

The GREAT Transition

While MUCH has been given in Scripture regarding the Millennial Age, there is still much to be pieced together to explain how that Age will Transition into the Next!

(From a Message Presented on Day 7 of the Feast of Tabernacles, 2016)

© Rich Traver, 81520-1411 11-6-16 [251] www.goldensheaves.org

Traditional religion has no awareness of one very important Phase of the Plan of God with regard to the potential Salvation of ALL who have ever lived. Even something as obvious as the Millennial Kingdom is largely brushed aside in favor of more favored after-life scenarios.

On one hand, God has given us a lot of detailed information regarding His Plan and the future for humanity beyond His Second Coming, yet He has left many unanswered considerations as to how the whole scenario will play out. We know that there will be a 1000-year period of unprecedented peace and prosperity when Christ and His Bride / Saints will rule the world and with Satan being under full restraint. But we also know that Satan will be released for a short time thereafter, and then the remaining dead will be raised back to life.¹

Day Seven of the Feast of Tabernacles

Of course, the ‘seventh day’ is the last day of the Feast. That’s well understood. Those of us who may not have thought about it say, "Oops, wait a minute, isn't there one more day?" Well, yes, there is another day, but it's a different Feast with a whole different meaning.

With this article, I want to present something that involves things that we know, yet peripherally there are a lot of questions. I want to address some of those questions. I know I've had them in mind for many years and never really thought about it in depth, putting it all together in a more comprehensive way.

Back in my real life before retiring, I worked for 30 years for a design house, an architectural-engineering firm. I was never an architect. Never wanted to be one. I was a detail draftsman. I love detail. I could take this grandiose design of an architect, who had no real thought of how his building design would come together, he just

envisions what it would look like as a finished structure. But we in the drafting department would have to take that design and put it on paper in a way that a contractor could build his design. Since buildings don't just fall together, you must put a structure in place in order to put the building's materials supported on that structure for the building to come together the way it would need to.

Architect of the PLAN

In a way, God has done that. He's the great Architect, and He's given us the elements of the major picture, but there's a lot of detail – in-fill information – that needs to be put in place. That's what I want to do here.

This is a subject that we ought to understand because it fulfills or it's illustrated by the meaning of the Seventh Day. We don't tend to focus on day seven, to the degree that we ought to, though there's great meaning in it as well.

An OVERLOOKED Phase

Traditional religion has no idea of this particular phase of God's Plan. He has a Plan. That Plan is laid out in very well-described terms. Most of the major picture we know in generality, but have we thought it through and pictured in our minds how this is really going to come about? Because that Plan is going to work. It's going to happen. It is a reality. God is going to make it happen. He's told us in advance what His Plan is, and it involves certain major design elements.

Those major elements, of course, are represented in the seven days of the Feast of Tabernacles. The other element is what we call Day Eight or the Last Great Day. We generally know what those days involve, what their meaning is. But, there's an essential event in between those two illustrations that we need to also factor in to our thinking.

In this article, I want to present to you “some things that are old, some things that are new, some things

¹ Revelation 20:5 & 7.

that are borrowed, and hopefully none that are blue". The meaning of this day and what it illustrates is very profound when we think about it.

Traditional religion has no idea. They've got a whole different picture in mind. In Daniel 12:10 we have a piece of the information. It applies to this time more than ever, and as years go on even more so. It says, *"Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly... business as usual... and none of the wicked will understand; but the wise shall understand."*

Government by God and His People

In the world to come, we know that there is going to be a merged religious and civil government. There won't be separation of Church and State like there is in some parts of the world today, particularly our country. Not all countries are that way. Religion and government will be merged in God's Kingdom. You can't merge them well in today's society because of several factors, one of which is the fact that religion is false, most of it. Then again, when you think about our society, when you think about our governmental institutions, our teaching institutions, science and theology, much of it is false as well. You can't put the two together in this world and expect a good result, but in the world to come it will yield a good result.

Let's look at a few places that tell us about that. Revelation 1:6 for example: We know who this is talking about. It says, *"He has made us kings and priests unto God and His Father, to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever."* God's elect are going to be set in positions of rulership, some in the civil branch, some in the religious branch.

Now to chapter 20 verse 6. These are some of the things that we know, and we know them well. *"Blessed and holy is he that has part in the first resurrection: on 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."* Our future assignment is going to be lengthy, and perhaps even longer than we might realize.

