

REV. 20:4-6 REIGN OF JESUS AND THE CHURCH

Brother George Tabac August 1993

In our study today we would like to consider additional points that have arisen since our previous consideration of the subject of the reign.

We all realize how there are differences of opinion on this subject. Some brethren believe the reign of Rev. 20:4-6 has begun, while others believe it is future.

And the irony of it is that both views are held by brethren who accept, study and greatly appreciate the writings of Bro. Russell as the Harvest Messenger.

Each view is held conscientiously because we all believe God used him to bring us meat in due season.

The purpose of our study today is **NOT** to give the final dogmatic proof of what is "**THE ANSWER**" to the subject of the reign. It is a subject that is not as crystal clear as we would like it to be.

What we pray to accomplish as we consider several possibilities, is to try to understand more fully a distinction in the Harvest Message that will help us to understand the other point of view more fully.

To realize those who have a different view than ours, have it because they sincerely feel that is what the Harvest Messenger taught.

The distinction we believe Bro. Russell makes in regards to the reign is:

First, the Lord has begun reigning **in one sense**, when he returned at his 2nd advent to begin setting up the kingdom.

But there is another sense in which a **REIGN OF GLORY** begins when the church is complete.

Let's go on to note these distinctions in Bro. Russell's writings. First we'll note a few articles referring to the sense in which the reign has begun.

R-5632 C1-P4

"At the sounding of the **seventh trumpet, Messiah** was to take unto himself his great power **and reign**. That trumpet is **now sounding!** "And the **nations were angry and thy wrath is come.**" (Rev. 11:18)

VOL.3 - 301:

" **Thy God Reigneth!**" The oft-repeated prayer of the Church has been answered; **the Kingdom of God has indeed come.**"

R-5990 C1-P2:

"And now -- **since the Spring of 1878, God has "set his king upon his holy hill of Zion.**" (Psm.2:6)

We realize there are many more articles such as these that refer to the fact that the Lord has returned with kingly power and is now reigning while the Kingdom is being set up.

Was Brother Russell justified in referring to the present work of our Lord as a time of reigning? We believe so. Let's note a few scriptures that bring this out.

REV 11:15-18

And the **seventh angel sounded**; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The **kingdom of this world** has become the kingdom of **our Lord, and of his Christ**; and **HE SHALL REIGN FOR EVER AND EVER**. ... We give thee thanks, **O Lord God Almighty**, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and **HAST REIGNED**. **And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come.**"

We note the setting: At the time the 7th angel sounded, that is at the time of our Lord's 2nd presence, were told the reign of **God all mighty and his Christ has begun**. It is a time when the nations were angry for His wrath was coming upon the nations.

It obviously is referring to the present time of trouble when the evil nations of Satans empire are being evicted by our Lord.

This is not yet the time of blessing of the Mediatorial reign, so from what sense is our Lord reigning?

We realize that Satan in the garden of Eden usurped authority and became the God of this world. Jehovah God permitted it for a purpose. But when the due time for our Lord's 2nd presence came, God sent forth his son to begin the process of removing Satan's evil empire.

Christ returned as God's representative with authority and power, to begin the process of evicting Satan and setting up God's kingdom reign over earth.

We notice from this standpoint God almighty and his Christ **begin a reign which will last forever and ever**, not just a 1000 years. (Greek = For the ages of the ages) meaning everlastingly.)

God and his appointed representative Christ will forever be King over earth and over all God's universe. Another scripture which refers to this same aspect of the reign is:

Dan.2;44

In the days of **these kings** shall the **God of heaven set up a kingdom**, which shall never be destroyed, ... it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and **it shall stand for ever**.

Here we see how the heavenly phase of the Kingdom began to be set by our Lord prior to 1914 when the kings were still upon the scene.

In the parable of the pounds we read:

Luke 19:12-15

A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return ... And it came to pass, that **when he was returned, having received the kingdom**, then he commanded these servants to be called unto him.

We see when our Lord returned to earth, it was with God's authority over the kingdom of earth having already been given unto him.

In the parable of the harvest of the wheat and tares we read:

Matt. 31:41

The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall **gather out of his kingdom** all things that offend, and them which do iniquity;

We see during the **harvest**, the authority over the kingdom of earth now officially belongs to our Lord, as he proceeds in the work of ridding **His kingdom of earth**, of all things that offend.

