

THE SECRET OF HIS PURPOSE THE PLAN FOR THE FULLNESS OF THE TIMES
TO HEAD UP ALL THINGS IN THE KING,
EVERYTHING IN THE HEAVENS AND ON THE EARTH,
IN JESUS....

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Thousand Years—Day of the Lord

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Recently, I have been considering the six references to a thousand years found in Revelation 20:4-6. Broadly speaking, there are two camps of interpretation regarding these enigmatic years. I'll avoid using the labels often applied to these schools of thought, but one camp takes them literally as a future age, and another camp takes them symbolically as spiritual metaphors or allegories. This latter camp has several permutations that alone probably should be considered camps all unto themselves, but I'll leave them because it's beyond the scope of what follows.

As a side note, I have written an article about the thousand years based on the history of creation making the point without injecting the thousand years of Revelation 20. In other words, I defend a thousand years based on evidence outside of Revelation. For more on this, check out this link.

Six Days, then the Seventh (6+1=7) — <https://www.kingdomandglory.com/art/art45.pdf>

Revelation—Victory of King Jesus and His Conquerors

Let me preface what I am about to share: Jesus is the truth—that is, truth (or: reality) in its absolute sense, and He is life—that is, life as God has always intended it to be. The very core of Revelation declares that King Jesus is God's reality—the living one (life-giving one) who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty. Jesus was, is, and will be the Victor over all that stands against God's ultimate purpose of all in all and against His people, the ones called the *conquerors*. As the word of God and the King of kings and the Lord of lords, He is the consummate Conqueror of All. He has conquered the world, sin, and death and, in so doing, has inaugurated a *new creation* where all things are being made new (in character, essence). Conceptually, this is embodied in new heavens, new earth, and New Jerusalem (the new humanity, expressed as a city and a bride). The conquerors are the first fruit of the new humanity of sons of God, patterned after the first born of creation and the first born from among the dead—Jesus, the Son of God. This is the overarching truth that runs through John's Patmos vision and has progressed down through the twenty-one centuries since the cross. It is the message of the eons (ages).

Thousand Signifies Completeness in Christ

In light of the fact that King Jesus is the absolute, consummate Conqueror of all, there is possibly a figurative meaning to one-thousand years. Consider this: the number 1000 is a factor of $10 \times 10 \times 10$. The number 10 signifies *ordinal completion or perfection of divine order*. Thus, 1000 signifies *God's completeness of what is in view*. This raises the question: Is there a type in scripture that manifests as $10 \times 10 \times 10$. Most assuredly! The holy of holies, where the Lord presented Himself in the tabernacle, was measured as $10 \times 10 \times 10$. Could we not say that this signifies *the presence of God in His completeness, further signifying His divine order?*

But we can't stop at this point without driving this thought back to God's central and preeminent point and the place where all His completeness is inaugurated and consummated, where we discover the truth of divine order. It all points to none other than God's Son. Jesus is truth and the book of Revelation lays out this reality in the one who is the victor over everyone and everything that is not of His life and character. Further, God's Son is the beginning of all creation and the consummation of all creation, meaning He is the completion or completeness of all things. He is the 10x10x10—the all in all. As Paul reminds us, we who are in the Messiah Jesus are complete in Him! He is our all in all, and one day, the entire human race will not only see this truth but come into it as well.

So, on a victory level, 1000 is the number of Jesus' victory. This is what new creation, in every aspect and comprehension, is all about.

Historic Thread of 70 AD Judgment—Old Made Obsolete; Christianity Set Free

Now, there is one other thread that runs through the Revelation that is rooted in an historical event that is often overlooked by many Christians. That event was the total destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in 70 AD, signifying that the old had fully passed away and behold the new had come. This was the end of the Mosaic age, meaning it was the end of biblical Judaism, and the setting free of Christianity—no longer aligned with anything of that era. (By the way, it was not the end of the world, of history, or of time. It was the inauguration of God's age or day, and those who believe have been brought into *the life in God's new age.*)

Jesus walked the roads of Judea, not only as the Messiah of Israel, but also as the Yahweh of Israel and representative of Israel itself (i.e., what Israel was always meant to be). In other words, He was and is all in all. As God's anointed prophet (as well as king and priest), Jesus prophesied the end of the Mosaic age when, in parable, He said God would send the Roman army to destroy the city and those who killed the prophets, even demanding the death of the Prophet of all prophets. He also clearly told His disciples that the temple would be destroyed in that generation (Matthew 24).

