and conflicting theories about the events that are to occur at that time. For example: there are some who hold the view that the millennium will begin with Christ's second coming, while others hold that the second coming of Christ does not take place until the end of the millennium. Some who believe that the millennium is to begin with the second coming of Christ have stated, "Christ will ascend from heaven, all the righteous dead will be raised, who along with all the righteous living will ascend with the Lord back into heaven. All the wicked living will be slain, and Satan will be bound on the desolated earth during the thousand year reign of Christ. At the end of the thousand years, Satan will be loosed, and the wicked dead will be raised." Another prominent view is that Christ will return to earth at his second coming and set up the kingdom of God, and will reign here on earth a thousand years. This view holds that at his coming, Christ will raise all the righteous dead, and banish all the wicked from the earth. At this time he will bind Satan, and only righteousness will exist on earth. There are numerous other views about the millennium, but these show that all advocates of this doctrine are far from being in agreement.

The one thing that is generally agreed upon is that this is the time when Christ will set up the kingdom of God, either on earth or in heaven.

There are certainly many things about Revelation 20 that puzzle Bible students, and things that may never be fully understood by us. The writing is highly symbolic, and where the symbols are not defined for us, we must be careful about our interpretations of them. Certainly

any interpretation of them that is in conflict with other teachings of the Bible must be abandoned.

The advocates of the various doctrines pertaining to the millennium suggest that Revelation 20 clearly teaches the above described statements. However, a casual reading of this chapter will indicate that much must be read into this text to support any part of these doctrines. This scripture does not imply that Christ is coming back at some future date to set up the kingdom of God, either in heaven or on earth. It does not imply that all the righteous dead will be raised to live and reign with Christ during this thousand years, neither does it imply that all the wicked living will be slain from the earth during this time. These are nothing more than imaginary beliefs in the minds of those supporting this doctrine.

There is one thing certain that Revelation 20 does not teach, and which, within itself, destroys the whole foundation of the millennium doctrines, and that is that Christ is coming back at some future time to set up the kingdom of God. Any view or teaching that places the establishment of the kingdom at some future time is in conflict with all that the Bible has to say about the kingdom.

Through the prophet Daniel, God foretold some definite things about the coming kingdom. In Dan. 2:44 he said, "And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom..." Notice that the kingdom would be set up "in the days" not after the days of these kings. These kings or kingdoms are defined in the preceding verses as four great world powers that would arise, one after the other. The first was Babylon (Dan. 2:37-38), the second was Medio-Persian (Dan. 5:25-31), the third was Greece (Dan. 8:20-21), and the fourth was Rome. Daniel showed that the kingdom of God would be established "in the days" of the fourth kingdom (Dan. 2:34, 45), which is Rome. God's kingdom was to break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms. Where are they today? Rome has fallen, and that over 1500 years ago. Is Daniel's prophecy true? Did God do as he promised? If so the kingdom of God was set up within the days of the Roman reign.

Some have been so bold as to suggest

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Soap Opera Love

By James Knight

One of the most beautiful subjects discussed in the Bible is that of love. The love of God for man, and man's love in return for God is discussed in a most beautiful way. The love that husbands and wives are to have for each other is discussed by many writers of the New Testament.

What does the Bible have to say about the love of the husband and wife? In Ephesians 5:22-33 we learn a number of things about this love. (1) Because of love, the wife is to submit to her husband as unto the Lord. (2) As the church is subject unto Christ, the wife is to be in subjection to her husband. (3) The wife is to reverence and respect her husband. In turn the Bible teaches that the husband is (1) to be the head of the wife, (2) he is to love his wife as the Lord loves the church, (3) she is to be loved as his own body (because they have become one flesh), (4) the husband is to leave his father and mother and be joined unto his wife, (5) and he is to love his wife as himself. Also, in I Cor. 7:1-5 Paul gives some very practical instructions to both husbands and wives concerning their relationship and responsibilities in marriage.

