

QUESTION: Does the Bible teach a literal 1000-year reign of Christ on the earth?

The querist refers to a doctrine known as “Premillennialism.” One man explained the doctrine in this way, “Pre” means before, “millennial” means a thousand years, and “ism” means it isn’t so. However, I’m sure our readers expect a more thorough treatment of the subject than that.

Premillennialism is a doctrine relating to the Second Coming of Christ. As we study the subject together, you will find it incompatible with the Bible, the word of God. Oh, many have tried to blend it into Bible teaching, but to do so they must take scriptures out of their natural context and force them into their fanciful theories.

There are many variations of this doctrine, but its advocates generally accept the following: (1) Jesus did not set up an earthly kingdom at His first coming because the Jews would not accept Him as the Christ. (2) Christ will come again for the same purpose, but with different results. (3) The righteous dead are raised to join the living saints and to reign with Christ from Jerusalem for one thousand years. (4) During that time, the Jews will turn to Him in faith and Israel will become a great nation. (5) At the end of His earthly reign, the saints are given eternal rest and the wicked are punished.

Does the inspired word of God support this doctrine? All millennial doctrines are based upon a symbolic passage found in *Re 20:4*, which states that those who died for the cause of Christ (i.e., preaching the gospel) “*lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.*”

A universally accepted rule of Biblical interpretation states that any conclusion relative to a difficult or symbolic passage must be in harmony with all other passages concerning the same subject; if not, then a wrong conclusion will result. Only a person of questionable motive would pit one passage of God’s word against another. God is not divided against Himself. He is not the author of confusion, but of unity and order. We must conclude that all Scripture is in perfect harmony; if confusion exists, it exists in the minds of men and not in the word of God.

Now, with that in mind, compare God’s word to the features of premillennialism stated above.

- (1) The Jews wanted Jesus as their earthly King, but Jesus refused their offer. “*Therefore when Jesus perceived that they were about to come and take Him by force to make Him king, He departed again to a mountain by Himself alone*” (Jn 6:15).
- (2) As we noted in previous articles, Jesus’ return will mark the end of His reign, the destruction of the physical realm and the judgment of every soul, “*...At His coming. Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father*” (1Co 15). “*But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which 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*” (2Pe 3). “*He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained*” (Ac 17).
- (3-5) There is not a single verse in the Bible that says Jesus will ever again put the sole of His foot on this terrestrial ball. At His coming, there will be **one** general resurrection, not two. One thousand years will not separate the judgment of the righteous and the wicked. “*...For the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and*

come forth — those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation” (Jn 5:28-29). In the previous verse Jesus said the Father has given Him authority to execute judgment, indicating, again, that the end of time and the resurrection of the dead is also the time of the final judgment.

In summary, when Jesus returns the physical elements will be removed, death will come to an end, His reign will cease and all will be judged according to their works. Are you ready for that day to come? The premillennial theory is just that, it is a theory, like the theory of evolution. There is no truth in it! It is a figment of wild imaginations.

-- C. Boyd Jennings