Thus we see how God almighty and his Christ are **reigning now**, from the standpoint that Christ as God's representative has been given the rulership over the kingdom of earth in place of Satan. And this aspect of God's and Christ's reign will last **forever and ever**, as we were told in Revelation 11:15.

Now we would like to go on to see the distinction in the Harvest Message of this **overall eternal reign** that has already begun, as compared to the reign of Rev.20:4-6.

Rev. 20:4-6

And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, ... and **they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years**. This is the first resurrection. ...they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and **shall reign with him a thousand years**.

Until a short time ago I had always thought that the Lord's reign since 1874 and this reign of Revelation 20 were one and the same.

Part of my reasoning was based on the Diaglot rendering of verse 4, where it says, "they lived and reigned with Christ **THE** 1000 YEARS," instead of **A** 1000 years. "**A** 1000 years would be referring to the fact that they actually reigned for a period of exactly 1000 years.

Whereas I reasoned that when it said "**THE** 1000 YEARS," it might really be like a title. The thought then being that they lived and reigned with him the Millennium. That is they reigned with him **sometime during the Millennial age**, meaning it wouldn't necessarily be a full 1000 years.

But then as I looked into the matter of manuscript translations further I found the Diaglot was incorrect. Overall the Diaglot is an outstanding translation being based on the 4th century Vatican 1209 manuscript.

But in Professor Wilson's footnote on the 1st page of Revelation he brings out, since the Vatican 1209 manuscript is missing the book of Revelation he used the Vatican 1160 manuscript, which is an 11th century manuscript.

SINIATIC 4TH CENTURY MANUSCRIPT OF REV. 20:4

Thus when I looked into the two oldest manuscripts available with the book of revelation, The Siniatic 4th century which this is a photo copy of,

ALEXANDRIAN 5TH CENTURY MANUSCRIPT OF REV.20:4

and the Alexandrian 5th century as well as many other older manuscripts, I found that they have **A** 1000 years, not **THE** 1000 years.

So that removed my proof as to why I had thought the reign of Revelation 20 had begun.

If someday an earlier manuscript is found that has both references in Rev. 20:4 & 6 "THE 1000 YEARS," then it could very well be a possibility. But for now there isn't, so I could not use it as a proof.

There was a 2nd line of reasoning I used in regards to the Harvest Message. I always knew there were a few articles where Bro. Russell referred to the 1000 year reign of Jesus and the Church as being in the future.

But I rationalized them, feeling he was just speaking in a general way, but that when ever he referred to the reign from a chronological standpoint he always said it had already begun.

But when I took the time to analyze carefully everything Bro. Russell wrote on this subject I found I was mistaken.

There was no question that he referred quite often to the Lord reigning in one sense ever since his 2nd presence.

But when I looked up every reference in the Volumes and reprints that Bro. Russell wrote on Rev.20:4-6 it became very clear that his thought was that the reign of Rev.20:4-6 was definitely in the future after the church was complete.

IN THE VOLUMES AND REPRINTS THERE ARE 185 REFERENCES TO REV. 20:4-6

14 in the 6 volumes and 171 in the Reprints = 185 TOTAL

Using the volume and reprint indexes I found there were a total of 185 references to Rev. 20:4-6. Fourteen in the volumes and 171 in the reprints.

I had **expected** to find a few of them as general statements applying to the future, and most of them being applied to the reign that began with our Lord's 2nd presence.

But what did I find?

IN THE VOLUMES AND REPRINTS THERE ARE 185 REFERENCES TO REV. 20:4-6

14 in the 6 volumes and 171 in the Reprints = 185 TOTAL

NOT A SINGLE ONE STATED THAT THIS 1000 YEAR REIGN OF JESUS AND THE CHURCH HAD BEGUN

**38 REFERRED TO THIS REIGN IN THE FUTURE TENSE
(AFTER THE CHURCH IS COMPLETE)**

The others had no time reference in them.

Out of the 185 references, there was **NOT A SINGLE ONE** that referred to this 1000 year reign of Jesus and Church as having already begun. And instead 38 applied the reign of Revelation 20, in the future tense to when the church was complete. The others had no time reference in them.

NOT A SINGLE ONE said it had begun and 38 applied it to the future after the church was complete.

You may want to take the time to look them up yourself. Using the volume and reprint indexes see if you can find even one single reference to Revelation 20:4-6 that says it has begun. I could not.