1st Peter 2:5-9. *"You also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."* Then down to verse 9. *"But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that you should show*

forth the praises of him who has called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."

Ain't OVER When it's Over!

The seventh day pictures the end of the millennial age. Have you ever thought about how the millennium will end? We know it will. We also know there's something beyond. We know there's an event that will occur at the end of the thousand years where Satan is released. But how will the millennium end? How will the millennial generation end? Will God cause the extinction of all people who lived during the millennium before the Last Great Day? Personally, I don't believe so. I find that thought disturbing, and I can't think of any scripture that would support such an idea. However there is one that would suggest otherwise. We'll go there in a few minutes.

Will the final generation of the millennium end before the Last Great Day? Think about it. That's going to involve a lot of people. The millennial population is going to be rather large when you think about it, even though it begins with a greatly reduced population. We can read many passages that show that the world's population is going to be drastically reduced in the Great Tribulation. And during the 1000 years there will be a controlled population growth, but there's going to be a lot of people who live during the millennial age. Will God end the millennial generation before He raises those multiple billions in the 'Second Resurrection era', the Last Great Day?

My personal feeling is that He **will not**, that there will be some overlap of the final millennial generation with those who will be raised after the end of the millennium. There's a reason for believing that there will be an overlapping. We'll get to the evidence of that shortly.

What happens to those who live during the millennium and come to the end of that age? There is a scripture that we've used for another purpose, but I want to look at it again. It's found in Isaiah 65. You've heard this verse before. We've always tended to consider this verse in the context of the Last Great Day, but it reveals something more than that. It's verse 20, where it says, *"There shall be no more an infant of days, nor an old man that has not filled his days; for the child shall die a hundred years old, but the sinner being a hundred years old shall be accursed."* We've tended to use that

particular passage to define how long the Second Resurrection era will be. The Second Resurrection era is what we call the Eighth Day or the Last Great Day or the White Throne Judgment. Those are the many terms we use to describe what will be the Great post-millennial age.

Achieving Great Age

This passage talks about a child as opposed to a sinner. Many of us have considered the child to be a child of God as opposed to the sinner, but it suggests living to the century mark. It also suggests that they're BOTH going to **die**. I pose to you that not only might it apply to the age beyond, but it also describes the living conditions in the millennial age. One hundred years will represent at least a maximum, or perhaps something commonplace at that time. It almost is the optimum even in our generation. When that was written, it was startling because the average lifespan then was about half that. It was considered extraordinary to attain a greater age than seventy! ² People today live a lot longer because of medical advances and because of better living conditions, better sanitary conditions, and such.

It's not a stretch to think that the people who live during the millennial age are going to live long, healthy lives. Why wouldn't they? They're going to be living in a society that knows the right answers to health issues. It's going to be a society where people are living properly, as they ought to, eating properly, living by the health laws that God has established. It's not a stretch to think that people will live to be as much as 100 years old. Not everyone, necessarily, but it may be commonplace. We have people today who are known to live that long. There's a passage of scripture in the Psalms that shows achieving the age of 70 was a remarkable feat back in David's day. Many of us have passed that mark already in good health.

It gives us a glimpse, but what's important about this particular verse is that it shows that those people will live and die relatively normal lives. What about the final generation? The millennial age is going to come to its final generation sooner or later. If the average generation is 25 years, which would suggest that couples in their mid-20s begin to have families, there could be as many as 40 generations that live during the millennial age.

² Psalm 90:10

What I want us to focus on is generation 40. What happens to that final generation in the millennial age? There will be a large population. There could be 10 or 15 or possibly 20 billion people alive in the final years of the millennial age. What happens to them? How do we transition from that era into the next? And we know that there will be a huge population alive at that time, by the number that Satan will be able to deceive out of those living at that time. ³

The GREAT Transition

That's the title of this article. I call it "The GREAT Transition" because there will be one. It will happen. Somehow, the millennial age is going to be terminated, and a separate, distinct era is going to occur right after it. Will those who live in the final generation of the millennium overlap with those who are raised in the Second Resurrection? I find that to be a very intriguing question, because it would be very impactful, not only to them, but to those who come up, who are to be introduced into a preexisting society that has already been living the right way for a thousand years. They will have a good handle on the right way to live. But, will it include all of them?

