

The Mystery of the Millennium

Part 3

This is the third installment of the MOM series, The Mystery of the Millennium. And there is an item that we need to look at to be refreshed on, because it is the undercurrent of all the events that we will be looking at.

It is foundational to God's plan and his overall purpose and we must understand it, just keep it in the back of our mind as we go forward.

In the book of John, chapter 12, verse 23 – 25. Christ speaking:

²³But Christ answered them, saying, "The hour has come that the Son of Man should be glorified. ²⁴Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain. ²⁵He who loves his life will lose it, and he who hates his life in this world will keep it for eternal life.

The two positions really couldn't be more clear. Love this world and all that it offers or hate this world and all that it offers. If we do that, that leads to eternal life.

I've spent the better part of three years after leaving the corporate COG looking up the word "spirit" in all its places in the bible, something I highly recommend doing in case you have a mind to do so. And after a while some conclusions just seem inescapable. I would like to share with you, for your consideration, some of those thoughts for you to look at and consider.

God the Father is the maker of spirits. We read of that in Zechariah 12:1. And Moses acknowledged that in Numbers 16:22 and 27:16. We don't think much about that today, at least in my church experience it wasn't first and front and center.

Those spirits, made by God, are given life in a body of flesh to experience life and make choices. They can decide to be hostile to God and his ways or to love God and his ways. And in a very real sense we are choosing our father and whom we might serve.

When we die our spirit survives the death of our body and it returns to God who gave it. Christ understood this idea in John 12, which we read and Peter understood it. If we go to II Pet 1, verse 14 and he clearly spoke about that and he understood it. It says:

¹⁴knowing that shortly (He knew the gig was up) I must put off my tent, just as our Lord Jesus Christ showed me.

So very similar to Christ's comment in John 12.

And if we go to the book of Daniel, Daniel 7, verse 15 we also see that Daniel understood that very thing. Daniel 7 and verse 15. It's important that we consider this. It says:

¹⁵"I, Daniel, (After he had seen many things) was grieved in my spirit within my body,

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And the actual Hebrew on that, within my body literally means, "In the midst of its sheath."

And it would likely be a good idea if Peter understood that and Daniel understood that it would likely be a decent idea that we understand it as well. Our spirit is the prize, for when it returns to God, God decides whether to put it into a spirit body or whether to put it back into a physical body.

If that spirit is in open hostility to God and his ways, the chances of it being given a spirit body and eternal life, are zero. The whole purpose of our human experience in life is for God to determine which way we will go.

There is the factor of being given the facility to choose, ignorance verses knowing such as this. But at the end of the day when we know and know that we know and God knows that we know and we choose to deny him and follow another path, the game is over.

When Christ died he was in perfect harmony with God and his ways. And his spirit returned to God. We read of that in the book of John. John chapter 19, and verse 30. Christ was absolutely cognizant of that. John chapter 19, verse 30.

³⁰So when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit.

Solomon tells us that our spirit returns to the God who made it and gave it. That is in Ecclesiastes 12:7 and Christ was no Different. His path is our path because Christ was totally at one with God. God was able and willing to put Christ's spirit into a spirit body with eternal life and tremendous capacity. But always in subjection to the Father who is his God.

How do you think it will work out for you and I, if our spirit returns to God if we are in total agreement with the Father? Further, how do think it will work out for you and I if we are hostile to God the Father?

It would seem obvious that one was perfectly in line with the Father the outcome would be significantly different than if we weren't. There is going to come a time when God is going to test the core of people to see whether they have submitted to him, or they haven't.

We read of that in Revelation 3:10 where it says:

¹⁰Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.

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There is going to be protection offered for some. Well, test for what? Well the answer is the spirit of their spirit. The mental disposition of that spirit that God gave to us, our seat of intellect; the part of us that returns to God. That is the test.

This is important because it is the underlying driver regarding end time events. Keep that in the back of your mind as we go forward.

In the last message we introduced the idea of the marker bed, which is a very, very powerful tool in our studying of the scriptures to join up events that talk of the same thing. And we used the example in Matthew 24 in the last message which is very straight forward and very familiar to us. Let's take a look at that again and pay attention to the sequence of events as they are revealed to us.

In Matthew 24:21, a very clear statement:

²¹For 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.²²And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved, but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.

So there is no mistaking that is clearly the Great Tribulation. If we go down to verse 29 it says:

²⁹Immediately after the tribulation of those days the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; the stars will fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.

A very clear unambivalent statement; after the tribulation the heavenly signs show up and we need to pay attention to that. Notice verse 30:

³⁰Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.

It is interesting to note here that they will mourn. Well, why would they mourn? We will find out that answer in this message. It's because they know what it means when they see that. Verse 31 the angels are sent to gather the elect and the first resurrection occurs. That is pretty simple; it's in order and we shall see that repeat if we got it right.