Given the above, and after studying the many views of Revelation and holding to most of them at one point or another, I have finally come to the conclusion that there is an historical setting for John's vision, and it is the period from Jesus' crucifixion (33 AD) to 70 AD. However, this does not preclude that the many symbols contained in John's book carry meanings beyond the historical—that is, it does not preclude the symbols being metaphorically or allegorically (metaphors joined together to make a complete drama) interpreted to signify spiritual principles in the life of God's people down through the centuries. I see these things (historical fulfillment and spiritual metaphors or allegories) as mutually inclusive.

On the historical level, I don't believe we can overlook or spiritualize away the fact that John clearly identifies a mystery—***Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and of the abominations of the earth***—as Jerusalem in his day, the place in which the Lord Jesus was crucified (Revelation 17:5; 11:8). In his own allegory, Paul called it ***the present Jerusalem*** (of his day) that had to be cast out (Galatians 4:21-31).

In those days, the elite Jews who plotted and demanded that Israel's Messiah be killed were representative of Jerusalem so that they were the ones riding the beast in that day, which was the Roman empire that ruled the known biblical world. The Jews had aligned themselves with Rome and sought favor from them. In other words, they rejected Israel's true king and sided with (rode on) the Romans (a beast-like kingdom as prophesied through Daniel). Let us not forget that according to Paul, these same Jews persecuted the *ekklesia* of Christ; something in which Saul, the persecutor of the *ekklesia*, had participated. Obviously, there is much more to be said to support this view but this is not the purpose of this writing. My purpose in sharing this is to lay out a brief summary of what I see as the historical backdrop to Revelation. With this, we can proceed to what is of interest in this writing—that is, the thousand years.

A Literal 1,000 Years in Israel's History?

In considering the thousand years, I began with the premise that the first level of historical interpretation of Revelation is as I have already laid out. This led me to inquire if a literal thousand years could be applied to the history of ancient Israel. And, if so, could such a period have a bearing on the interpretation of Revelation 20? The answer to this inquiry is that, in fact, there is a significant thousand-year period that concluded in 70 AD. But what could this mean?

To answer this, we need to start with the *United Kingdom of Israel* that began with David and ended with his son Solomon that was a fulfillment of all the promises God had made regarding this chosen nation of the sons of Jacob-Israel—from the wealth of the nations' pouring into this kingdom to the peace of Jerusalem. It is fascinating how many people seem to overlook the glory of this kingdom established by God and, even more astonishing, how many people believe it is only to be fulfilled through ethnic Jews in the age to come. So, they pray for the peace of Jerusalem that sits in the modern-day Israel, when, in fact, peace has already come to Jerusalem once in Solomon's day and exists today in New Jerusalem. Check out these links:

Jerusalem—Tale of Two Cities — <https://www.kingdomandglory.com/tuc/tuc547.pdf>

Abraham's Multitude of Nations — <https://www.kingdomandglory.com/art/art63.pdf>

Unfortunately, Solomon's foreign wives led his heart away from the Lord who had given him much wisdom and prosperity. As a result, God promised that upon his death the kingdom would be split up and so it was. It is generally acknowledged that Solomon died around 931 BC and the kingdom was split into Judah and Israel in 930 BC. Adding one-thousand years to 930 BC brings us to 70 AD (give or take). Could this be a coincidence? Probably not!

As an interesting aside; from the birth of Abraham to the completion of Solomon's house was about 1,000 years (which was 500 years after the Exodus). Sixteen years later, Solomon died and the following year Judah and Israel split into separate houses. So, although not exact, we discover roughly 1,000 years from Abraham to the end of the United Kingdom of Israel and then another 1,000 years until the end of the second earthly temple along with the Mosaic era itself. If anything, these 2,000 years speak to God's longsuffering with His people. No one can accuse God of acting impulsively.

The Promise of His Coming—the Day of the Lord

Now, a thought came to me as I contemplated what the thousand years could mean. For this, we need to turn to Peter and his second epistle.