Now, if someone were resurrected and placed in a society like in today's world, what would we expect of them? They'd probably be caught up in the mood of the time. They would probably be infected by the evil thinking that permeates our society. They would probably have no better chance at becoming converted than anyone. They'd revert right back, it would seem, to their former lives. That's the important difference between the end of the millennial age, and the beginning of the next age. After the millennial age, when people are raised, they are going to be introduced to a society that's already been living the right way.

Overlapping Generations?

Will the millennial age and those raised in the Second Resurrection overlap in any way? My feeling is that there will be some point in time when the final generation in the millennium will end as far as bringing forth children, that those alive at the time will live on and complete their allotted lifetimes among those who come up in the second

³ Revelation 20:8. A small percentage will be a vast number.

resurrection. Those who come up in the second resurrection aren't destined to die again.

That was the problem with this verse in Isaiah 65, because our take on it (applying it to the Last Great Day) created a problem for us! I've had this issue with the Doctrinal Committee with UCG, and it reflects back to our Worldwide understanding as well, where this verse says that those people will live and will die. And from that we deduced that those who come up in the Second Resurrection will die again and then have to be raised yet again for Judgment. My feeling is that, no, they'll remain alive and stand for Final Judgment still in their resurrected state, and that point in time might be up to a century after they're raised, or at least one full generation. (Other than this verse, we have no indication of how long the Second Resurrection era will be!)

No More Children at Some Point!

We also have to think about those children that are born in the last generation of the millennial age. When will they have a chance to complete their lives and have their opportunity for salvation? If they live on over, then there's an obvious answer that they will experience their opportunity, the same opportunity that those who are raised in the Second Resurrection will have.

In Mark 12:25 we're given a little glimpse into this question. Like I say, Christ has laid out some things for us, but He hasn't necessarily given us all the details. This is an interesting narrative. We have to think about who He's speaking to and what they thought, because He's somewhat answering their ideas as much as providing us with this piece of pertinent information. I'm going to start with Mark 12:18: *"Then come unto him the Sadducees, which say there is no resurrection; and they asked him, saying, Master, Moses wrote unto us that if a man's brother die, and leave his wife behind, and leave no children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise up seed unto his brother. Now there were seven brethren: and the first took a wife, and dying left no seed. And the second took her, and died, neither left he any seed: and the third likewise. And the seven had her, and left no seed: last of all the woman died also. In the resurrection therefore,*

when they shall rise, whose wife shall she be of them? For the seven had her to wife."

Here's the key. Here's what we need to understand. I think we do understand this. I'm not relating something new. Verse 24. *"And Jesus answered and said unto them, Do you not therefore err, because you know not the scriptures,"* He's telling us that this information is contained in their scriptures, *"neither the power of God? For when they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as the angels which are in heaven."* What He's telling us is that in the resurrection there will be no more procreation. Now, we know that. We tend to think of this verse in the context of the First Resurrection, but wouldn't it also be true of the second?

"When they shall rise from the dead, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are as the angels which are in heaven." Who was He speaking to? He was speaking to people who had a general understanding that there would be a resurrection, not necessarily with the understanding that we have of there being more than one, but He makes that essential point that there is a point in time, especially as it affects those resurrected, that there will be **no more childbearing**. There will be no more marital relations at that time! People are going to be given into a different life regimen, where they're not going to be involved so much with family situations where there are complications and where there are life stresses.

A Full Measure of Devotion

That situation is fine for now. Marriage has its value now. It's supposed to be now. We learn lessons from our marriages and family. But in the age when the resurrection occurs, God wants a direct relationship with each and every one of those people, undistracted, so that they can pursue salvation fully focused and as undistracted as it can possibly be.

Satan is Restrained "Temporarily"

There's another factor. Again, something we know well, but I want to shape what we know into a comprehensive picture and maybe fill-in some of the little detail areas. It's seen in Revelation 20:1. We know what it says already. This is an important phase. Granted, this occurs at the beginning of the

millennial age, but it carries on through. *"And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, ... (and certainly his demons with him), "...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.**"* Have we recognized the significance of that word "must be"? He must be released. He must be loosed a little season. Just for a short while. Why?

Down to verse 7. This we know too. *"And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and he shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog, and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is the sand of the sea."* Some think Satan is to be released back into society to give people spiritual trials, to deceive them and to reintroduce the same cultural climate, the same societal situation as we see today in this world. The scripture says, no, the reason for his release is to gather people together into an army and to do what it says in verse 9. *"And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them."*

Before the Second Resurrection?

