

The Millennium and Beyond

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The Bible foretells the future of the human race, a time when God’s government will replace man’s government.

Newspaper headlines carry daily reports of human problems and tragedies. Wars. Revolutions. Droughts. Hunger. Hurricanes. Earthquakes.. Terrorism. Illegal drugs. Robberies. Murders. “News” has become nearly synonymous with “bad news.”

INTRODUCTION: End of an Era

But here is good news: Humanity at long last will learn the way to global peace, happiness and abundance.

Can you envision a world where nations cooperate and are at peace? Where no family has to agonize about sons and daughters sacrificing their lives on a battlefield or in jet combat? Where words like tank, battleship, bomb, nuclear warhead and holocaust are not part of the daily vocabulary?

Impossible? No. Such a world will be a reality. Ages ago, the prophets of the Bible foretold these utopian conditions: A world with a food surplus to more than support the population of the entire planet – and farmers will prosper. A world where people will learn to live without racial bigotry and hatred. A world where people learn to respect the culture, abilities and talents of one another. A world of mutual understanding and love.

In the new world to come, all humanity will be pioneers in some breathtaking changes in thinking and behavior. Societies will assimilate values that bring lasting peace of mind, happiness, and satisfaction – true fulfillment! No more murder, rape, drugs, child abuse, repression, greed or corruption! Peoples everywhere will learn to love one another and live together in peace on a revitalized planet.

Too good to be true?

Not if you understand what God has in mind for the world tomorrow. His plans have been in the Bible for many centuries.

This brochure is about how that wonderful world tomorrow becomes reality and life during the 1,000-year reign of Jesus Christ on the earth – the Millennium – and beyond.

Two years after the end of World War II, British statesman Sir Winston Churchill declared, “Unless some effective world super-government can be set up and brought quickly into action, the prospects for peace and human progress are dark and doubtful” (*Winston S. Churchill – His Complete Speeches*, edited by Robert Rhodes James, Volume VII, page 7488).

“Our desire for peace and harmony among nations is more than an idle dream”.

CHAPTER ONE: Needed: Fundamental Change in Government

In the early 1960s, noted nuclear physicist Edward Teller, who helped develop the hydrogen bomb, warned, “We must work for the establishment of a world authority sustained by moral force and physical force – a world government capable of enforcing worldwide law” (February 3, 1962, *Saturday Evening Post*).

Numerous other Scientists and leaders have echoed that world peace is possible only if all nations come together in some kind of supreme world organization.

The international political scene has changed considerably in recent years. Even after major international political developments – some of them revolutionary – humanity is really no closer to having an equitable world government than at the end of World War II. Today’s worldwide economic, social and even religious instability isn’t helping any, either.

In his book *World Politics*, A.F.K. Organski, professor of political science at the University of Michigan, observed: “World government is still a long way off... The creation of a world government through the voluntary agreement of existing nations is so unlikely that we can say flatly that it will never happen” (page 484).

Political scientist and historian Hans J. Morgenthau in *Politics Among Nations* asserted, “There is no shirking the conclusion that international peace cannot be permanent without a world state, and that a world state cannot be established under the present moral, social, and political conditions of the world” (sixth edition, page 537).

What a paradox! Many leaders understand the most urgent need today is an equitable world government. Yet they admit that such a government is quite impossible under present world conditions!

Will world government ever be accomplished? Or is it just an idle dream of unrealistic optimists? What is the answer? You need to know.

Lesson to Be Learned

Few understand that God has allowed us time to try every form of government and socioeconomic theory humanly devisable. We humans have experienced monarchy, oligarchy,

communism, fascism, socialism, democracy, even anarchy. (See insert *Government Definitions* at end of brochure.)

And neither they nor any international organizations have been able to guarantee world peace.

God has allowed man through the centuries to pursue the way that seems good. The result is a tragic history for all to read. The Bible warns that humanity's way won't work: "There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death" (Proverbs 16:25).

If our only hope lies in human efforts, then effective, justly administered world government indeed is not possible and there is no guarantee of survival.

Sooner or later, modern technology in the wrong hands would mean worldwide catastrophe.

Divine Intervention

Jesus Christ came with good news. An age of peace and harmony among peoples is coming.

Yet even Jesus prophesied humanity would bring itself to the brink of global suicide: "For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved [alive]..." (Matthew 24:21-22).

"But" he added, "those days will be shortened" (verse 22).

How? By the intervention of a supernatural power. The Eternal God will step into human affairs to send Jesus Christ, whom the Hebrew Scriptures call "the Prince of Peace," "the Messiah," to stop war and establish the government of God on the earth: "He makes wars cease to the end of the earth; He breaks the bow and cuts the spear in two; He burns the chariot in the fire" (Psalm 46:9).

The result? "The work or righteousness will be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever. My people will dwell in a peaceful habitation" (Isaiah 32:17-18). And, later, this: "Violence shall no longer be heard in your land, neither wasting nor destruction within your borders" (Isaiah 60:18).

The prophet Isaiah wrote: "For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the government will be upon His shoulder. And His name will be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government and peace there will be no end" (Isaiah 9:6-7).