They will say, "***Where is the promise of his coming?*** For ever since the fathers fell asleep, all things are continuing as they were from **the beginning of creation.**" For they deliberately overlook this fact, that the heavens existed long ago, and the earth was formed out of water and through water by the word of God, and that by means of these the world that then existed was deluged with water and perished. But by the same word the heavens and earth that now exist are stored up for fire, being kept until the day of judgment and destruction of the ungodly. **But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.** The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance. But **the day of the Lord** will come like a thief, and then the heavens will pass away with a roar, and the heavenly bodies will be burned up and dissolved, and the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed. (2 Peter 3:4-10 ESV [bold added])

A very common and widely-accepted teaching of these verses says that they refer to a literal burning up of the heavens and the earth. In other words, when King Jesus returns, He is going to literally torch the old creation and usher in new heavens and a new earth in a physical sense. I don't believe Peter is saying anything of the sort. What he is saying is that the ***old creation order*** was going to go through ***the consuming fire of God*** to transform God's creation into something of ***an entirely new order or character***. Another way of stating this is that God's spirit-fire will change the very order (character) of the heavens and the earth. It is not about literally and physically consuming the old order; it is about changing its very character into the character of God's Son, our Lord Jesus, and ultimately into the all in all of the Father. It is about ushering God's creation into the divine order of God, something the original creation has not seen for six-thousand years. God's righteousness (living God's way in accordance with His will and character, which is love) will dwell in the new heavens and new earth when both heaven and earth come together in a way that is beyond our expectation or imagination.

The proof that this is so is discovered in the flood of Noah's day. The heavens and the earth were not destroyed (they are still with us today); the earth (whether the entire globe or a vast region) was deluged with water, bringing judgment upon mankind that had become totally corrupt. The flood took away the old order (from Adam to Methuselah) and established a new order that led to the cross.

In the Greek, there are two words for the word *new*: ***naos*** that relates to new in time or recent; and ***kainos*** that relates to ***form or quality***, that is, a different nature from what is considered old. *New* testament, *new* man, *new* name, *new* commandment, *new* creation, *New* Jerusalem, *new* heaven, and *new* earth are all based on the word *kainos*, meaning each one speaks to something new in form or quality. Undoubtedly, *kainos* is the backdrop for Peter's day of the Lord and the promise of His coming.

What came to me is that Peter's expression ***that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day*** refers to ***the day of the Lord***. In other words, the day of the Lord is likened or equated to a thousand years. Does this make the thousand years literal or figurative? Perhaps, both! But let us start with a literal view.

The day of the Lord is an expression that Israel's prophets used in reference to judgment of nations, including and especially of Israel, and the outworking of those judgments. Keep in mind that **judgment is simply a decision based on an evaluation of a situation**. Based on this evaluation, certain decisions are made about the nation, good or bad, including its destruction (tearing down), if necessary. Unfortunately, many today see the day of the Lord as an end-time event in which earth is destroyed and time comes to an end. But it doesn't seem that Peter or the other apostles had this in mind. What they did have in mind was the end of an order and that order was the Mosaic era. Based on the Lord Jesus' teaching, especially through His parables spoken against the elite Jews (Pharisees) of His day, the disciples knew that a judgment was coming upon Jerusalem, the temple, and Judaism itself that would take away the old order, severing the Christ order (new heaven) from the Moses order (old heaven), so that the old would pass away and all things would become new, continuously and progressively. *Whatever is becoming obsolete and growing old (Mosaic order) is ready to disappear* (destroyed by fire in 70 AD) (Hebrews 8:13).

So, when he cites those who ask where is His coming, Peter is referring to those who had heard that Jesus would return and bring judgment on Jerusalem and the temple as Jesus had prophesied. Peter is not referring to some end-time event but to something that the Lord Jesus had told them would occur to that generation of non-believing Jews (or: Israelites). It is in this context that Peter wrote of the day of the Lord in relation to a thousand years.

Thousand Years from 930 BC to 70 AD

Given this thought, I submit the following proposal: the thousand years in John's Patmos vision simply refer to the day of the Lord to which Peter refers. They are one and the same. But here is the fascinating part (haven't seen this in other commentaries)—this day actually began in 930 BC when Solomon's kingdom was judged and the determination made that it be broken up. Even though the Jews later returned to Jerusalem and rebuilt the temple, this determination did not change. For a thousand years, the Jews were under this judgment, which explains why they were still under foreign rule when Jesus arrived on the scene, and Solomon's United Kingdom remained split with most of Israel in dispersion.

