God's Peace for the Planet – The Millennium

INTRODUCTION

A. PLAN for history – God has not seen fit to reveal all of His plan for history all at one time – or even over a period of time. However, He has revealed much of it, and we can also see from looking back at past history the great variety in God's plan and His governing of human history. The periods in human history are distinct one from another in 3 areas:

1. **Man's OBLIGATION** (God's requirements for faith & life of mankind or of a portion of it)
2. **God's ADMINISTRATION** (how and how much God intervenes with humans and with history)
3. **God's REVELATION** (the amount of truth and the ones to whom God declares it) – During the first 4,000+ years of human history God revealed truth to many people in many different ways (Heb 1:1-2), but He ceased to do so during 400 years between Old Testament and New Testament times and also for nearly 2,000 years since the New Testament writers finished writing.

B. PEACE in history

1. Little peace experienced – Historians have studied much of recorded human history and found very few years (much less decades) of peace on earth. For example, when Will & Ariel Durant published their book ***The Lessons of History*** in 1968 they found only 268 of the previous 3,421 years had no war – only 8% of that period of time. We have even had two "world wars" when many nations were involved in the same war. In the last century or so there have been numerous years when as many as 40 wars were taking place at the same time. The longest recorded period of general peace was the Pax Romana (200 years of the Roman Empire).

2. Little peace revealed – When we look specifically for what God has planned and revealed we find that He did not reveal ahead of time when there would be periods of war and when there would be times of peace. The only long period of peace predicted in the Bible is the future Millennium (when Jesus returns to reign on earth for 1,000 years).

I. Periods preceding & including the Millennium

– The variety that God has built into human history is similar to the variety He included in the stars, seashore sand, and human fingerprints, eyes, and DNA – no two are identical. In some ways history seems to repeat itself; in other ways it's all very different. Someone has said the worst thing about history is that every time it repeats itself the price goes up. Let's look at the major periods of **God's dealings with 4 groups of people**:

A. The human race ~ 2000 years – For about the first 2000 years of history (which began with Creation of perfect humanity, followed by the Fall, the Flood, and the Tower of Babel) God dealt with humans as a whole – and they failed.

B. Israel ~ 2000 years – It was also about 2000 years from God's call of Abraham till Jesus' death; in that time God dealt mainly with Israel. Israel failed under a few different types of leadership and ended up crucifying their own Messiah.

1. Pre-Law ~ 500 years (including the Patriarchs in Palestine and Israel in Egypt)

2. Law ~ 1500 years (including Moses, the Judges, Israel's and Judah's kings, the captivities, and the return of some Israelities to Palestine under the rule of the Persians, the Greeks, and the Romans)

C. The Church ~ 2,000 years – During the time covered by the Book of Acts and the 1900+ years since then God has been focusing on the Church (the ones He has chosen and joined into the one Body of Christ from among both Jews and Gentiles). God in His Word has predicted that this Church age or age of grace will end with lukewarmness and apostasy.

D. Israel & the Gentiles ~ 1000 years – During the Tribulation (7 years) and the Millennium, Israel will have special protection (in the Tribulation she will be able to take refuge in the wilderness [Rev 12:14]), and afterward she will have special prominence (in the Millennium) – after which a world rebellion of other nations will be defeated by the Lord.

II. Preparation for the Millennium

A. Two returns – Before the Millennium, God will regather Israel to their land, and Jesus will return to the earth.

B. Two routings

1. Military (Armageddon – Rev 16:16; 19:19) – A coalition of forces – Antichrist from west (Rev 19:19), Russia from the north (Ezk 38:14-16), and armed hosts from the east (Rev 16:12,16) will be resoundingly defeated by Christ.

2. Judicial – Jesus will judge the Gentile "nations" when He returns; some will be allowed into His millennial kingdom, and others will be excluded (Mt 25:31-46).

C. Two removals

1. To the lake of fire – Antichrist and the false prophet (the world leaders during the Tribulation) will be cast alive in a firey lake burning with sulfur (Rev 19:20).

2. To the bottomless pit – Satan himself will be bound and then cast into "the deep" or "the bottomless pit" during the Millennium (Rev 20:1-3)

III. Participants in the Millennium

A. Who is absent

1. Satan (Rev 20:1-3 – AKA "the dragon, the old serpent, Devil" [Rev 20:2] and "the wicked" – Mt 13:19,38; Eph 6:16; 1Jn 2:13; 3:12; 5:18)

2. All unbelievers – at the start only (Mt 25:31). Births will produce so many unsaved that by the end of the Millennium there are multitudes that reject Christ and join in rebellion with Satan against Christ (Rev 20:7-10).