The New Testament describes Jesus Christ establishing God's government of peace and justice in a rebellious, hostile world: "Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations [until people learn the way to peace]. And He Himself will rule them with a

rod of iron... And He has on His robe and His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS” (Revelation 19:15-16).

The World Tomorrow – When?

Call this climactic event what you will, the appearance of the Messiah, the second coming of Jesus Christ, the end of the age, it refers to the end of human societies as we know them today, unable to eradicate wars, sorrow and suffering. A totally new era will dawn. We call it the world tomorrow.

Jesus trained his disciples to proclaim the message of this coming world of peace. God will set up his kingdom on earth – that is the good news, the gospel, Jesus taught.

Jesus did not say precisely when Christ’s return would happen. No doubt his disciples thought it would be then. They asked Jesus, “Tell us, when will these things be? And what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?” (Matthew 24:3).

In Matthew 24, Jesus told them what to watch for. However, to answer the specific question, “When,” he warned, “But of that day and hour no one knows, no, not even the angels of heaven, but My Father only” (Matthew 24:36).

It has now been nearly 2,000 years since Jesus spoke those words. To this day still, only the Father knows exactly when Christ will come again to establish God’s kingdom.

But Bible prophecies point out events to immediately precede the coming of God’s kingdom.

A Restoration

After Jesus’ crucifixion and resurrection, and only days following the start of the New Testament church, Peter preached this message: “Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out... that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began” (Acts 3:19-21).

That is still the message of Christ’s Church. The return of Jesus Christ to this earth. The time of restoration.

But what needs restoring?

A better question is this: Does anything not need restoring?

Human Mismanagement

Our civilization has managed to pollute much of the vastness of our planet. We’ve poisoned streams, rivers, lakes and oceans with chemical and waste products. We spray the land with

herbicides, insecticides and pesticides. We have, through abuse, depleted soils of their natural fertility. We have even fouled the air we breathe with noxious waste of our industrial society.

In some areas of the world, we process and refine our food beyond recognition, depleting the nutritional value. In other areas, populations go with little and sometimes no food or shelter.

All this in addition to the main issue – humanity’s inability to live at peace. The earth will be in utter chaos before Christ returns! Christ is coming to abolish human misrule and to establish the kingdom of God – God’s government – over the earth. He will replace chaos with order; hatred with his laws of love.

More than anything else, a just government needs restoring. There is no other way to achieve lasting world peace, end hunger and sickness than the restoration of the government of God.

There is no other way to thoroughly stop pollution and to provide opportunity for human beings to live in the happiness we so desperately desire.

The Millennium

The last book of the New Testament shows Jesus Christ reigning for the period of 1,000 years during which he will bring about world peace, happiness and abundance.

This 1,000-year period has been called “the Millennium.” (Actually, the word *millennium*, which, incidentally, is not in the Bible, comes from the New Latin words *mille* and *ennium* meaning “one thousand” and “years.”)

The apostle John summarizes this time of peace in Revelation 20. There he saw in vision the resurrected, immortal saints who “lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years” (verse four).

Jesus Christ will not work alone in creating a world at peace with God and itself.

Verse six describes the responsibilities of Jesus’ followers in more detail: “Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ and shall reign with Him a thousand years.”

When the apostle Paul wrote of that same resurrection he said: “For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord” (1 Thessalonians 4:16-17).

This dramatically pictures Christ’s second coming. At the mighty blast of a great angelic trumpet, the dead in Christ will rise to spirit life. They ascend to the level of the clouds, meeting the Lord at his coming.

This description has caused many sincere people to assume that when Jesus comes, he will take the saints from the earth to heaven. The Bible, however, clearly teaches that when Jesus returns, he is coming back to earth. His followers will come back with him, and he will stand on the mount of Olives.

The prophet Zechariah pictures this spectacular event: “And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives... Thus the Lord my God will come, and all the saints with You... And the Lord shall be King over all the earth” (Zechariah 14:4, 5, 9).

This begins the promised time of peace and prosperity.

Jesus Christ will create a world of peace and blessings beyond what most have ever imagined. But these blessings won't happen in all nations all at once. This new society won't be built in a day, with so many wrong ideas to unlearn and overcome. Nations will need to learn the biblical way to lasting happiness and radiant health.

CHAPTER TWO: How Peace Will Come

Christ and the resurrected saints will set about to teach the world the way to peace. Two great commandments will be the foundation for peace and happiness: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind” and “You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Matthew 22:37, 39).

The prophet Isaiah describes this new kind of education: “For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. He [the Lord Jesus Christ] shall judge between nations and shall rebuke many people; they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore” (Isaiah 2:3-4).

Depicting this verse, outside the United Nations building in New York City is a striking bronze statue – a man beating a sword into a plow blade. That statue, a gift from the government of the Soviet Union to the United Nations, pictures, however, an elusive ideal in the hands of humans.

Happy Family Life

Today, peace and happiness are missing even from homes and families. Parents generally have not learned right childrearing principles. The outcome is family discord and often emotionally unstable children. In the coming millennium this will be corrected, as parents learn how to rear children to honor and obey them as God commands (Exodus 20:12). Right education, which begins in the home, produces happy family life – and much more.