Now, let us take a look at the title of this article. What is meant by the term, SOAP OPERA LOVE? I am sure that all of us are familiar, in one way or another, with the soap operas that are aired on TV every day. These programs are presenting a kind of love, if it can be called that, which is foreign to what is taught in the Bible.

In these soap operas, the husband or wife loves their mate just as long as all things are going to suit them, but if they don't get their way they just leave and find someone else. In the soap operas the husband and/or the wife loves until they find someone else that is more attractive than their present companion. Soap Opera love sees nothing wrong with an extra-marital affair, or just plain committing of adultery. This kind of love cannot stand the everyday stress and strain that is placed upon the marriage relationship, therefore, most of the husbands and wives on the soap operas have been, or will be, married many times.

I believe that young people, and many older ones, are being influenced greatly by these examples set by the TV soap

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EDITORS: Erwin Cowen and Harrold Turner.

Ladies, Would You Call Your Husband Lord?

By Larry Price
McKinney, Texas

For some time it has been my observation that generally few wives honor their husbands as the Bible teaches. With the trend toward "Women's Rights" growing, most likely the husband will regress in the honor due him. Often when the subject is taught the comments made on this subject are light and flippant as if of little importance. In fact this is a serious matter worthy of serious teaching. A woman can lose her soul if she fails to obey God's plan for her relationship to her husband.

Wives must be in subjection to their husbands. Peter, in 1 Peter 3:1, wrote, "Wives, be in subjection to your own husbands..." Then in verse six he gives an example of how that is to be done, by saying, "As Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord..." Imagine that! She honored him enough to call him lord or master. This is the inspired example for the Christian wife to follow and one by which she will be judged in the last day. Paul, in Titus 2:3, tells the older women to teach the younger women to be obedient to their husbands in order not to blaspheme the word of God. Yes, a wife is a blasphemer of God's word when she is not obedient to her husband. That condition also exists when the young wife refuses the correct teaching of the older Christian women regarding this matter.

In Ephesians 5:33 wives are told to reverence their husbands. In I Cor. 11:3 Paul says that the man is the head of the woman. In Ephesians 5:22 Paul says, "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord." The kind of submission the wife is to have to her husband is to be as or like her submission to the Lord. Wives, would you tell the Lord to mind his own business; because you are going to do as you wish whether he likes it or not? Paul continues in verse 24, saying, "Therefore as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing." Note that God's will is that this submission be in every thing."

Of course, there are always objections. Someone will invariably say, "Being in subjection doesn't mean what you imply. The husband can't 'lord it' over his wife." Then the discussion will gradually approach an absurd conclusion that marriage is a "50-50" relationship.

power than we have ever dreamed possible. Brethren, the blessings are at the top of the mountain. If we do not climb it, we will miss the blessings. Let's pray for that strength to reach the top.

Someone else will say, "But that would mean a wife would have to jump off a cliff if her husband ask her to." How ridiculous! In the first place she couldn't do that without disobeying God. Others will say, "What about the husband who doesn't treat his wife with love? Doesn't that excuse her?" If we intend to speak as the oracles of God, we will have to say, No. The husband is to love his wife as much as himself (Eph. 5:28), and he is wrong if he does not do that. However, there is no license, other than putting God first, for the wife to refuse to honor and obey her husband. Strong words? No, not to the Christian woman who loves the Lord and his plan for Christian living.

"He that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life: but he that openeth wide his lips shall have destruction." Prov. 13:3

"Good understanding giveth favour: but the way of transgressors is hard." Prov. 13:15

CONTRIBUTIONS

INDIVIDUALS:

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Soap Opera Love (cont.)

operas, and I believe that it is time that we begin to speak out against such practices before it is too late.

Beloved, the Bible teaches that marriage is a life-long, permanent arrangement. It teaches that only sexual unfaithfulness on the part of husband or wife can break a marriage and carry with it the right of remarriage. Death is the only other thing that can destroy a marriage. Every man and woman who enters this relationship should be aware of these things, and determine to make their marriage what God intends it to be. Let us turn our back on SOAP OPERA LOVE, and return to Biblical love in the marriage relationship.