This was rather conclusive proof to me that Bro. Russell saw a difference between the reign that began in 1874 or 78 and the reign of Rev.20. For many years I had thought that his teaching was that this reign of Rev.20:4-6 had begun. But if that were so, - surely there would be at least one reference saying so in so many words.

"The reign of Rev.20:4-6 has begun." But instead I found not a single one, and 38 applying it IN the future TENSE..

Let's note just a few of the articles that refer to the 1000 year reign of Jesus and the Church as being future.

R-5023 C2-P1-5

QUESTION: "Is it scriptural to say that the glorified members of the church have reigned at any time up to the present?"

ANSWER: No! They have not reigned at any time. At least, if they have reigned, we have not found it out, and they have made a poor reign of it so far. ... **The reign of Christ did not in any sense begin in the past.** ... When the reign of Christ begins, you will find it such a thorough reign that all the members of his body will have some part in it. If the reign of Christ should begin today, the saints would be with him, ... "kings and priests unto God," who **"shall reign with Christ a thousand years."**

R-5919 C2-P4

"The kingdom cannot come until the royal family is ready to take the throne.
Jesus, indeed, had long been ready; but in harmony with the Father's plan he has waited and has been doing a work in the preparation of the church, ... **Then for a thousand years** the restitution privileges will be open to the whole world of mankind."

R-5692 C1-P3

"This Church of God, in all the world, is not numerically strong. ... **Their reigning**, their power and their control in the world's affairs **will not come** until they shall have experienced the resurrection change, and **Messiah's kingdom shall be fully inaugurated. Then these shall live and reign with Christ a thousand years". - Rev.20:4**

R-5604 C1-P3

"We have heretofore pointed out that the great **Battle of Armageddon** - the anti-typical one - is near ...**which will precede and prepare the way for Messiah's glorious rule of a thousand years. 1 Cor. 15:24-26; Rev. 20:6**

Question Book 805

Christ will reign during the Millennium and **we all know that Christ has not reigned yet.** If Christ were reigning now, we would not have the great systems of evil in the earth.

There are many more articles along this line. Was Bro. Russell scripturally justified in referring to the reign of Rev.20:4-6 as future. Yes we believe he was.

Let's note why in Revelation 20:4-6

Rev. 20:4-6

And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, ... and **they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.**

This is the first resurrection. ...they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and **shall reign with him a thousand years.**

Let's notice in verse 4 the setting of the opening scene when the church reigns with Christ a 1000 years. They are **sitting on thrones and judgment is given unto them.**

When do the saints sit on thrones to do a **judging work?**

Let's note Matt. 25:31-33 which describes **WHEN** the parable of the sheep and goats begins.

Matt. 25:31-33

When the Son of man shall **come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, THEN** shall he **sit upon the throne of his glory**: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his **sheep from the goats.**

We note the parable of the judging of sheep and goats BEGINS - **WHEN** the Son of man comes in his glory, **and all the holy angels are with him.** That is, the **church is complete.** Then notice it is at that time that the Lord will sit on the throne of his glory. **THEN! THEN shall he sit on the throne of his glory.**

Bro. Russell refers to this in Reprint 4694:

R-4694 C1-P4

THE SHEEP AND THE GOATS

"Today's study tells of the kingdom, but from another standpoint. It explains the work of the kingdom AFTER it shall have been set up, - **after Messiah at his second advent shall have gathered his 'jewels' to constitute his bride class, - AFTER these shall be with him in the throne of his glory,** - after he shall have taken unto himself his **great power** and shall have **begun his Messianic reign** of righteousness under the whole heavens."

R-5830 C1-P3

"The exalted Jesus is a spirit being of the very highest order, - of the divine nature, - who sat down at the **Father's right hand, on the Fathers Throne,** waiting for the time when he would make **HIS OWN THRONE,** establish the **Millennial Kingdom** and **associate the church with him in his throne** as his bride. 'To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in **MY THRONE,** even as I also overcame, and am set down with my father in **HIS throne.'** Rev. 3:21."

Thus we see that the Lord is now sitting on the Father's throne. He will **NOT** sit on his own throne of glory until the church is complete. Let's read again Matt.25:31 followed by Matt.19:28

Matt. 25:31-33

When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, THEN shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:

Matt. 19:28

"WHEN the Son shall sit in the throne of HIS glory, ye also shall sit upon 12 thrones judging the 12 tribes of Israel."