We get a glimpse of happy family life in the world tomorrow from a few scriptures that look to the future – the time when God's government is set up.

Jeremiah wrote that God's way will restore "the voice of joy and the voice of gladness, the voice of the bridegroom and the voice of the bride, the voice of those who will say: 'Praise the Lord of hosts, for the Lord is good, for his mercy endures forever'" (Jeremiah 33:11).

Throughout time the joy of countless brides and bridegrooms has turned to sorrow. Sickness, poverty, divorce and war epitomize large segments of human history. But in that world to come, the joy of the wedding will live on and on as husbands and wives grow together in love.

Glimpse of the Future

They will have healthy, happy and obedient children: "They shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth children for trouble" (Isaiah 65:23). Notice what Zechariah saw as God revealed the future to him: "The streets of the city shall be full of boys and girls playing in its streets" (Zechariah 8:5).

Without fear of serious accident, kidnapping, gang violence, sexual abuse, drug pushers and the host of other modern atrocities that plague our societies, children will play openly – free from harm by man or beast.

Verse four tells us that the elderly will sit in the streets of Jerusalem (as an example of God's way to spread throughout the earth), "each one with his staff in his hand because of great age." The elderly will not fear mugging by the young. The traditional age barriers will crumble. The generation gap will go away. They will share the streets together. A wonderful time!

God's Government Worldwide

From the home to the community, to the entire world, Jesus Christ said the kingdom, or government, of God would spread like leaven or yeast in a lump of dough (Matthew 13:33). To permeate the whole earth so, eventually, " 'It shall come to pass that... all flesh shall come to worship before Me,' says the Lord" (Isaiah 66:23). The earth will become full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea" (Isaiah 11:9).

God's law will underpin all education, all statutes, all business dealings and all actions. Concern for the welfare of others will displace greed. With one worldwide standard of right and wrong, nations will have a basis for cooperation. Without conflicting ideologies and prejudice, people will resolve their problems peacefully.

A World Without Fear

The prophet Micah wrote: "Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established on the top of the mountains and shall be exalted above the hills; and peoples shall flow to it. Many nations shall come and say, 'Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we

shall walk in His paths.’... But everyone shall sit under his vine and under his fig tree, and no one shall make them afraid” (Micah 4:1-2, 4).

A world without fear seems unthinkable to people so used to living in fear. Yet as hard to believe as it is, such a peaceful, harmonious society will be established. Humans will not only be at peace with one another, but with nature itself.

Notice it in Isaiah 11:6-9: “The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the young goat, the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze; their young ones shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

“The nursing child shall play by the cobra’s hole, and the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper’s den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain.”

Sound farfetched?

It shouldn’t. It’s the promise of Almighty God recorded in the Bible.

How God will Change Human Nature

Such a world is not possible under human government. But with God all things are possible. (Matt. 19:26). And he will work an even greater miracle than changing animal nature: With a willing humanity he purposes to change *human* nature!

Yes, God, by his Spirit, will change human nature from its normally self-centered, defiant attitude. The power of God’s Holy Spirit working within the converted human mind will promote giving, serving, sharing, respect and concern for others.

Jeremiah illustrates this in symbolic form: “But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, says the Lord, I will put My law in their minds, and write it on their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be My people” (Jeremiah 31:33).

No more will men and women live in ignorance of God. In Ezekiel 36:27, we read: “I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep my judgements and do them.” God’s way of life will be made known to everyone.

As God is going to give the lion a peaceful nature, so he will make a truly marvelous and miraculous change in man’s hostile mind.

This change in the human mind will be brought about by repentance and receiving God’s Holy Spirit.

By a miracle, God will place his own nature of outgoing love within mankind (Romans 5:5). True love then being manifested in human beings through God's Spirit, people will then love their fellowmen and strive to make them happy and productive.

The millennial world will be filled with happy, fulfilled people guided, helped, protected and ruled by Christ and the saints. And all human beings will be called by God to inherit everlasting life in supreme happiness and accomplishment and thrilling joy.

Why is it inflation, recession or economic stagnation afflicts so many nations today? No nation's economy is without at least one of these problems for long. Either too much money chases too few goods, or too little money chases too many goods. But be sure of one thing: Most people are chasing more money and more goods!

CHAPTER THREE: The Land: True Source of Wealth

Jesus Christ has a better idea. When he returns as King of kings and Lord of lords, he is going to establish an economic system that will work. He will base it on God's laws.

God gave instructions to the nation of ancient Israel that, if complied with, would have meant an immensely successful society – not one with so many problems, like ours today. Under Moses, that society was to be a model nation. But ancient Israel as a whole did not comply.

Bible prophecies talk of humanity under Christ's 1,000-year reign enjoying peace, happiness and abundance. Chapters three and four of this brochure show how tomorrow's world will experience this by following the instructions God gave Israel. (See insert *Cities Rebuilt*, at end of brochure.)

True increase originates with the land: the source of food, raw materials for clothing, for constructing houses. To produce a stable economy, Jesus Christ will apportion land.

Let's turn again to the prophecy of Micah 4. In verse three we read that weapons will be beaten into farming implements – necessary items for an agricultural economy. Then, verse four: "Everyone shall sit under his vine and under his fig tree." This literal statement describes residential conditions as they will be at the time. It suggests family ownership and fertile land.