Lord, Please Don't Move The Mountain

By Ted Knight

After preaching the sermon last Sunday, in regard to our need for more faith, a brother told me of a song which he had heard, which said, "Lord, please don't move the mountain; give me the faith and strength to climb it." I love that spirit. So much of the time we seem to think that the Lord will do for us those things which we are capable of doing for ourselves. Our desire should be to seek the Lord's help only when we cannot succeed with our own hard work. I know that without Him we can do nothing, and do not mean to imply that as long as we do not need Him that we just ignor Him. I am afraid that there are times when we really have the power to climb the mountain, and will be blessed if we will do so, but it is much easier to ask the Lord to move it for us.

How many times have you heard someone pray, "Lord, bring us back at the next appointed time," when you knew that person would not be back at all. Do we expect the Lord to come by and pick us up and if He fails to do so we will just stay at home? Some of us must. The Lord will certainly want us to be present at the next appointed service, but it is up to us to make preparations to come and worship properly. If we do not come, He will not come by for us.

How many times have we asked for prosperity, and then failed to work with our hands to be successful in our endeavors? Do we expect the Lord to bless us in spite of our laziness? Surely He will not do so.

Lord, please don't move the mountain; give me the strength to climb it! If that could be the attitude of every Christian, the world would never be the same again. We would possess greater

How Can I Know That I'm Saved?

By Leslie Leonard

The question: How can I know that I'm saved? is one that bothers many religious people, and it is one of the most important questions in the world. The answers one gets though are as different as the variety of religious beliefs that exist.

One person will tell you that he knows because his church has told him that he is saved, while another will tell you that he knows because of his feelings, and then another will try to bring scriptural evidence as proof that he is a saved person. So how can you know? How can you be sure?

There are only two kinds of evidence that can be used to determine the answer to this type of question. One is external, or objective, evidence, while the other is internal, or subjective, evidence. Both of these types of evidence are used by different people as proof that they are saved; so let's examine them and try to determine which one is reliable.

First, let's look at the internal, or subjective, evidence; because this is what the vast majority of Protestants use. By internal, or subjective evidence, we mean the looking inside ourselves at our thoughts and feelings in an attempt to determine our spiritual condition. Those who use this type of evidence reveal their source of proof by such statements as: "I know I'm saved because I feel it." Or, they appeal to some emotional experience they have had as a special working of God or the Holy Spirit, and claim to be saved because they have the evidence internally.

Of course this type of evidence is not something that can be brought out and tested by any reliable methods since it is based entirely upon what the person thinks and feels. What happens is that the person has looked inside himself at his feelings and thoughts in an attempt to determine his spiritual condition and arrived at a conclusion based upon how he feels.

The problem is that if he should feel depressed or guilty he might reach the conclusion that he does not have God's approval. But it is possible that he may feel depressed because of some physical ailment, or if he should find guilt it may be caused by either real or imaginary wrong doing. If he should feel free, exalted, and happy he may reason that he has God's approval. But his feelings may be caused by good health, a lack of trouble in his life at that moment, or even a conviction that he is not guilty of sin.

Man is easy to move by suggestion as any salesman will tell you, so there is always the possibility that someone has

simply suggested that he is free from sin when he really isn't.

A vain and proud person may delude himself into believing that it is impossible for him to be wrong, or lost, and the fearful person may find it impossible to feel free. Then there are those people who do not have enough information to make a correct evaluation of their spiritual condition. Searching for the answer to one's spiritual condition within one's self is not a dependable test. Even when one is convinced that he has felt something special happening to him, he cannot be sure that it wasn't Satan touching him instead of God.

The Jews of Jesus' day were sure they were doing right when they were crying for His crucifixion. Paul was sure he was doing right when he persecuted Christians. If these did examine their feelings they would have felt justified in what they were doing.