Note the tie in! We saw before from Rev.3:21 how Jesus is **NOW sitting on the Fathers throne.** Matt. 25:31 tells us Jesus will sit on **his own throne** of glory, when the church is complete. Then he says in Matt. 19 that is when the church will also sit on thrones judging mankind.

Now lets add to these scriptures Rev. 20 to get the tie in as to when the reign of the church will begin.

Matt. 25:31-33

When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, THEN shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:

Matt. 19:28

"WHEN the Son shall sit in the throne of HIS glory, ye also shall sit upon 12 thrones judging the 12 tribes of Israel."

Rev.20:4

4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them, ... and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

Notice the opening scene in verse 4. It identifies the time element as to when the church's 1000 year reign with Christ **BEGINS**. It is when they **sit upon thrones and a judgment work** is then given to them.

As we consider these three scriptures together we see the church will **not sit on thrones to judge**, until Jesus first sits on his own throne of glory, which is when the church is complete.

Thus we believe these scriptures corroborate Bro. Russell's thought that the church is not yet reigning, but that the 1000 year reign of glory of Jesus and the church will begin when the church is complete.

Rev. 20:4-6

And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, ... and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

This is the first resurrection. ...they shall be **PRIESTS** of God and of Christ, and **shall reign with him a thousand years.**

Another point to establish when the 1000 year reign begins, is to note they will be **PRIESTS** of God and Christ a 1000 years.

When do the Church become the reigning Melchisedec Priesthood?

R-4759

The Aaronic Priesthood Contrasted With The Melchisedec Priesthood

Two priesthoods are set before us in the Scriptures, the Aaronic and the Melchisedec. Both typify The Christ-Head and body. The *Aaronic pictures the sufferings of Christ*, but shows nothing of the glory and reign, except as these were symbolized in the *garments of glory and beauty*.

The Melchisedec Priest represents merely the future of The Christ, after the sacrificing shall have been finished and all the members of the body completed.

(We recall how in Leviticus 16, the high priest did not change from his sacrificial garments, to garments of glory and beauty until all the sacrificing was over. Thus depicting the change of office from Jesus being the sacrificing priest of the Gospel Age, to the reigning Melchisedec priest of the Messianic Age.)

Note how this 4759 reprint article goes on to explain why all the sacrificing must be over before we could have a reigning Melchisedec priesthood.

R-4759 (Continued)

The priest must first offer sacrifice, in order to become worthy of his own exultation to the priestly office and glory; and secondly, he must have the *merit of that sacrifice* wherewith to *satisfy justice on behalf of the sins of the world*, in order that, as the *glorified Priest*, he may have the full right to stand as *Mediator* between God and mankind, - to bless the latter and uplift them during the *thousand years of his reign as the Melchisedec Priest, - a priest upon his throne*.

Rev. 20:4-6

And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, ... and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

This is the first resurrection. ...they shall be **PRIESTS** of God and of Christ, and **shall reign with him a thousand years**.

Thus the church do not become reigning priests until the sacrificing is all over, then they will sit on thrones and as priests reign with Christ a 1000 years.

But if this 1000 year reign is future, what do we do with

2 Peter 3:7-11

But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the **day of judgment** and perdition of ungodly men. But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as **a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day...**

But the **day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night;** in the which the **heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.**

We believe this scripture must of had it's beginning in 1874 at the time of our Lord's 2nd presence. For we notice first of all it ties in the *day of judgment, and the Day of the Lord together.*

Then it mentions how this day of the Lord will come as **a thief in the night, in which the present symbolic heavens and earth will pass away.**

This undoubtedly is referring to 1874 when our Lord came as a thief in the night, invisibly. The day of judgment upon the nations begins as he begins the process of removing the present heavens and earth of Satan's empire.

Thus we can see this 1000 year day of judgment and Day of the Lord, must have begun, and they are referring to the same period of time.

1874 TO 2874 ARE THUS THE:

1000 Year "DAY OF JUDGMENT"

1000 Year "DAY OF THE LORD'S PAROUSIA"

7th 1000 Year MILLENNIAL SABBATH DAY

To Be Followed By Earth's Great Grand 50th 1000 Year Jubilee

But if these 1000 year periods have all begun in 1874, how do we harmonize Bro. Russell's thought that the 1000 year reign of Jesus and the Church mentioned in Rev. 20:4-6 are yet future?