B. Who is present – 2 groups (Rev 20:4,6)

1. **Martyrs** (v. 4) – The ruling judges are the beheaded martyrs from the Tribulation.

a. Their prominence – RULING (judging with Christ) – long enjoyment = for **1000** yrs!!!

b. Their perseverance – REFUSING (the mark & worship of Antichrist for **3.5** years) – short endurance (marvelous grace of our Lord Jesus Christ!!!)

2. Others (v. 6)

a. Others who died (believers before the Tribulation) – 1st RESURRECTION = ALL **SAVED** of all ages. This seems to include resurrection of the just (Lk 14:14), a resurrection unto life (Jn 5:28f), an "out" resurrection (*exanastasis* – Php 3:11), and a better resurrection (Heb 11:35); contrast another resurrection = "the rest of dead did not come to life until the thousand years ended" (20:5), a resurrection of damnation (Jn 5:29) forever-- Isa 66:22; Jer 31:35-37

1) Old Testament saints (Dan 12:1-2) and Tribulation saints (Isa 1:16; 61:1-7; Mt 19:28)

2) The Church ("a mystery" – Rom 11:25; Eph 3:1-6; 5:25-32; Col 1:27)

b. Others who didn't die (believers during the Tribulation)

1) Israelites – "ALL Israel" (at the END of the Tribulation – Zec 13:8f; Rom 11:26) [3 re-gatherings & reunions – under Ezra, Nehemiah, and Zerubbabel – 19th cent to now – End of Trib (Isa 11:10-16; Amos 9:11-15)]

2) Gentiles (Mt 25:31-40; Zec 14:16 = those left of the nations that come up against Jerusalem

IV. Peace in the Millennium (Ps 72:3-7; Isa 9:7; 11:6-8; Mic 2:18; 4:3f; Zec 6:13) – Isa 9:7 ="Of the increase of His government and peace there shall be no end." 11:6-8; 65; Mic 4:3 ="They shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."; cf. 2:18: 4:4); Ps 72:3-7 (v. 7 = "In His days shall the righteous flourish – and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth.")

A. The REMOVAL – of the great DISTURBER & DECEIVER (Satan's work in the world for about 6,000 years)

B. The REGENERATION (Mt 19:28 "In the regeneration, when the SOM shall sit in the throne of His glory.")

(1) NOT– spiritual **rebirth** (1Co 4:16; Col 3:10; Tit 3:5)

(2) BUT – renewal of nature (Rom 8:21 deliverance of creation – but not fully like sinless Eden)

C. The REIGN – Christ on David's throne – **He is NOT reigning now** (Isa 9:6; 16:5; Jer 23:5; 33:17; Am 9:11; Zec 12:8f; Lk 1:32-33) – "with a rod of iron" (Ps 2:9; Rev 2:27; 12:5; 19:15) – suppression (not total elimination) of evil (crime, violence, injustice – Ps 72:4; cf vv 12-14; Isa 11:3-5; 42:3; 65:21f – **disease, death, deception / lies [FAKE news])**

V. Progress in the Millennium

A. CREATION (Rom 8:21ff– **change = bondage to liberty**) – curse lifted (thorns, thistles, sorrow, sweat – Gen 3:17-19; Isa 55:13) – animals tamed (Isa 11:6-9; 35:9; 65:25), abundant water & plants (Isa 35:1-7; Ezk 34:26; Joel 2:23)

B. RELIGION – There will be world knowledge of God (Isa 11:9; Jer 31:34; Ezk 9:3; 10:4,18), new temple with sacrifices (Ezk 40-48; Zec 6:12f) and city (Mic 4:1-2), God's glory and worship (Ezk 11:23; 43:2-5; Zec 14:9), and holiness (Zec 14:16-21) – one world religion (the TRUTH) regulated worship (Zec 14:17-19)for God's glory (see 2Ch 7:1f; Ezk 9:3; 10:4,18; 11:23; Ezk 43:2-5). Doctrinal deviation (heresy) and political insurrections (against Christ) will be suppressed.

C. WEALTH – prosperity & security (Ps 72:7,16; Amos 9:13f; Mic 4:4)

D. HEALTH – less disease (Isa 33:24; 35:5f) > longevity (Isa 65:20)

VI. Postlude to the Millennium (Rev 20:7-22:5 – release & rebellion (7-10 = a final proof that both Satan & humans are incorrigible), review of the lost (20:11-15), new heaven & earth (2 Pet 3:13; Rev 20:7-15; 21:1-22:5)

CONCLUSION – The Millennium (the last major age in human history) will be a theocracy under the direct, divine (all-wise, all-holy, all-righteous, omnisicent, omnipotent) dictatorship of Israel's Messiah; thus, the planet will be at **PEACE.**