

## Th131 God's Plan

### *Lesson Th131-41 The Millennium*

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to be the mayor of a city or perhaps even the president or prime minister of a country? There would be great dinners with important people and much prestige. But what few of us consider is all the work of governing and leading. How does one learn to do this? A university education is a good starting point, but where do you get practical hands-on training? What happens to the people you are governing if you make a mistake?

In this lesson we will learn about how God has included in His plan for His children a time of training and practical experience in the family business of ruling and reigning. Previously we have learned that Christ returns in the clouds and all of the saints, living and dead are changed or resurrected with new immortal bodies. They meet Christ in the clouds to be with Him in heaven. We also learned that God pours out His wrath upon the wicked of the earth during seven years called the Great Tribulation. Almost half of the world's population will die during the Tribulation. Three and one-half years into the Tribulation there will be a great war in heaven. Satan and all of his angels will be thrown down to the earth. At the end of the Tribulation, Jesus Christ returns to the earth from heaven, leading a great army of all of the saints. Satan gathers armies to try and stop Him, but as you can imagine, all of the armies of the earth have no power over Christ and they are all destroyed.

Can you imagine this majestic return to the earth by Jesus? Can you imagine the sheer terror that Satan will experience as he is captured and dragged before Christ? Here is what the apostle John saw in his vision: "And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain. He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. He threw him into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him; to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended" (Rev 20:1-3).

We can only wonder at the rage and frustration Satan will feel. He was the great cherub who once flew above the throne of God. He once ruled over one-third of the universe. But he has been bound and cast into the Abyss or what is often translated the 'bottomless pit' or the grave.

The prophet Isaiah wrote of Satan's fall into the bottomless pit: "The realm of the dead below is all astir to meet you at your coming; it rouses the spirits of the departed to greet you— all those who were leaders in the world; it makes them rise from their thrones— all those who were kings over the nations. They will all respond, they will say to you, 'You also have become weak, as we are; you have become like us . . . How you have fallen from heaven, O morning star, son of the dawn! You have been cast down to the earth, you who once laid low the nations! You said in your heart, 'I will ascend to the heavens; I will raise my throne above the stars of God; I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly, on the utmost heights of Mount Zaphon. I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.' But you are brought down to the realm of the dead, to the depths of the pit" (Isa 14:9-15).

So for 1000 years Satan will be bound and remain in the very prison he had inflicted upon all of humanity.

Meanwhile, Jesus Christ will set up His throne in Jerusalem and will rule over the entire earth for 1000 years. All of the saints in their immortal bodies will rule with Him over all of the wicked who managed to survive the Great Tribulation.

We have learned that God wants His children to be with Him. We have also learned that we will share with Jesus His inheritance, which includes the spirit world and the physical universe. God created it all for His children. But we have also learned that a ruler rules through power and authority. The simplest use of power and authority is in warfare. We, the children, learn how to use God's power and authority in warfare with Satan in our short 60-80 years upon the earth. This is our time of elementary education. Since God did not want us practicing on each other, He let Satan continue to work even after he was condemned through the death and resurrection of Christ. This was so that the Church, His children, would have someone to practice power and authority over.

This conflict with Satan trains us to be spiritual warriors. But it does not train us to rule or govern. This will require on-the-job training. And again, God does not want us practicing on each other. These 1000 years when we rule and reign with Christ upon the earth will serve as our university training in governing. We will not rule over each other, but rather over the wicked who survived the Tribulation. Elementary school was one lifetime. The Millennium will be the equivalent of 12 lifetimes!

This lesson is **important** because it describes the events leading up to the Millennium—the 1,000-year reign of Christ with his saints over all the earth.

The **main truth** of this lesson is that we will rule and reign with Christ upon the earth. This will serve as our on-the-job training in governing for eternity.

Let's **review** what you learned in this lesson.

1. At the end of the Tribulation, Christ will return to Earth. What will happen to Satan?

[Pause]

A. If you said, “Satan will be bound and cast into the Abyss for 1000 years,” you are correct.

2. What will Christ and the saints do on the earth during their 1000-year millennial reign?

[Pause]

A. If you said, “They will rule and reign over the wicked who survived the Tribulation,” then you answered correctly.

3. What is God's purpose for His children during the millennial reign? [Pause]

A. If you said that He wants His children to learn how to use power and authority in governing, you are right.

In this lesson we have learned about God's plan for our future and how He wants us to learn how to be good stewards and how to govern. The time during the Millennium is like attending God's university of power and authority. But before we can advance to university, we must first learn the basic lesson of power and authority by practicing it in spiritual warfare with Satan now. We know that we do this directly by being a witness of Christ to unbelievers. Your **assignment** is to sit down with a few fellow believers and discuss other ways that Christians can learn to practice power and authority over Satan.