Land Stays in the Family

God's instructions to ancient Israel serve to give us an idea of land ownership in the Millennium. In chapters 13 through 19 of Joshua, Joshua divides the land among the tribes of Israel. It was divided still further among extended families or clans (see, for example, 1 Kings 21:1-3).

In Leviticus 25:23, God instructed that the land was not to be permanently sold out of the family. Verses 24 and 25 teach that if a family member through lack of good management or other

causes must sell for a period of time a portion of land he or she has control over, a member of the extended family has the right to buy back the land, so it remains within the family.

God further instructs, in verses 26 to 27, that if no one in the extended family can do this, the seller then has the right to buy back the land, provided he or she has acquired the means to do so.

We begin to see here that buying and selling are not, in fact, the terms we would use to describe this type of transaction. We might call this leasing.

Verse 28 clarifies this point. One could sell or lease the land outside of the extended family only until the year of the jubilee, which occurs every 50 years (verse 10). In this year, the land returned to the control of the family that had it as a permanent inheritance.

Under this system, then, those who have had to sell part or all of the family inheritance for a period of time will be able to repossess it. They may retake possession without cost during the year of jubilee or redeem – purchase it at a certain cost – before the jubilee year arrives.

Families will never again have to permanently lose the basic resource of their agricultural land.

The Seventh Year

Every seventh year in the cycle of 50, short-term debts will be eliminated. This will give debtors a chance to start a fresh. God will pour out blessings on those who forgive such debts (see Deuteronomy 15).

Leviticus 25 describes letting the land lie fallow during the seventh year: “Six years you shall sow your field, and six years you shall prune your vineyard, and gather in its fruit; but in the seventh year there shall be a sabbath of solemn rest for the land, a sabbath to the Lord. You shall neither sow your field nor prune your vineyard” (verses 3-4).

What will people eat in the seventh year? Whatever grows voluntarily, of its own, may be eaten during that time of land rest.

In Leviticus, God says: “Then I will command My blessing on you in the sixth year, and it will bring forth produce enough for three years. And you shall sow in the eighth year and eat old produce until the ninth year; until its produce comes in, you shall eat of the old harvest” (verses 21-22). God always provides when humans sincerely seek to obey him and his laws.

Funded by Tithes

God will fund his spiritual government by a basic annual 10 percent of the increase each person receives from his or her productive effort. This 10 percent is called a tithe (*tithe* means tenth). The same law, the same percentage, will apply to all.

In ancient Israel, after the people demanded a mortal king instead of God to rule over them, the government collected taxes beyond the tithes God required. The story occurred in the time of the prophet Samuel. The people sought a king – a human government. Samuel warned them that the king would expropriate a tenth (the king’s tax, not God’ tenth) of their produce and cattle to himself: “And he will take the best of your fields, your vineyards, and your olive groves, and give them to his servants. He will take a tenth of your grain and your vintage, and give it to his officers and servants... He will take a tenth of your sheep” (1 Samuel 8:14-15, 17).

Today taxes are far more than a tenth of one’s increase. Of course, a percentage of the various taxes that governments collect cover workers’ salaries and public works projects.

In Matthew 22:21 Jesus taught, “Render therefore to Caesar [the head of the human government of that day] the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.” In keeping with this teaching, Christians today pay the required taxes collected in nations where they live. In the Millennium, however, exorbitant human imposed taxation will be no more!

With no tax on property value, each landowner will have incentive to improve the land and any buildings associated with it, adding to its value, and thus the landowner’s living standard.

Another Tithe

God’s law also provides for the widow, the fatherless and other needy. And there will be many of them at the beginning of the Millennium. “At the end of every third year you shall bring out the tithe [another 10 percent] of your produce of that year and store it up within your gates. And the Levite, because he has no portion nor inheritance with you, and the stranger and the fatherless and the widow who are within your gates, may come and eat and be satisfied, that the Lord your God may bless you in all the work of your hand which you do” (Deuteronomy 14:28-29).

Historically, this sum was set aside for welfare and administered at the *local* level where the problems could best be understood. If practiced today, this method would end the need for welfare states.

What a wonderful way to eliminate perpetual hopelessness, poverty and dependency! What a happy time for so many poor and landless millions to look forward to!

Sound Land Management

But you may ask, will there be enough good and fertile land for all? Yes, God will ensure enough for everyone. Notice: “The wilderness and the wasteland shall be glad for them, and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose; it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice... For waters shall burst forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert” (Isaiah 35:1-2, 6).

Farmers under the government of God will not need synthetic fertilizers that do not maintain or replenish the soil's natural fertility and humus. Such methods alter water-holding capacity and beneficial microorganisms and can leave harmful residues in the soil, contaminate the groundwater with nitrates and increase some plants' vulnerability to disease.

No more will they plant hundreds or thousands of acres to one crop (monoculture), giving rise to the potential for enormous crop damage by pests and the consequent use of pesticides. People then will be educated in proper farming methods.

No more will humankind create wastelands by letting livestock overgraze. No more will they deforest whole regions with little topsoil. No more will they put to plow poor soils designed for pasture: "Do not be afraid, you beasts of the field; for the open pastures are springing up" (Joel 2:22).