When Messiah Jesus appeared amongst His people in roughly 29 AD, which would have been roughly 959 years from the breakup of the united kingdom, the Jews were called to receive their king, but many, especially of the religious leadership, rejected the offer of entering into His kingdom. In this regard, collectively, ancient Israel never reached a thousand years as a truly united nation under God, which is reminiscent of Adam and his pre-flood progeny who never lived a full thousand years. As Adam failed to live a thousand years, so did ancient Israel under the Mosaic covenant fail to reach a thousand years, entering into the glory of God. Actually, counting the combined reigns of David and Solomon, they only reached 80 years as a united

nation that manifested the glory of God in a way that was never achieved even under Herod as he beautified the second temple.

This might seem to be the end of this part of the story, but there is another facet of this thousand years that speaks to a people, collectively speaking, that did arrive at the thousand years. Down through the centuries since the breakup of the kingdom of Israel/Judah, there have been those who loved the Lord and obeyed His will to the best they could. We could call them the *conquerors*, much like Caleb who had a different spirit. So, when Jesus arrived in the midst of Israel, there was a company (i.e., a remnant within that generation) of the Lord's people who were ripe for the picking as first fruits. They came from a long line of a conquering remnant. They believed Jesus was and is the Messiah of Israel. These were the ones who Paul said represented the natural branches of the rich root of the olive tree (Hebrews 11). They remained rooted in this metaphorical tree while many others of the natural branches were cut off due to their lack of faith. Those from among the nations (i.e., non-Jews) who were considered wild branches—previously cut off from the commonwealth of Israel (Ephesians 2:12) and who believed in Jesus—were grafted into the olive tree.

So, in this sense, a collective company (not individuals per se, but a collective remnant from each generation) did reach a thousand years, and this period could be called *the day of the Lord*. This would serve as a great encouragement to those from the line of Jacob-Israel who were longing and looking for the arrival of Israel's Messiah and King in the 1st century AD.

Thus, a literal thousand years could be seen to represent an age that lasted from the breakup of the ancient kingdom of Israel in 930 BC to its final demise in 70 AD. This alone would make it a day of the Lord. Notice that I use *a* day and not *the* day, for there are many periods in history that could be called *days of the Lord*. A case could be made (and some make it) that we are currently in the day of the Lord. Others claim a day of the Lord is yet to come. Nothing of what I am proposing challenges any of these claims. To be sure, whenever and however King Jesus manifests His presence, it could rightly be called *a day of the Lord*.

Now, let us consider the thousand years in light of the day of the Lord as presented in Revelation 20.

Replace One-Thousand Years with Day of the Lord

I propose that John adopted Peter's same language recorded in 2 Peter 3, but instead of using the expression *the day of the Lord*, he used the expression *one-thousand years*, making them synonymous and interchangeable with one another. In this light, I suggest that replacing one-thousand years with the day of the Lord removes all argument over whether one-thousand years literally refers to time or not and, if so, when, and provides an entirely new framework around simply a generic day in which the Lord Jesus is actively engaged and, we should add, victorious.

To make the point, I have taken the liberty of replacing the thousand years in Revelation 20 with the term *the day of the Lord*. However, we need to take note that the expression *thousand years* appears as **the** thousand years in three places and **a** thousand years in three places. Some commentators suggest some significance to the use of these articles; we'll hold off on this until later. One other point: I have also taken the liberty of rearranging verses starting at the end of

chapter 19 including all of chapter 20. Most commentators suggest that Revelation is not strictly chronological and repeats itself by describing the same event from various angles. Given this, I feel it is acceptable to rearrange the verses in question by grouping them according to the subjects in view (i.e., the dead who worshipped the image of the beast [rest of the dead]; the Christian martyrs, and the satan-adversary.

Let's see what this looks like. In reading this, take note that **the** day of the Lord is in view for the rest of the dead, while **a** day of the Lord is in view for the conquerors (martyrs), and both **a** day and **the** day of the Lord is in view for the satan and adversary. Commentary will follow.

Rest of the Dead

Revelation 19: (19) And I perceived the wild beast and the kings of the earth and their armies, gathered to do battle with Him Who is sitting on the horse and with His army." (20) And the wild beast is arrested, and with it the false prophet who does the signs in its sight, by which he deceives those getting the emblem of the wild beast, and those worshiping its image. Living, the two were cast into the lake of fire burning with sulphur." (21) And **the rest were killed** with the blade which is coming out of the mouth of Him Who is sitting on the horse. And all the birds are satisfied with their flesh. ... Revelation 20:5a: (**The rest of the dead** do not live until **the day of the Lord** should be finished.)