Satan is going to be reintroduced to the society of that time, and we know that it's the last generation of the millennial era, which will be HUGE! Satan is going to have an interaction with that last generation, and what he is going to do is to deceive certain ones among them, gathering them together into an **army**, and to besiege the World Capitol at Jerusalem, which it calls the Camp of the Saints.

Now, the Saints of the First Resurrection, those who were made Spirit-beings at that point in time, are going to generally be dispersed throughout the world, ruling over 10 cities, over 5 cities, over whatever rewards they're given. They're not going to be all concentrated in Jerusalem. The Camp of the Saints includes those people who are converted, who are Elders at that time, though still physical. These will be people who COULD BE conquered! Many are going to be there in the Headquarter City.

Satan is going to have the intention of conquering Jerusalem and taking over the world. He's going to be very desperate to do so because that's his absolute **last chance** to do anything. He wants the god-like control that he's always coveted and never was able to attain.

An Essential Function!

When you think about what he will do at that time, what Satan is going to do is to extract from the millennial society those people who aren't really converted, those who can be deceived, those who had their opportunity for conversion but who spurned it. They just didn't care enough. They didn't really want it. They were happy with the lives they had. They were casual. They remained lackadaisical. They didn't apply themselves. That's the element that Satan is going to be used by God to extract from that final generation so that when the Second Resurrection occurs, these resurrected people are going to come into a society that has been purified of its rebellious or resentful of God contingent.

Does that make any sense? Satan is to be released for just a little while. He is going to deceive those who can be deceived. He is going to amass them into an army that is going to surround World Headquarters, and God is going to 'devour' them, it says, with fire. Problem solved!! Now those people who come up in the second resurrection who were exposed to a Satanic society before, either from the society around them or who were personally affected, they're going to come up into a world where that negative factor is no longer present!

Absolute FINAL Defeat

Verse 10. *"And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet had been cast ... at the beginning of the millennium ... and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."*

Where is that said? In the previous chapter, Revelation 19:20 we read. *"And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshiped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone."*

That event happens before the thousand years. Satan and his demons are going to be cast into the same Lake of Fire a thousand years later.

THE "Perpetual" Lake of Fire?

We see that at the end of the Last Great Day, that Lake of Fire is still going to be in existence. This physical phenomenon is going to exist on the Earth for more than a thousand years, a thousand years plus a generation. I've heard others speculate on this. (This is something borrowed, I'll say.) I've heard others speculate, wondering if the Lake of Fire might be a tourist attraction in the millennial age. It's going to be there, unless God extinguishes it and then restores it. ... I'm inclined to think it's going to be there. Could it be? Do you think it'll be a tourist attraction? Do you think that tourist attraction will be haunted by the demons that inspired the Beast and the False Prophet? The world is going to know about all this at that time. They won't have to only read about it. Just a thought. I don't see it as being too far out to suggest such a thing. So could it be?

The world will have a physical illustration of the penalty of sin then and there, because that generation, the whole millennial generation and the age beyond it, that is going to have their chance. There'll be no chance for them beyond that. Whatever they do in pursuit of conversion is going to have to be genuine. Otherwise, they face extinction in the same Lake of Fire at the Final Sentencing event.

Those who live in the millennial age will know only peace and prosperity. They'll know nothing of our evil age. There's a reference in Jeremiah 33:6. It says, "*Behold, I will bring it health and cure, and I will cure them, and will reveal unto them the abundance of peace and truth.*" That certainly describes the millennial age. Proper health. Living God's ways. It will yield prosperity and truth.

Imagine what society would be like if we didn't have the burden of defense or the massive wealth drain of war: the destruction, the disruption of all of the economies of the world. War is expensive. When the beast power says, "*Who is able to make war with him?*" it suggests that there's going to be a major economic upheaval at that point in time

where nobody can afford to go to war anymore, against him.

Imagine what it would be like when the economy is run properly, when all the wealth doesn't flow to one percent of the world's population, when the economic production is spread equitably, when there is no more war, when there isn't the massive population decreases that occur in war, the massive loss of life, when there isn't that happening anymore. Imagine what it would be like, because that is that age. The millennial age.

Those people will know a world like that. That's all they'll know. After the first generation, the current situation, the current economy, the current religious systems that we have, the educational systems, those are going to fade from memory. All of the things that were false are going to fade from people's memory. The latter generations won't know of any such thing, unless they read about it somewhere, but they'll have no real conception, not having experienced it.

An Environment for Deception?