No longer will anyone subsist on marginal land. In the Millennium, families around the world will keep their precious inheritance of land fertile and productive. Gone will be the huge economic strain on farmers to produce more than land resources can bear. Sanity in the expectations of the marketplace will finally return.

Ranchers will not feed livestock on giant feedlots, leading to excessive fats in meats and waste disposal problems. "In that day your cattle will feed in large pastures" (Isaiah 30:23).

All of this may seem too good to be true. Yet this is what Bible prophecy reveals for the future. Christ is returning with full authority to teach nations and individuals how to preserve and increase the most precious physical resource humans have – fertile soil.

Any viable economy must first be agriculturally based. Remember, no economy is without an agricultural base somewhere, even countries that rely on imports. But what if rain comes too early, or too late, or during harvest or not at all? What if floods ruin crops? What if they are struck by destructive winds or frost? Today these threats, more and more widespread, can spell economic ruin.

CHAPTER FOUR: Incredible Blessings

Wonderfully productive communities flourish when human beings live by God's practical laws. Rain at the right times – one of the many blessings of obedience.

In the world ruled by Jesus Christ, there will be no worry about the environment or the weather. To the obedient, God promises: "I will cause showers to come down in their season; there shall be showers of blessing. Then the trees of the field shall yield their fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase. They shall be safe in their land" (Ezekiel 34:26-27). What wonder blessings!

Imagine the joy of today's impoverished desert dweller seeing fulfilled the prophecy: "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongues fail for thirst, I, the Lord, will

hear them; I, the God of Israel, will not forsake them. I will open rivers in desolate heights, and fountains in the midst of the valleys; I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water... that they many see and know, and consider and understand together, that the hand of the Lord has done this, and the Holy One of Israel has created it” (Isaiah 41:17-18, 20).

Notice also: “And all these blessings shall come upon you and overtake you, because you obey the voice of the Lord your God... The Lord will open to you His good treasure, the heavens, to give the rain to your land in its season” (Deuteronomy 28:2, 12). The only time the weather will be against people will be when individuals or nations refuse to obey God and his laws. You can read of this in Zechariah 14:17.

The combination of obedience to God’s laws, right agricultural practices and favorable weather brings unprecedented abundance.

Of that time, God inspired the prophet Joel to write: “The threshing floors shall be full of wheat, and the vats shall overflow with new wine and oil... You shall eat in plenty and be satisfied” (Joel 2:24, 26). Food production will greatly increase: “Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when the plowman shall overtake the reaper, and the treader of grapes him who sows seed” (Amos 9:13).

Fairness for All

But national abundance today does not eliminate the hunger and malnutrition of the poor elsewhere. In the world tomorrow everything will be different. Jesus Christ will not tolerate the political systems we are now familiar with: systems that force the poor nations to sell what they grow to richer nations, to pay off grinding, unending debt. He will not allow political and military conflicts that today stop equitable distribution of food to the poor.

We have already examined God’s system of debt-forgiveness. The Bible also states: “Here are the orders of the Lord the Eternal: Enough, O princes of Israel! Cease harrying and despoiling the people, enforce law and justice, relieve my people of your evictions, says the Lord the Eternal. You must have just balances, just dry and liquid measures [the end of economic selfishness]” (Ezekiel 45:9-10, Moffatt translation). And elsewhere: “How long will you judge unjustly, and show partiality to the wicked? Defend the poor and fatherless; do justice to the afflicted and needy. Deliver the poor and needy; free them from the hand of the wicked... Arise, O God, judge the earth; for you shall inherit all nations (Psalm 82:2-4, 8).

An Outbreak of Health

Adherence to biblical principles dealing with sanitation, hygiene, quarantine and diet (see, for example, Leviticus 3:17) will rid the world of a host of illnesses.

The scourge of sexually transmissible diseases, including AIDS, will be conquered by teaching young people to wait until married before entering a sexual union and by ending, through

education and strict prohibition, intravenous drug abuse. Faithfulness to one's marital partner will further ensure sexually transmissible diseases never occur.

God will also miraculously intervene so "the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped." And "the lame shall leap like a deer, and the tongue of the dumb sing" (Isaiah 35:5-6). Vibrant health for all! Those who have experienced serious illness know what a wonderful blessing this will be!

As God liberates human beings from sickness and disease, healing "shall spring forth speedily" (Isaiah 58:8). Promising the wonderful conditions of good health, God says, "For I will restore health to you and heal you of your wounds..." (Jeremiah 30:17).

Miraculous healing of sickness combined with right education will mean radiant health for all – blessings for obeying God's laws and principles.

God's Laws Produce True Joy

In a world of such bountiful blessings, people will know true joy: "Then shall the virgin rejoice in the dance, and the young men and the old, together; for I will turn their mourning to joy, will comfort them, and make them rejoice rather than sorrow" (Jeremiah 31:13).

For 1,000 years, obedience to God's laws will be the only way that leads to a truly fulfilling and happy life for everyone: "That they may see and know, and consider and understand together, that the hand of the lord has done this, and the Holy One of Israel has created it" (Isaiah 41:20). What a contrast to the centuries of humanity's chaotic rule under Satan's sway leading so many to unhappiness, pain and death.