Well there is a companion account in the scriptures, let's go over to Mark 13, where we will look for the same sequence of events to confirm and reaffirm our understanding. In Mark 13, verse 19 we read:

¹⁹For in those days there will be tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the creation which God created until this time, nor ever shall be. ²⁰And unless the Lord

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had shortened those days, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake, whom He chose, He shortened the days.

Well that matches up perfectly.

²¹*“Then if anyone says to you, ‘Look, here is the Christ!’ or, ‘Look, He is there!’ do not believe it.*

So it tells us as it did in the previous passage, I did not comment on it, but there will be enormous deception at that time.

We see the heavenly signs in verse 24:

²⁴*“But in those days, after that tribulation, (Exactly as it says in Matthew 24:29) the sun will be darkened, and the moon will not give its light; ²⁵the stars of heaven will fall, and the powers in the heavens will be shaken.*

The sign!

²⁶*Then they will see the Son of Man coming in the clouds with great power and glory. ²⁷And then He will send His angels, and gather together His elect from the four winds, from the farthest part of earth to the farthest part of heaven.*

It's exactly the same sequence and that is exactly what we would expect.

Well let's go further and just nail that puppy down. Luke 21. If we go to Luke 21 and pick it up in verse 22, it says:

²²*For these are the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. ²³But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! For there will be great distress in the land and wrath upon this people. ²⁴And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.*

Yes, the modern state of Israel is going down. The gentiles take over for a time. Notice verse 25.

²⁵*“And there will be signs in the sun, in the moon, and in the stars; and on the earth distress of nations, with perplexity, the sea and the waves roaring; ²⁶men's hearts failing them from fear and the expectation of those things which are coming on the earth, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken.*

Notice again we see, there is an expectation of those things; they knew what it was when they saw the signs. They knew it! How did they know? We will get to that. They knew; it's important!

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They see Christ's coming; the first resurrection is referenced in verse 28:

²⁸Now when these things begin to happen, look up and lift up your heads, because your redemption draws near." The first resurrection.

All three accounts line up perfectly, repeating the exact same order and they give us additional details in each account.

We spent three hours this past Sabbath building a chart of this and amazing to us it was how easy it stitched together when we simply believed what it said. Absolutely none of this is millennial, it's all premillennial. Once we get this clear in our minds something else comes to mind and I had never considered before and we touched on that in the last message In Joel 2, verse 28-32. Verse 28:

²⁸And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions. ²⁹And also on My men servants and on My maid servants I will pour out My Spirit in those days.

Well that is the Father; it is the Father who the spirit comes from. It can come through Christ, but it doesn't originate with Christ; it comes from the Father.

³⁰And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: blood and fire and pillars of smoke. ³¹The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and awesome day of the Lord.

I spoke with a minister the other day and he said, "You know, we taught and I taught for years that verses 28 and 29 were millennial." Well how can they possibly be millennial if they happen before the signs in the time or even prior to the time of the tribulation?

And if you don't think that sign is the same the rest of verse 31 it's before the great and awesome day of the Lord.

The millennium has not started, but that is not where we put it. The heavenly signs mentioned here match the passages we looked at before. God pouring out his spirit on all flesh, Israel and Gentiles alike, occurs before the heavenly signs and before the first resurrection.

These folks are given an opportunity for salvation in and through the great tribulation, which means that had to happen no later than at some point during the tribulation. They had to be called then, because how would you know what to do if you weren't?

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And again the happenings of Joel 2 were long taught in the COG (Church of God) to occur in the millennium, when in fact it happens well before that and it's highly likely as we will see, even before the tribulation begins. Can we find any evidence of that?

Well let's turn to Revelation 7, and look at verses 9 –17, it says:

⁹After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude

Not the 144,000

...a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, ¹⁰and crying out with a loud voice, saying, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" ¹¹All the angels stood around the throne and the elders and the four living creatures, and fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God,

This is in heaven. The great multitude which no one could number, not just of Israel but of all nations, tribes, peoples and tongues, standing before the throne. So here is the group of people, you can't even count them all. They're spirit beings. Huh, how about that! Let's go on, verse 13:

¹³Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?" ¹⁴And I said to him, "Sir, you know." So he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

Well how did they know to do that? They had to have been called and given spiritual knowledge to make that decision and we talked about that at the onset. And for what purpose is the great multitudes raised? Why did they receive salvation? Well obviously because they were at one with God and repented through the great tribulation.

We go to Revelation 5, verses 9 and 10

⁹And they sang a new song, saying: "You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals; for You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood

Obviously talking of Christ

out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,

There is a great harvest that is going to happen through the tribulation and these folks have been made kings and priests to our God and we shall reign on the earth.