But the millenniums will know only peace and prosperity, so you can see how Satan could impact them. He's going to be doing things that are new to them, nothing like they've ever heard or seen before. We tend to think in the millennium that everyone will become converted. It'll be so easy. It will be the easiest time, really, when you think about it. Yes. Satan will not be there. Everything is going fabulously well. Everyone is prospering. Everyone has all they need. Everyone knows the truth. "*The truth will be out there like the waters cover the sea,*" it says.⁴ People won't go around needing to evangelize one another, saying, "*Know the Lord.*" "*They will all know me,*" it says. People are going to know God. They're going to know a great deal of His Plan. They're going to know where the Lake of Fire was, if it's not still there.

Wouldn't everyone become converted at that point in time? We would think so. But there's the human factor, you see. It isn't just Satan. We have our carnal selves as well. Anyone living in this age, anyone called in this age, understands that. We have ourselves to overcome as well. We're our own Satan at times. Does anyone disagree? We create our own

⁴ Habakkuk 2:14 / Hebrews 8:11

problems, our own resistances to God's way. There will be an element within that society that is, let's call it, if I can use that term, Laodicean: Lukewarm: Casual. They'll take a casual approach. People who aren't appropriately zealous.

WHEN Does Laodicea End?

I spoke some time ago about the seven church eras, and I posed in that message that we tend to think the seven eras are going to end with the Second Coming. Most of the world, most of the Protestant religions who believe in the Church Eras idea, think the same, that at Christ's return the Church is going to become passé, that the Laodiceans end the eras.

My feeling is that the same attitudes, the same approach, the same problems that we read of with regard to the Laodicean Era will carry on into the millennial age. There will be a Church of God in the millennial age. It will have a spiritual structure. It will be administered by the Spirit-born Saints of God, and it will have converted Elders who are ordained and who serve His congregations not all that differently than now. There will be a Church of God in the millennial age, and it will have, at least, the human problem of being lukewarm about things.

Gently Down the Stream

People then, as now, will tend to 'go with the flow'. It'll be so easy to float along, just like in this society. It's so easy for our young people to go with the flow. Whatever the majority are doing, that's it for them. That's the way they go. Well, in the millennial age it'll be similar. There will be those who are zealous, those dedicated to what they are being given, just as in the Church of God today. Think about our experience of the past 20, 30 years. How many supposedly 'called' people were just 'going with the flow' but who weren't really in it. They weren't applying themselves. Look what happened. For whatever reason, they found justification to wander away and no longer be interested. It won't be that different in the millennium in that respect. There will be people who are Laodicean in type at least. They're going to be casual about their calling. They're not going to be zealous as they ought to be, as God wants of them.

There'll also be another element. We don't think about this, but, like in today's society, there will be a few who resent being imposed upon by God. They

will resent the demands being put upon them by their opportunity for conversion because it's going to cramp their style. There are going to be people who hate God. They won't be obvious, necessarily, not to us, but that's what Satan's release is for, to take out of the millennial society those people whose attitudes would be detrimental to those coming up in the Second Resurrection.

Picture this. Those coming up in the Second Resurrection are going to have their past experiences still burned into their minds. If they came up and interfaced with people who resented God, who had all kinds of 'issues', who weren't converted, what would it do? It would reinforce their reactions and make it that much more difficult for them to repent and change and become members of God's Family. It would negatively affect and seriously hinder that opportunity being offered them.

A Positive Environment

God wants to make it as easy as possible for the next generation of His Family – the generation beyond this generation – to make it. Now, some have objected to that and they said, "No, no. You must be subjected to Satan's trials in order to develop perfect Righteous Character." Well, that's true of our age, but our age is to be awarded a higher reward. Those who come from this age are to be part of the Bride of Christ. There is a point in time when that opportunity to be part of the Bride is cut off. Remember that point where Christ said to His disciples, at His final Passover, he says, "*I will not drink of this cup until I drink it anew with you in the kingdom*"? When we understand the symbology of drinking of that cup, it represents a betrothal, a marriage proposal. Christ offered that cup to His disciples first, and they were the first to be included in the Bride contingent, but He left that period open. That period is still open presently.