Christ's millennial reign will evidence once and for all what a wonderful world results when human beings really live by God's laws.

The Millennium, though, is not the end of it all. There is yet more revealed in the Bible.

It's logical next to ask: What happens after the thousand years?

So far we have concentrated on the period sometimes called the millennium – the 1,000-year reign over physical human beings on this earth by Jesus Christ and his saints. We have seen the new society God will establish and how truly happy people will be living in a peaceful, clean, healthful and well-planned environment.

But, as incredible as it may seem, this is only a means to an end, a step toward a goal beyond the Millennium!

A Future Tragedy

Before we tell you of that time, however, we must first relate a future tragedy. Revelation 20 describes: “Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea. They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city [Jerusalem]. And fire came down from God out of the heaven and devoured them” (verses 7-9).

In his perfect understanding of human nature, God realizes that even after 1,000 years of real happiness, humans can ignore the lessons of history. They will not remember how miserable it was when Satan ruled.

Therefore, God will release Satan from his imprisonment for a short time. God will confirm that he rules supreme – that his way alone brings true happiness.

Those who choose to follow Satan and knowingly rebel against the government established by Jesus Christ will be punished by a sudden fiery death before the next part of God’s plan occurs.

After God uses Satan for this time of testing, he will banish Satan and all the demons. Never again will the devil influence human thought.

With the archrival Satan permanently out of human affairs, the Eternal God will bring about the next step in his plan – a step only a few now understand.

Many a mother – and father – has pondered some variation of the following: “What is the fate of my baby? She was born premature and died just four hours after birth.” Or asked: “My child died shortly before birth. Will he ever have a chance to live in the next world?”

CHAPTER FIVE: Beyond the Millennium

God offers salvation to all. Billions brought back to life will see God’s way yielding peace and happiness.

Perhaps you have even asked such questions as “Would God condemn all those who have never even heard of Christ?” Or “What will happen to Uncle Harry who never went to Church and died an alcoholic?”

The apostle Peter faced similar questions. He said, “God shows no partiality” (Acts 10:34) and that God does not desire any to perish (see 2 Peter 3:9).

Throughout history most lived and died without hearing the name of Jesus Christ. Yet, speaking of Jesus, Peter also stated, “Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).

How then do we reconcile the seeming paradox in Peter's message? Does the Bible address the concern of mothers who have lost infants?

And what about the idea that "now is the day of salvation" (2 Corinthians 6:2) for anyone who has heard the name of Jesus – when most don't respond? How to reconcile that?

Part of this verse, written by the apostle Paul, is from Isaiah 49:8. Neither the original Hebrew of Isaiah 49:8 nor the original Greek of 2 Corinthians 6:2 uses the definite article *the*. Therefore, "the" is not the original sense. Yet most Christians take for granted the doctrine that now is *the* only day of salvation.

2 Corinthians 6:2 can validly be translated: "For He says: 'In an acceptable time I have heard you, and in [a] day of salvation I have helped you.' Behold, now is [an] accepted time; behold, now is [a] day of salvation."

Certainly, this is the day of salvation for *some*. Those to whom God has offered salvation in this age – whose minds he has opened to spiritual knowledge and converted to his way of life – have opportunity to be saved by his grace.

But the vast majority of people have not had their minds opened. This simply is not their day of salvation.

Another Resurrection

So what about all those who have not known Christ and those who died as little children? And those who thought they were Christians but didn't really live the Christian life?

They have yet to receive their first and only opportunity to be saved!

Jesus Christ instructed the people, as recorded in Matthew 12:41-42: "The men of Nineveh will rise in the judgement with this generation [those who heard Jesus speak but did not believe him] and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed a greater than Jonah is here. The queen of the South [the queen of Sheba] will rise up in the judgement with this generation and condemn it, for she came from the ends of the earth to hear the wisdom of Solomon; and indeed a greater than Solomon is here."

From areas as diverse as Nineveh in ancient Assyria and Sheba in Arabia will come those who will learn of and reproach the hypocrisy of Jesus' generation. But for people from such different times and regions to hear and learn of each other's problems requires a singular event in human experience – a resurrection and a time of judgement and reflection. (See also Matthew 11:20-24).

This resurrection takes place long after Christ's return and the rising to immortality of those called to learn and understand the truth of salvation. Using the Moffatt translation, we read in Revelation 20:4-5 of those comparatively few called by God to salvation: "They came to life and

reigned along with the Christ for a thousand years. (As for the rest of the dead, they did not come to life until the thousand years were completed.)”

A thousand years after Jesus restores his government, all who lived *without an opportunity to receive salvation* will be brought back to physical life!

The Bible describes this resurrection in the book written by the prophet Ezekiel. He saw this same time in a vision from God. God put Ezekiel in a valley full of dry bones, representing people long dead (Ezekiel 37:1-2). These dead, God revealed, are the house of Israel (verse 11). As we have just seen, they will not be the only nation or people in the resurrection.