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If they knew what to do and did it, then it follows that the rest also knew what to do and did not. We are going into a test or going into a test and not having clue about what it is, what is actually going on is far different than making a choice when you do know what is going on and don't do it. It just makes sense.

There is an enormous harvest of people through the tribulation which means they had been called during it or prior to it to know what to do. And there are two parts to that process, which I think we would all understand, but I've certainly never considered it before.

How it is then that God is going to get the message out before the tribulation? It seems reasonable to ask; don't you think? How is that going to happen so that a great pile of people, that nobody could even count, comes out of the tribulation with salvation? How is that going to go down?

Well, let's go back to Luke 21, and verse 12 – 19. Let's take a look at that. Notice, and this is the key, the tribulation does not start even until we get to verse 21. So this event that we are about to read of happens before the tribulation. Pick it up:

¹²But before all these things, they will lay their hands on you and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues and prisons. You will be brought before kings and rulers for My name's sake. ¹³But it will turn out for you as an occasion for testimony. ¹⁴Therefore settle it in your hearts not to meditate beforehand on what you will answer; ¹⁵for I will give you a mouth and wisdom which all your adversaries will not be able to contradict or resist. ¹⁶You will be betrayed even by parents and brothers, relatives and friends; and they will put some of you to death. ¹⁷And you will be hated by all for My name's sake. ¹⁸But not a hair of your head shall be lost.

God will use some and what these people will speak, we don't know. And nor do we need to worry about it, it will be given. You will want to check that out, is that correct? Well let's look at Mark 13, verses 8 – 11. Verse 8

⁸For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom. And there will be earthquakes in various places, and there will be famines and troubles. These are the beginnings of sorrows. ⁹But watch out for yourselves, for they will deliver you up to councils, and you will be beaten in the synagogues. You will be brought before rulers and kings for My sake, for a testimony to them.

Now notice this:

¹⁰And the gospel must first be preached (First) to all the nations.

Now we see the reason why God pours out his spirit on all flesh, because they all know. You can stand up on a soap box and sing like a canary preaching the gospel, but if

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people are not given the spiritual understanding to grasp it and understand it's import it's a waste of time.

You have to have both things in place, and it's going to be put in place.

¹¹But when they arrest you and deliver you up, do not worry beforehand, or premeditate what you will speak. But whatever is given you in that hour, speak that; for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit.

There is going to be a witness to the world before it all blows and everybody's going to know what this is all about. The test, the choosing, will be brought into main focus. So God is going to do that individually with people. Do we know who that is? Nope, I sure don't!

Again if you look, now that we can start to understand how these things bolt together, if we go to Revelation Rev 11:2 it says:

²But leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles. And they will tread the holy city under foot for forty-two months.

Well we read about that, we saw that in Luke 21:20. Going on in verse 3 of Revelation 11:

³And I will give power to my two witnesses, and they will prophesy one thousand two hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth." ⁴These are the two olive trees and the two lamp stands standing before the God of the earth. ⁵And if anyone wants to harm them, fire proceeds from their mouth and devours their enemies. And if anyone wants to harm them, he must be killed in this manner. ⁶These have power to shut heaven, so that no rain falls in the days of their prophecy; and they have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to strike the earth with all plagues, as often as they desire.

Well, what do you think they are going to be talking about in the tribulation time? How to play tiddly winks or repent and turn to God? What do you think? The gospel is to be preached to all nations; again as I said is only one half of the equation. We have to have the calling of God which we read of in Joel 2, verse 32 to match up to that.

God has to provide the means to understand the significance of what is being said and to act upon it. It doesn't just happen.

Revelation 7 tells us that with some, a great multitude, it does happen. And those who do not repent, even when they knew to do so, will get another dose of, "here is the choice" ratcheting up the accountability and responsibility, yet another notch.

Revelation 14, we will read verses 1-5.

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¹ Then I looked, and behold, a Lamb standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His Father's name written on their foreheads. ²And I heard a voice from heaven, like the voice of many waters, and like the voice of loud thunder. And I heard the sound of harpists playing their harps. ³They sang as it were a new song before the throne, before the four living creatures, and the elders; and no one could learn that song except the hundred and forty-four thousand who were redeemed from the earth. ⁴These are the ones who were not defiled with women, for they are virgins. These are the ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes. These were redeemed from among men, being firstfruits to God and to the Lamb. ⁵And in their mouth was found no deceit, for they are without fault before the throne of God.

So this group of people, as distinguished from the innumerable multitude, are standing before God and only they could learn this song. Both the hundred and forty four thousand and the mixed multitude were in the first resurrection, but they are separate groups and they are distinct. That's interesting!