You see, when the bridegroom partakes of the cup, He accepts those who have agreed to be part of His Bride. That reverts back to an old Jewish custom, the formal marriage proposal custom. His disciples understood that. There are places where they wrote about it, showing that they understood that. (That was another message given another time.) Just as a point, there is a point in time – that's the point I want to make – there is a point in time when the

Bride opportunity period is brought to a close, and that's when He will partake of that cup with them in the Kingdom. But after that, those who are called and those who are converted are going to be of the children of Christ and His Bride. Their status is not going to be as high in the Family structure. They won't have overcome as much. They won't have been the ones who were martyred. They won't have been the ones who had to slug it out through life as many of us have, with Satan's trials and with every imaginable difficulty in life.

It's going to be a different world in the millennium, and it's going to be much easier. God is going to restrain Satan from the millennial age, and from the Last Great Day as well, but He also needs to restrain the interface between those who resent God still living in that final millennial generation from those that are going to be raised up. Does that make sense? It does to me. You can call that speculation. You can call it deduction. I would agree. It is. However, it IS going to work somehow. There is a reason why Satan is to be re-injected back into the final generation of the millennial age, though briefly. Satan's release from prison is going to mark the end of the millennial age, but there's a greater age to follow.

Into the Last Great Day

There is going to be a Great Transition. God's Plan is going to move from the thousand years into an even greater day, and that's why it's called a Great Day, where those who have ever lived are going to rise up and be given the opportunity that they never had. Those who did have an opportunity prior to that time are going to remain asleep in their graves until the sentencing event that comes at the end. There's basically three opportunity periods for conversion. We know of them. There's the present age with its situations; There is the world to come, which we call the millennium; Then there's that brief period beyond the world to come, which we know as the Second Resurrection era, also called the Great White Throne Judgment.

Where Judgment Has Begun

We're told that judgment today is on the household of God. 1st Peter 4:17, another familiar passage. You see, Peter recognized this too. He wanted people to understand that we are presently in a judgment period. *"For the time is come that*

judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?" Those that are being called are being judged, not judged in the sense of being condemned, but judged in the sense of being evaluated. All judgment involves a period of evaluation, even in the modern court system, which refers to it as the 'evidentiary phase'. There's a period of evaluation where the evidence is heard, and then there is the 'sentencing phase' where a sentence is imposed appropriate to that evidence. It's no different with God. We are being judged now, and that in this sense is evaluation.

Those who survive on into the millennium, we can read of them in Revelation 20:12. John writes, *"I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were **judged** out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works."* That judgment is going to extend on beyond into another age. It's not just that age. There's going to be another age when people are going to be evaluated, much as we are. In Revelation 14 we see another relevant passage. I like this chapter for another reason, (but that's a message for another day). Revelation 14:7. This is where the three angels are addressing the survivors of the Great Tribulation, the first generation about to live on into the millennium.

He says to them, *"I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth."* They're going to be hearing the everlasting gospel for the first time. *"And to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters."* If this judgment were for condemnation, why would he tell those people to worship God? Get the point? This is not a condemnation situation. This opens a period of evaluation. Those people are going to enter into an evaluative period of judgment, just as God's people – those He is calling – are in today.

Saints to Judge the World!

1st Corinthians 6:3 is insightful as well. This is another little piece of in-fill detail. This is an

example where there were some judgment calls necessary in the congregation. Paul says in verse 1, *"Dare any of you, having another matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints? Don't you know that the saints shall judge the world? And if the world shall be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters?"* We are going to be world judges. We should now be honing our senses of discernment, as it says in Hebrews chapter 6, that we should be evaluating matters in the situations that we're in. We are going to judge the world.

Continuing in verse 3: *"Don't you know that we shall judge angels?"* There's one. *"How much more the things that pertain to this life?"* What does he mean, "judging angels"? How are we going to judge angels? Well, this obviously is not the fallen angels, because they're already judged. They're already pre-sentenced. The judgment of angels has to be God's angels, judging not in the sense of condemnation but judging in the sense of directing, deciding, telling them what to do and how to do it.

Our mentality is going to be higher than theirs, if you can imagine that, to where we are going to know more about what to do than they do. We're going to have a better sense than the angels do as to what's the right way and how to live it. These are profound scriptures if we take time to meditate on them. God has told us a lot about the future.

Babylon IS Fallen!

Those first years of the millennium, as far as we're concerned, will be dealing with those who had some WCG familiarity. Picture that. As time goes on, the former Babylonian religious systems also will fade from people's memories. Those later generations will know nothing of that stuff. Those people who are converted at that time are going to have a very different outlook on life. They won't have the memories of bad experiences. They won't have had the trials. You can see from that how it could be easy for that society to not take spiritual matters as seriously as they ought to.