No, internal evidence is not dependable, and external evidence is not dependable at times. If we try to determine who is right by the number of people who believe a certain doctrine, we must realize that Jesus said, "Many are called, but few are chosen." If we try to use monetary standards we have to realize that the apostate religion in the book of Revelation is a rich religion.

We have to realize also that simply because something good or bad happens doesn't indicate that God approves or disapproves. Remember, Jesus was crucified and eleven of the apostles died violent deaths while many wicked people went to their graves in peace. About the only thing we can be sure of when examining external evidence is mentioned by Jesus in Matt. 7:15-20, and he indicates that we can know that those who do evil are not God's children.

But there is one objective, external evidence that we can depend upon. That is the Word, or the Scriptures. They are a reliable proof. In fact they are the only dependable proof we have. The only way we can be sure that we are saved is to have God tell us we are saved through His word. The problem is then simply a problem of faith. Not faith in how we feel, what someone has told us, or what we have reached by reasoning from some supposed evidence, but faith in what God has said. If we study the scriptures and find certain things that we must do to be saved, and we have done these things, then we can be certain that we are saved because God's word is behind it. But if we haven't done these things, God's word is still true, we are not saved. We can know we are saved only when we have God's word that we are.

The Wisdom Of the Bible

By Jason Frizzell

The Bible states, in all its teachings, the infallible mind of God. It does not need to tell or say why it is expressed as it is for God is Love, Truth, and the very essence of perfection. In the Bible, God states, "I am that I am," a statement that no mortal man can make. Man is in some ways different each day of his life, but God is the same yesterday, today, and tomorrow.

The Bible pictures the state of man from his very first existence to the present time, and his future and final destination. The Bible gives the way or plan of salvation for mankind, depending upon man and his obedience to the will of God. Here again we have the mind of God revealing through his word, the way, the how, and the procedure man must follow if he ever expects to be in the presence of God after this life. The Bible contains the information concerning the sinner and his final doom. It contains the unsearchable riches of truth concerning the believer and his final destination. It lists the happiness, fellowship, the hope of life eternal for those who comply with its teachings.

The doctrines of the Bible are holy, infallible, and non-contradictory regardless of the efforts of man to dispute its statements. Its precepts are binding to all mankind, and the history of the Bible is true. The facts and decisions of the Bible are immutable.

The contents of the Bible are for the benefit of mankind. We should read it to be wise in this life, believe it to make safe our destination, and practice it to secure the blessings of God and as a light to our fellowman. It is the light that can and will direct our pathway in this life, it is food for the mind to dwell upon, and support for our inward being. It holds words of comfort and cheer when all of man's words fail. It is the staff of the sojourner here on earth, the map for the traveler, a compass for the wanderer. It serves as a sword for the soldier of Christ, and a chart for all Christians.

Jesus Christ is the supreme subject, the design is for the good of man, and the end is for the glory of God, the supreme architect. It contains wisdom to guide our pathway, rule the heart and hands, and fill our minds with memories of the greatest event of all ages.

We should read this book of wisdom slowly, prayerfully, and frequently to glean from it's inspired pages the wonderful future for those who obey its precepts, and to learn from it the condemnation to those that disregard its teachings. It is compared to a river of

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What Are Your Odds?

By David Crawford

No! The "Odds" in the title of this article have nothing at all to do with secular gambling, race tracks, horses, etc. These "odds" are related to the salvation of man's eternal soul. The "odds" I'm writing about made quite an impression on me the first time I came across them in a church bulletin. Here they are:

19 out of every 20 who become Christians do so before they reach the age of 25.

After 25, only one in 10,000 obey the gospel.

After 35, only one in 50,000 obey the gospel.

After 45, only one in 200,000 obey the gospel.

After 75, only one in 700,000 obey the gospel.

No source was quoted by the bulletin for these statistics. But they seem plausible enough to me. Surely these are the most awesome "odds" anyone has ever been faced with in any situation. These "Odds" are witnesses to the fact that the longer one delays his preparation to meet God the slimmer his chances become for salvation.

