

Homer Gatchet will ring  
"Day is Dying in the West" accompanied by  
Roy Elliott

THE MILLENNIUM

SCRIPTURE: Revelation 20:1,10

Perhaps you might think we have chosen an odd subject for our discussion tonight -- the Millennium. The scriptures speak of "the thousand years", but never mention the millennium. Some churches ignore the subject altogether. The few who do believe in it, differ as widely as the poles on their interpretation of the few scriptures concerning it. We have chosen it for discussion because it is a subject which lies at the heart of much of our Latter Day Saint belief. We believe as a people that the Golden Age of Christianity lies yet in the future. We ~~like~~ believe that salvation is not, and cannot be purely personal, but that the individual is saved with his group, and saved largely by his efforts to save that group. Personal righteousness is well-nigh impossible in a world of collective and social sin. Hence we as a people look forward to the day when Christ's Kingdom shall be established, and rejoice to spend our efforts that that kingdom might be.

As the disciples stood gazing up into heaven at the time of Jesus ascension, a voice spoke to them, giving this promise: "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." If we believe in that promise, we must believe that Jesus is coming again, probably at a day not too far distant from today, to dwell again on the earth with his people, and to establish his kingdom with the people who have prepared themselves to live in that kingdom.

When Christ comes to earth the second time, the first resurrection will occur. The dead in Christ shall rise first, and together with the righteous who are still alive on earth, will be caught up to meet him in the air. Now some believers in the millennial reign have taught that the righteous will be caught up to meet him, and then he will turn around and take them back into heaven with him for the thousand years. If you were to go to the station to meet a friend arriving from Chicago, what would be your expectation? - that he would stop and visit you here awhile, certainly -- not that he would take you back home with him. ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ This earth is the natural abode of Christ. It is here that he will have his dominion. It is to this world that the promise was given that he should come. The kingdoms of this world are to become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ.

At Christ's second coming, the earth shall be cleansed as by fire. Much futile argument has been wasted over whether this was a literal fire, a literal burning. Some have gone so far as to say that with the righteous caught up in the air, the wicked will be destroyed; every plant and animal and fish and bird will be destroyed; every house and sign of civilization will be destroyed, leaving the earth a vast, black smoking wilderness, without a living thing remaining on earth, on sea, on in the air. With that idea we cannot agree. Isaiah 4:4 speaks of the "Spirit of burning," a spirit of judgment, which shall so work upon the hearts of the wicked that they will tremble

and fear, and seek to hide in the caves and clefts of the rocks, knowing that their wickedness is discovered, and fearing to face the perfect Lord whom they have thus far rejected. Some of these wicked will be destroyed by this spiritual power, no doubt. But among the great nations of the earth, there will be many people who have never heard of Christ, never had his gospel preached to them in power, never had a true opportunity of accepting him as their Savior. It would be a gross injustice to destroy these too, and give them no opportunity ~~to~~ of knowing Christ. They will be spared. But the call will go out from the band of righteous gathered with Christ, for all those who are dwelling in the midst of wickedness to gather out of it, to ally themselves with the forces of righteousness. The gospel of Christ, which has been preached in the world precious to Christ's coming in order to gather a nucleus of the righteous to him to establish his kingdom, will now be preached to every creature, before the final day of judgment. "This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness, and then shall the end come." Mat. 24,

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Some time read the second chapter of Isaiah, or the fourth chapter of Micah....they are almost identical. We summarize it briefly: "In the last days, the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountain, and shall be exalted above the hills, and all nations shall flow unto it." (It seems that they will be many nations still living on earth, besides those righteous who dwell in Christ's kingdom.) "And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up unto the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us his ways, and we will walk in his paths. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people, and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, etc."

During this thousand year period, wonderful conditions will prevail throughout the world, as told in the 11th chapter of Isaiah. Enmity between beast and beast, between man and beast, and between man and man shall be abolished.

What makes it possible for these idyllic conditions to exist? During the millennium Satan shall be bound. From the 20th Chap. of Revelation, we read: "And I saw an angel come down out of heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years should be fulfilled, and after that he must be loosed a little season." One of the peculiar beliefs about the millennium is that with the righteous transported to heaven for the thousand years, and the wicked all lying dead on the earth, there would be no one left on earth to tempt; and in the sense of being handicapped by having no one to tempt in all the whole wide earth, he will be bound.

If God adopts that round-about method of ~~his~~ binding Satan, he will show less judgment than we poor mortals do. When a criminal threatens the peace and safety of a town, we don't evacuate all the righteous people, and kill all the wicked, in order to make sure that the criminal won't molest anyone. We catch and jail the criminal. And that is what God is going to do - catch and jail Satan. The people of the earth need have no more fear of him until the thousand years are

finished, when he is to be loosed again for a little season to make further trial of those who have accepted Christ in the prison house, but who have not yet had to meet temptation since they came to know their Lord.

At the end of the thousand years, will come the second resurrection, when the wicked of earth, those who spent their lives in sin, will come forth. They have been in the prison house, sometimes called hell, but not to be confused with the hell of the second death. In the prison house they have received the ministry of the gospel, and an opportunity to repent of their sins, and find salvation thru acceptance of Christ. They will have no part in the glory of Christ, nor of his father. Theirs will be a lesser glory, the glory of the stars, a salvation without reward, because they have no works to merit a reward. After this second resurrection, every man, woman, and child who ever lived on earth will be alive at once - and will be called before the throne for final judgment. There has, of course, been some preliminary judgment, to determine who should come forth in the first resurrection, and who should remain until the second, but now every man has had his chance; the love, the education, the punishment of God have done their work on every creature. Every man who has accepted Christ, in this or in the spirit world, will be saved, But his place in the glories of God, his reward, will be determined by his works.

Those who in spite of every effort, have still refused the saving grace of Christ, or who have denied the witness of the Spirit of Christ when it came to convict them of sin and convince them of the thing they ought to do, will be those who are cast out into the lake of fire and brimstone; who will suffer the second death, the most horrible and final fate which can befall a human soul. Satan, too, will be cast into a bottomless pit, and shall be heard of no more.

Then shall be earth be made new, and all things that offend shall be gathered out and burned by fire. Together with the new Jerusalem which has come down from heaven, the kingdom which Christ has established will rule the earth, and men shall dwell forever in the light of his presence, in perfect peace, perfect joy, perfect happiness world without end.