Conquerors

Revelation 20: (4) And I perceived thrones, and they are seated on them, and judgment was granted to them. And the souls of those executed because of the testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who do not worship the wild beast or its image, and did not get the emblem on their forehead and on their hand—they also live and reign with Christ [for] **a day of the Lord**. (5) [part (a) moved to close out Revelation 19] This is the former (first) resurrection. (6) Happy and holy is he who is having part in the former resurrection! Over these the second death has no jurisdiction, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will be reigning with Him [for] **a day of the Lord**.

Adversary Bound and Released; Gog and Magog

Revelation 20: (1) And I perceived a messenger descending out of heaven, having the key of the submerged chaos and a large chain in his hand." (2) And he lays hold of the dragon, the ancient serpent, who is the adversary and the satan, and binds him [for] **a day of the Lord**." (3) And he casts him into the submerged chaos and locks it, and seals it over him (lest he should still be deceiving the nations) until **the day of the Lord** should be finished. After these things he must be loosed a little time." [verses 4-6 removed to above] ... (7) And whenever **the day of the Lord** should be finished, the satan will be loosed out of his jail." (8) And he will be coming out to deceive all the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, **Gog and Magog**, to be mobilizing them for battle, their number being as the sand of the sea." (9) And they went up over the breadth of the earth, and surround the citadel of **the saints and the beloved city**. And fire descended from God out of heaven and devoured them." (10) And the adversary who is deceiving them was cast into the lake of fire and sulphur, where the wild beast and the false prophet are also. And they shall be tormented day and night for the eons of the eons."

To bring this into focus, consider this simple chart.

	<i>The</i> day of the Lord	<i>A</i> day of the Lord
Rest of the dead	Dead during; alive after	
The satan, the adversary	Bound during; loosed after	Bound
Christian conquerors/martyrs		Alive, reigning with no defined end

This might disappoint some, but I am going to ignore the eschatological debate (more like an argument) over these verses that gets into the weeds of who, when, and how.

The primary takeaway I want to bring to your attention in this chart is that there is only one group that is alive and reigning in what is called *a day of the Lord* (or: *a thousand years*)—they are the Christian conquerors. And during this day, the satan is bound, meaning it has no power or authority over the Lord's people. It does not participate in *a day*. The rest of the dead are in *the* day of the Lord, a specific time of judgment of those outside of Christ; those who are in Christ do not participate in this day and its judgment.

Putting aside all the controversy (eschatological viewpoints) over these verses, the good news and most important takeaway is that God's people, regardless of what they might face, including martyrdom, are not defeated, for they have life and they are reigning with the one who is Life. To repeat (and I say this for the benefit of those who are constantly trying to battle the satan), the satan has no power over us; it is bound, along with anything and everything stirred up by the satan, whether identified as a whore, a beast, or even Gog and Magog. Stop trying to stomp on its head or turn over every so-called *rock* to find it (and whatever weird and crazy things you are doing in this regard) and embrace the Life; this is how we conqueror and this is how we live—alive and reigning with and in King Jesus!

I submit that *a day* of the Lord stretches and overarches throughout all the ages to come, meaning it fills the ages until the consummation of these ages when God is all in all.

Those included in this day have *eonian life*—life in God's age; an age that transcends all the ages that leads to immortality (bodily resurrection—transformed as sons of God into the image of the Son of God). Paul calls this day *the age of the ages: Now to Him Who is able to do super-excessively above all that we are requesting or apprehending, according to the power that is operating in us, to Him be glory, in the ecclesia, and in King Jesus, to all generations, and to the age of the ages!* Amen! (Ephesians 3:20-21). The psalmists intimate this same age: **A day** in Your courts is better than **a thousand** (Psalm 84:10); **A thousand years** in Your sight are like yesterday (Psalm 90:4); The word He commanded to **a thousand generations** (Psalm 105:8).

Dear saints, this is the good news. Don't get caught in the eschatological weeds planted by the theologians. We who believe are now living in the age of the ages, fully protected in the life of King Jesus. *In His courts* and *in His sight* are simply ways to say **in His presence**. In spirit, we are in His presence now. Soon we will be in His presence literally! The only thing left for us is to enter into immortality through the redemption of our body. Don't let anyone persuade you otherwise. His presence is in the air! We are the generation.