A Shocking Development

When Satan is released, it will shock everyone in the realization of their Laodicean condition. It's going to be so easy to be lax in that society. Everyone's going to know most everything. They're going

to know all the truths that they need to know. But there's something more to it than just intellectual understanding. One's calling needs to be pursued with purpose. God wants more people in His Family. Today we're a pitiful few, really, when you think about the world population. We are so few, and yet we're going to be the CORE of the Administration of those greater ages. Not only in the millennial age, but God's Saints are going to be the leaders in the post-millennial age as well, the Last Great Day, the Second Resurrection Era.

Honed to a Real Proficiency!

We're going to do so with a thousand years of experience under our belt, because we're going to have some difficult cases to deal with. It'll be a tough generation that comes up. Think about the people that have lived in inner cities. Think about the people that lived in past ages who never knew the right way, who all they knew was war and killing and thefts, who never knew that there was a real God or a right God, who worshiped everything imaginable. There's going to be some tough cases. How's God going to deal with them? How are we going to deal with them?

Those of you who are familiar with the last twelve chapters of the Book of Ezekiel realize – and this is particularly evident in Ezekiel 44 – will realize that there is going to be a restoration of some form of the Sacrificial System. Whether it's identical to what was done in the Levitical Order, I don't know. Keep in mind, the Order of the Priesthood at that time will be of the Melchizedek Order, which long-preceded the Levitical Order! I don't know if it matters. God is going to restore some form of that system, and it's going to coexist with what we would consider a New Testament type system. There are people who will be worshiping at the Millennial Temple, and there's a proscription against certain individuals, that they can't come into the Temple environs to worship unless they are circumcised either of heart or of foreskin.⁵

People will have to at least be worshiping under one approach or the other, but the Millennial Sacrificial System is going to function much as it did in the Old Testament era. Paul explained the reason for that, though not all understand it. It was to bring

⁵ Ezekiel 44:4-9

those people into a mental orientation where they could come to Christ. (Gal. 3:23-24) There are so many effective illustrations in those physical rituals that taught important spiritual lessons. Those people that are the tough nuts, the difficult cases, are going to have to be reoriented in their thinking through the Ceremonial System until such time that their minds can accept what God is offering them, and when they do achieve that state they will revert over to what is more like the New Testament system.

God's Model Nation

God gave those rituals, those ceremonies, that sacrificial system, to ancient Israel for a purpose. God is going to use Israel to teach in the world tomorrow, physical Israel as well. They are going to be the examples that the world looks to. People are going to lay hold on the sleeves of the garments of certain people and say, "You're Jews. You're with God. We want to follow you. We want you to teach us." ⁶ They're going to get much of the picture from having experienced the Sacrificial System. It's not for everyone. It's for those who need to have their minds reoriented to the point where they can come to Christ. Not all will be able from the start.

That's another reason why He's not going to have marital situations in the second resurrection, to give people as clear a path, as uncomplicated a situation as they can possibly have, to where they can focus their attention on their relationship with Him, because it's their last chance. It may be their first, but it's also their last. At the end of that age mankind awaits a Final Sentencing. That's more the subject of a Last Great Day message, but they have to make it. This is their only chance, and God has provided them with the best possible environment imaginable for conversion.

He's also given them the most potent educational system to be able to do so. We tend to think of the Second Resurrection people in the sense of our society, but think of other societies. Think of the murderous groups that have been around. Think of something we can relate to, a criminal gang kind of mentality or a hardened criminal. What does it take to turn those persons into a compliant, spirit-born Saint of God? What about those raised in pagan religions who haven't a clue HOW to repent?

It's going to require some drastic action. It's not just a casual waltz. Nor is it just knowledge. They can know all they want to know, but if they don't respond in the right way, if they don't accept God's Spirit, if they don't use God's Spirit to live and to develop the character of Christ in themselves, what good is knowledge? It has no use at all. We're going to be the Elders in the world to come. We need to be preparing for that now.