God told Ezekiel to tell the bones: “Thus says the Lord God to these bones: ‘Surely I will cause breath to enter into you, and you shall live. I will put sinews on you and bring flesh upon you, cover you with skin and put breath in you; and you shall live’” (verses 5-6). Then these who had rejected God “shall know that I am the Lord.” And, God announces, “I will put My Spirit in you” (verse 14).

Judgment, But Not Condemnation

This resurrection is a time of judgment: “Then,” John wrote in Revelation of the vision Jesus showed him, “I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it [Jesus Christ]... And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened [the books of the Bible]. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books” (Revelation 20:11-12).

This judgment is not a time of condemnation, not a time of “second chances.” Jesus and his saints will open the minds of those restored to physical life to understand the Bible. As if a veil were lifted from their eyes (Isaiah 25:7) they will *for the first time* receive spiritual understanding.

In this time of judgment, multiple billions of people, likely to include your relatives and loved ones, will see the superb work accomplished during the 1,000-year reign of Jesus Christ on earth. They will see the clean, verdant countryside, the restored, neatly organized and crime-free cities. And they will know the way of life that created this paradise also led to eternal life for those who lived in it.

The society created during the millennial reign of Jesus Christ will be quite different from the ancient world or the Middle Ages or our world today. It will be a witness of God’s way to help billions find eternal life.

These resurrected billions will see how their lives contrasted with God’s way of life shown in the Bible. All – young and old – will understand the causes of the sorrows they experienced. With their minds opened, they will be given their first and only chance to repent of former ways and begin living God’s way of life as physical humans.

God offers them spiritual salvation and they ultimately attain eternal life. Jesus alluded to this: He “stood and cried out, saying, ‘If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water’” (John 7:37-38).

Some would receive these rivers of living water – God’s Holy Spirit – beginning shortly after Jesus’ resurrection. But the ultimate meaning of this scripture, the resurrection to physical life, is still more than a thousand years into the future!

Billions who have lived from the beginning of human history will be brought back to life by God’s power, taught his truth and given a chance to live physical life as he intended, before being changed to spirit and entering his kingdom. What a great time of salvation that will be!

But what about those comparatively few who knowingly and willfully don’t want to overcome their human nature and submit to the rule of God?

In the end, those who reject salvation are put to death mercifully.

A Final Resurrection

In Revelation 20 we read: “The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades [the grave] delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works” (verse 13).

These comparatively few already had their only chance for salvation when they were first alive. God offered it and they willfully rejected it. God does not desire that anyone perish, but he will not *force* salvation upon anyone.

Rather than let them live a miserable life opposing the only way that leads to true happiness, mercifully God will pronounce a death sentence upon them. They will be “cast into the lake of fire” (Revelation 20:15).

This fire will be all-consuming: “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” (2 Peter 3:10). The elements of the universe will be altered.

A New Heaven and a New Earth

Revelation 21 unfurls the scene that follows. “And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God... I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, ‘Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them [God the Father then coming down from his throne in heaven to live on the new earth!], and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be with them and be their God. And God will wipe

away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying; and there shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away.'

“Then He who sat on the throne said, ‘Behold, I make all things new.’ And He said to me, ‘Write, for these words are true and faithful.’ And He said to me, ‘It is done!’” (verses 1-6).

The description continues in Revelation 21 and 22. Take the time to read and consider these passages about a time so spectacular it makes the trials of our present lives pale into insignificance (Romans 8:18).

What a magnificent plan for all humanity designed by our patient and loving God “who desires all me to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (1 Timothy 2:4).

It Will Happen!

Bad news will be a thing of the past. Peace, happiness and abundance at last! Our future is a world of great physical blessings under Christ’s millennial reign. Beyond that, immortal, spiritual life (if we accept it!) in a spectacular, transformed universe!

When we see and experience suffering in our present world, let’s be thankful for our loving Creator’s plan of salvation. This is the hope of humanity. What glorious, good news!

Governments and Socioeconomic Policies

Nations have tried numerous forms of government and socioeconomic systems over thousands of years. But no human government or national policy has been able to ensure permanent world peace or abundance for all. Humanity without God simply cannot produce lasting solutions.

Anarchy	Lawlessness or political disorder due to the absence of governmental authority.
Capitalism	Individuals or corporations own capital goods, with the price, production and distribution determined mainly by competition in the marketplace.
Communism	Property communally owned, with distribution of goods and services.
Democracy	Government of the people with the rights of the individual respected and protected by law and the authority of elected representatives.
Dictatorship	Absolute power concentrated in an autocrat or clique.
Fascism	Single political party dictatorship with privately owned but strictly party-controlled, means of production.
Monarchy	Undivided rule or absolute sovereignty by one person, often a hereditary chief of state with life tenure.
Oligarchy	Often corrupt rule by a small unrepresented elite.
Socialism	No class structure, economic divisions or private ownership, with production controlled by the community
Theocracy	State or group government as divinely guided.

Sources: *Dictionary of Historical Terms*, 1983; *Dictionary of Politics*, 1980; *A Dictionary of Politics*, 1974; *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary*, ninth edition.

Cities Rebuilt

The sprawling, overcrowded, sometimes ugly and crime-filled metropolises of this world will soon be no more. This does not mean, however, there will be no business and governmental centers during Jesus Christ's 1,000-year reign.