No wonder, then, the inspired scriptures repeatedly emphasize the urgency of obeying the gospel immediately after learning the truth. The wise man wrote, "Remember now thy creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them" Eccl. 12:1. Three thousand men of Israel obeyed heaven's truth on that memorable pentecost day recorded in Acts 2 as soon as they were taught by the apostle Peter. The Ethiopian eunuch requested baptism as soon as he had been instructed by the evangelist Philip (Acts 8). Others followed their example of prompt obedience: Saul of Tarsus, Cornelius and his house, Lydia and her household, and the Philippian jailor, to name a few. The great word of the Bible is TODAY, "... behold, now is the day of salvation" II Cor. 6:2. What are your "Odds?"

"There is that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing; there is that maketh himself poor, yet hath great riches." Prov. 13:7

"The soul of the sluggard desireth, and hath nothing: but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat." Prov. 13:4

The Millennium (continued)

that God did send Jesus to set up the kingdom, but because of his rejection by Israel, the kingdom was postponed and the church substituted. This is nothing short of blasphemy against the intelligence, wisdom, and foreknowledge of God. And, not only this, it makes God a liar, along with Christ and the apostles.

Jesus said in Mark 9:1, "Verily I say unto you, that there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power." Are any of the apostles living today? Or, are any of those people living today who were standing there when Jesus made this promise? Or was Jesus just mistaken? He said the kingdom would come within the lifetime of some of those standing there with him, yet men say that the kingdom is still to come sometime in the future, whom shall we believe?

The apostles also taught that the kingdom was present within their lifetime. The apostle Paul wrote in Col. 1:13 of God, "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." How could this be if the kingdom did not exist at that time? In Revelation 1:9 the apostle John wrote that he was in the kingdom along with those to whom he wrote.

The kingdom of God was set up as recorded in Acts 2. The Bible does not promise that Jesus will set up any other kingdom than this one. In fact when Jesus returns he is coming for the kingdom to deliver it unto the Father. Notice 1 Cor. 15:24-26, "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom unto God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." This shows that Christ will reign as long as life and death continue, and when he returns to deliver up the kingdom, he will at that time resign his reign back to the Father.

No, the Bible does not teach that there will be a thousand year period of peace and tranquillity to be enjoyed by the inhabitants of this earth. This teaching comes from a failure to properly interpret symbolic teachings. There is no reason to believe that the thousand years mentioned in Revelation 20 is anything other than symbolic. The context is highly figuratively, and must be considered in that light.

For some thoughts concerning the binding of Satan, see Gen. 3:15 the bruising of Satan's head or authority, then Matt. 12:26-29 which speaks of the binding of Satan, too see Heb. 2:14 where reference is made to Jesus destroying the power of Satan, also, Col.

1:13, Acts 26:18 supports this.

It is admitted by most, that for the most part, the book of Revelation is symbolic and difficult to understand. Certainly any doctrine that finds its support almost solely upon the symbolic language of this book is at the most very weak, and not to be taken too seriously.

The Bible assures us that it is appointed unto men "once" to die, and after this the judgment (Heb. 9:27). It is not appointed unto men "twice to die and then the judgment, as the doctrines of the Millennium suggests. The important thing for us is to become a Christian, live a faithful life to God, and be ready when death comes.

The Wisdom of the Bible (Cont.)

pleasure, it is a mine of wealth, and describes a paradise of glory. It is given to mankind in this life, it will be remembered forever, and will be opened at the last judgment to be used as the law of inscription that will settle the final abode of all intelligence. It also contains the wisdom of the highest responsibility, it will grant the greatest reward for the greatest labor, and will condemn without hesitation all who trifle or misuse its Holy Inspired Contents.

Scriptures to affirm the above statements are too numerous to quote all that deal with what has been said. But, after all, the statements are made to attest to "The Wisdom of the Bible."

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