After the Transition

Another important event is going to happen. We read of that in Ezekiel 37, where the nations of Israel are going to be raised. They're going to be given God's Spirit. He says that in Ezekiel 37:13. He doesn't say that they asked for it necessarily, because He is going to use those people. Having had the experience of the Old Covenant Sacrificial System, they will already have that in their background. He says he's going to do something here. *"And you shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out of your graves, and **shall put my spirit in you**, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land: then shall you know that I the Lord have spoken it, and have performed it, says the Lord."*

God is going to raise these people and give them His Spirit, perhaps unrequested, but I don't think they'll be non-receptive either. They'll be so glad to be alive again. I think they'll be glad to know and understand what they were doing back then and what importance it had for their future. The Sacrificial System did not produce conversion or salvation. None of those works that they did absolved their sins, not really. It pictured it, it pictured that there was a need to do something about it, but it didn't do it. The blood of bulls and goats didn't take away sin, yet it taught them important spiritual lessons, and those lessons are going to be key then. When He gives them His Spirit, it's all going to become so clear to them, and He's going to use those people to teach the rest of their generation who come up in the Second Resurrection.

We're going to transition from the millennial age, this age which is pictured by the seventh day of the Feast. We're going to transition over into a totally new age. The millennium is going to begin with a drastically reduced population base. Population

⁶ Zechariah 8:22-23

growth will be controlled and sustainable, though possibly rising into the billions. When you project a population growth without wars factoring in, there might be as many as 20 billion in the final generation of the millennium. People will live out their normal lifetimes and die, as we do presently. There might be as many as 40 distinct separate generations in that time span, if 25 years is a reasonable generation length from the time of birth to the time when they are producing their own families.

A Comprehensive Recap

At some point in time, the final millennial generation is going to lose the ability to procreate. There won't be infants born during the Last Great Day. That's not the time for that. It isn't explained how it's going to happen, but God can certainly shut off that capability towards the end to where there aren't newborns in the millennium's last few years.

Satan will be released to gather the malcontents from among the final millennial generation. He's going to draw them out of society for God's purpose. World headquarters in Jerusalem will be besieged. You can read of that in Ezekiel 38 and Revelation 20:9. That was presented earlier. Satan will experience an ultimate and final defeat. His physical army will be devoured by fire, and his demons, with him, will be cast out to where they can no longer have any interactions with humanity. They'll be destroyed in the Lake of Fire, as it says.

That accomplished, the Second Resurrection will then take place, raising those who hear the call to be resurrected – that particular qualifier applies to the Second Resurrection era, not the third – for them to have the opportunity that this life never provided them. The final generation of the millennium will die-out within the Second Resurrection Era. As it says in Hebrews 9:27, *"It's appointed unto all men once to die, but after this the judgment."* Those that live in the millennium will also experience a 'first' death. That's what Isaiah 65:20 tells us. The child or the wicked person will die even if they live to 100 years, much like now. It won't be that different.

Those who are resurrected will live out their generation. How many years that is we can't say specifically, but they will live on to stand in the Final Sentencing Event. They're going to remain alive. People who are raised in the Second Resurrection won't have health issues. They'll have sufficiently perfect physical bodies to where they

can continue to live without the aspect of health problems or death from whatever cause. They're going to remain alive to the final end.

Sheep From the Goats

Everyone who is to be judged (this time sentenced) in the Final Judgment will be alive physically to stand before God for an accounting. God is not going to sentence anyone to the Lake of Fire who is unconscious. They're going to stand and answer and receive their appropriate sentences. God is going to separate the sheep from the goats. They're going to come up together. (Those who didn't hear, who weren't called up in the Second Resurrection, will be raised in the Third Resurrection to stand with the others for final sentencing.)

Revelation 14 talks about two distinct – if you can call it – operations. One is the White Cloud Harvest, where Christ passes His sickle into the world population before Him at that time and reaps those destined for His Family. Those that aren't reaped in that manner are left to two angels, for the rest to be thrown into what is called the Grapes of Wrath winepress. He's going to have those angels reap those people for extinction in the Lake of Fire.

We Should Have the Picture

God has given us so much detail about that age, about what is coming, about His Plan to call everyone who has ever lived to have an opportunity for eternal life, to be a part of His Family, to be born literally of the Spirit, to become a Spirit-Being capable of living on through eternity. We couldn't do that in our physical form. If in this life we would never endure. When we read of the world to come, how it's going to be composed, obviously it's not a material world anything like what we know.

So there'll be what we could rightfully call a Great Transition. How it's all going to shake together is in part for us to figure out, to fill in the details. We know the major elements. How the minor items come together, it's anyone's guess, at this point.

I hope this article has given you a picture that works, that hopefully can provide food for thought that maybe can structure our thinking on these matters. The seventh Day of Tabernacles, represents the end of the millennial age, and we look forward into that day when the rest will be raised to have their opportunity. I hope this proves helpful. 