Notice: "And they shall repair [renew] the ruined cities" (Isaiah 61:4). What will these cities be like?

The prophet Ezekiel gives an inspiring example of the future world capital of Jerusalem.

Green belt is planned (Ezekiel 48:15-17), to the east and west farming areas (verse 18-19), to the north semi-wilderness areas with rivers running from the Temple to the Mediterranean Sea and the (formerly) Dead Sea. Although still partly saline, the dead Sea will be highly beneficial for its mineral content and abundant fish. The riverbanks will be lined with fruit trees because of this new source of pure water (Ezekiel 47:9-12).

Jerusalem's environment – a blend of the best qualities of the city and countryside – and God's desire for open spaces, as expressed in Isaiah 5:8, means millennial cities will have this model to follow.

Some city planners even today promote green belts of farms, forests and other greenery so residents don't lose touch with the natural environment. Land will be properly distributed between city, suburb, agricultural and natural areas. Ecological beauty and balance will figure heavily in the planning of millennial cities.

Unlike the property in agricultural areas and villages, city property will not be a perpetual family possession, the Bible indicates.

Notice God's instructions to ancient Israel concerning this matter: "And if a man sells a house in a walled city, then he may redeem it [he has the right to buy it back] within a whole year after it is sold... But if it is not redeemed within the space of a full year, then the house in the walled city shall belong permanently to him who bought it, throughout his generations [unless he or she also decides to sell it]. It shall not be released in the Jubilee" (Leviticus 25:29-30). This allows for creative city development.

Many of today's cities lack concerted planning and quality construction. Often, building styles clash, sites are overcrowded and streets or rail systems woefully inadequate for the numbers traveling them. But God is not the author of such confusing conditions (1 Corinthians 14:33, 40).

Under God's government, resurrected saints will govern cities and guide city planners.

Thoughtfully designed urban centers will not just spring up in a hodgepodge manner.

Transportation engineers will construct systems to handle carefully anticipated populations – not the dangerous chaos that exists in so many parts of the world today. Cities will not be populated beyond what can be provided for with locally available resources, such as water.

Food will be grown nearby. Houses will be compatible with environment and fully energy-efficient. In accord with the golden rule – "whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them" (Matthew 7:12) – buildings will not be constructed with toxic or dangerous materials.

No longer need human beings feel cut off from God's creation by miles of nothing but artificial surroundings of concrete, asphalt and steel.

Business in the Millennium

God's law, the Ten commandments, and God's Word, the Bible – which amplifies the intent of God's laws – will be the basic guides of how humans conduct business relationships.

Nations won't have endless, complicated bureaucracies, regulations and laws to govern every action. All will promote honesty, truthfulness, fair prices, service and safety. In other words, nations will become converted.

Existing methods of buying and selling – business as a whole – are to be completely revamped. Trade, even among nations, won't be cutthroat competition. Quality goods will sell at fair prices.

What about industrial pollution?

The Bible indicates society of the world tomorrow will certainly need small industry when it mentions, for example, “beating swords [war machinery] into plowshares [farm implements].”

These industries, however, will not pollute the environment. God takes caring for our planet very seriously. The guiding principle is in Isaiah 11:9: “They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain.” The world under the reign of Jesus Christ will use energy sources in an effective, helpful way.

Men and women won't be slaves to an assembly line. God's law of love toward our fellow humans demands labor practices that enhance rather than dehumanize workers' lives.

In all human production and activity, the emphasis will be on quality, not quantity and cheapness at excessive profit. Lasting, quality goods conserve resources and energy.

Reusable materials will be recycled.

The concept of planned obsolescence will itself be obsolete. Providing goods and services to help, rather than exploit and burden, will be the order of the day. Western culture's consume-quickly-and-throw-away society will be no more.

Overview of End-Time Events

The Bible foretells major events of God's plan on earth, including the future of the human race and how God's government will replace human-ruled society. A few scriptures spotlighting these events are listed below.

<p>Return of Jesus Christ Daniel 7:13-14 Zechariah 14:3-4 Revelation 11:15-17</p>	<p>Satan Incites Rebellion, Cast into Lake of Fire 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 13 Revelation 20:7-10</p>
<p>Saints Resurrected Matthew 24:31 1 Corinthians 15:50-52 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17 Revelation 11:18</p>	<p>'Great White Throne' Judgment, Billions Resurrected Isaiah 25:7-8; Ezekiel 37:1-14 Matthew 11:20-24; 12:41-42 Revelation 20:11-12</p>
<p>Messiah's 1,000-Year Reign, Satan Chained Psalm 97, 98, 99 Isaiah 2:1-4; 11:6-9; 35:1-10 Micah 4:1-5; Revelation 20:1-5</p>	<p>Unrepentant Dead Rise in Third Resurrection Daniel 12:2; John 5:29 2 Peter 3:7-12 Revelation 20:13-15</p>
<p>Saints Rule World With Christ Psalm 149:4-9 Daniel 7:22, 27 Matthew 19:28 Revelation 20:6</p>	<p>Glorious 'New Heavens and New Earth' Isaiah 65:17-18 2 Peter 3:13 Revelation 21:1-5</p>