But what is even more interesting is verse 6, of which I have never paid any attention before. So after that vision happens the first resurrection has occurred:

⁶Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth

Well, excuse me, it was preaching to the world before the first resurrection as evidenced by the innumerable multitude and here we go again.

In chapter 14, verse 7 what does this angel say? He has the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth, to every nation, tribe, tongue and people. These are people who have not yet repented even when they knew to do so.

⁷saying with a loud voice, "Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water."

So here we have, after the first resurrection, the Father stepping in and saying, "I got this, here's the deal." And they are specifically told judgment has come, worship him who made the heaven and earth the sea and springs of water. That's pretty clear.

Going on saying:

... "Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication." ⁹Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice,

Yet another warning, they were told to give glory to God. To further elaborate:

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“If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand, ¹⁰he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, (That’s the Father) which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. ¹¹And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.”

That’s pretty clear; they’ve being told.

¹²Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.

Some people at this time, well after the first resurrection, are going to get with the program.

¹³Then I heard a voice from heaven saying to me, “Write: ‘Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.’”

It is way after the first resurrection, prior to the day of the Lord and the pouring out of God’s wrath, salvation is still being offered. God is not willing that any should perish. So the choice must be offered, and indeed it is. And God’s spirit needs to open their minds so they knew and know that they know.

Alright, when will these be resurrected? They are blessed in the Lord when they die in what is coming. And what will happen to the cursed, the ones that know and still know or don’t do it? Their spirit is still set to disobey God and they will have nothing to do with Him. Well let’s go to John 5 as we move down the timeline of events.

In John 5, verses 24 - 30. Christ speaking:

²⁴“Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me (The Father) has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life. ²⁵Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live. ²⁶For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself,

When we are at one with God you can see the kinds of responsibilities God gives us, in this case Christ:

²⁷and (The Father) has given Him authority to execute judgment also, because He is the Son of Man.

²⁸Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His (Christ’s) voice ²⁹and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.

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³⁰I can of myself do nothing. As I hear, I judge; and My judgment is righteous, because I do not seek My own will but the will of the Father who sent Me.

So when Jesus Christ comes back people are going to come out of their graves, some will rise to eternal life and some will go into the lake of fire.

Christ returns to sit on his throne and a thousand years is in front of him. There is a great harvest, which we just read, which the COG (Church of God) speaks nothing of. For it would blow up their theology and along with it their authority.

If you go to II Thessalonians, II Thessalonians 1. II Thessalonians chapter 1 and verses 7-10; it is indeed educational to talk about this, where we read of the same event. It's all over the place.

II Thessalonians 1:7-10, well we will pick it up in verse 6:

*⁶since it is a righteous thing with God to repay with tribulation those who trouble you
⁷and to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels,*

That sounds like one of the comings and the involvement of God to you? What is he going to do when he shows up with his angels?

⁸in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁹These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of Yeshua and from the glory of His power,

When Christ returns in this situation it's not going to be real good for those who have chosen a spirit of hostility against Jesus Christ and the Father.

Going on in verse 10:

¹⁰when He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was believed.

Hum, if we go to the book of Matthew we read exactly the same thing. What goes on when Christ returns to actually start the millennium? The book of Matthew, verse 25; well let's read in verse 31, because that is very important. It talked about Christ coming with his angels. In II Thessalonians it shows us what he is going to do and if we read Matthew 25 just to set the time setting.

There is a very powerful marker bed for us. When Christ comes to sit on the throne what is he going to do? And it tells us, we read of that in II Thessalonians. In Matthew 25:

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³¹*“When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, (We are given more detail) then He will sit on the throne of His glory.*

Judgment, the ability to resurrect people has been given him and that is exactly what he is going to do.

³²*All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats.*

You can walk through that entire passage of the how he separates and how he knows and you can see through that that these people knew to do good, knew what to do; some did, some didn't. Their spirit was set to either obey or disobey or be hostile to or to love God.

If we go down to verse 46 it says:

⁴⁶*And these (The Goats) will go away into everlasting punishment, (Exactly as it was said in II Thessalonians) but the righteous into eternal life.”*

So here we have another resurrection to spirit life when Christ actually sits on his throne and there is no place in traditional Church of God theology for that and it is all over the place in the New Testament.

How do we get to the condition of where the sheep and the goats are already known? When Christ comes he already knows who the sheep and the goats are. Well how does he know that?

Well it's obvious that their lives, the history of their lives and their choices that they made has to have occurred before that point; it couldn't possibly be after. And he is handing out judgment, consigning people to the lake of fire when he does come to set up the millennial thousand years. But what happens and how we got to that point will be the subject of MOM number four, the Mystery of the Millennium.

Can we see where misapplying Joel 2, verses 28 and 29 as a millennial event, when it clearly is not, has caused us all kinds of problems? More to come!

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