Let's begin with:

1 Cor. 15:24-26 NIV.

24 Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father **after he has DESTROYED all dominion authority and power. For HE MUST REIGN until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. ...** When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all.

Christ must reign until all enemies in the universe are **destroyed**, which would include Satan at the end of the little season.

The first harmonization of the reign is based on this scripture. It is spelled out very simply on question book page 827.

It shows the 1000 year reign of glory of Rev.20:4 goes beyond the 1000 year day of the Lord's parousia to include the little season.

Q.B. 827

"Question -- Since **Jesus is to REIGN until all enemies are put under His feet**, and the **last enemy to be destroyed is death (1 Cor.15:25,26,)** would it not prove that **SATAN** and his hosts would be **DESTROYED** before death is destroyed, and that **both would be destroyed DURING THE REIGN OF JESUS?**

ANSWER -- The **Apostle's argument is so clear and convincing** in this 15th chapter of First Corinthians relative to the reign of our Lord Jesus and the object or purpose to be accomplished by that reign, that there is but one answer to the question and that one is in the **AFFIRMATIVE**.

Here Bro. Russell **positively affirms** that the reign of Christ **will continue** until **Satan is destroyed**, which we know will be at the end of the little season as 1 Cor. 15: brought out.

1 Cor. 15:24-26 NIV.

24 Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father **after he has DESTROYED all dominion authority and power. For HE MUST REIGN until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. ...** When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all.

WE know Bro. Russell expressed two views on this scripture of 1 Cor.15:24-28. But by far the greatest majority refer to the Lord's reign continuing to the end of the little season.

There are 26 references in the 6 volumes to 1 Cor.15:24-28. Look them up when you have time. You will find that there **is not a single one** which applies this scripture before the little season, and 14 apply it to the reign continuing, until Christ turns over the kingdom to God at the **end of the little season**.

And we want to remember that in the 1916 forwards Bro. Russell clarified or changed those things he felt were not expressed correctly. He did not change a single one of these 26 references.

We will read just one from the volumes.

Vol. 4 page 644

"Thus shall God's Kingdom come, and his will be done on earth as it is done in heaven. **Thus shall the Christ reign** as the Father's vicegerent until he shall have **put down all antagonistic authority and power**, and caused every knee to bow and every tongue to confess the Wisdom, Justice, Love and power of God the Father.

And finally, having manifested, by the last crucial test at the close of the Millennium, all who have even a sympathy for sin, though outwardly obedient; and **having DESTROYED these from among the people (Rev. 20:9)**, he shall surrender to the Father the vice-royal dominion ...Then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him (the Father) which did subject all things under him **(for the thousand years).**" **1 Cor. 15:24-28.**"

There are many similar quotes in the reprints, but we'll quote just one.

R-5210

"The scriptural proposition is that at the close of the Millennial age, when Christ shall have conquered sin and Satan, **WHEN SATAN SHALL HAVE BEEN DESTROYED**, and when the empire of the universe shall be in absolute harmony, then God will be **all in all. (1 Cor.15:28)** To all eternity there will be no opposition to His will."

Bro. Russell's latest comment was in the:

1915 "Convention Report Sermons," page 479.

"At the conclusion of Christ's Millennial Kingdom when all the willing shall have been made perfect and all the willfully wicked shall have been destroyed, Christ will turn over the kingdom to the Father that God may be all in all. 1 Cor. 15:28"

This concept of the Lord reigning to the end of the little season in which the faithful are rewarded and the 2nd death class are destroyed, is brought out in all 5 sets of scriptures that refer to the work of the reign in detail.

Matt. 25:31-46, the parable of the sheep and the goats, --rewarding of faithful and destruction of 2nd death class.

Rev. 11:17,18 Refers to what is accomplished in the reign, and ends with destroying those who were corrupting the earth.

Rev. 20:11-15 Judgment of the Great White throne, -- faithful are rewarded and ends with 2nd death class destroyed.

Rev.21:1-27 New Jerusalem picture, -- ends with rewarding the faithful and again the destruction of the 2nd death class.

1 Cor. 15:24-28 which includes the destruction of all Christ's enemies, heavenly and earthly.

All five of these scriptures which describe the reign, show that it continues until the faithful are rewarded and 2nd death class destroyed.

This concept of the reign of Rev. 20:4 continuing beyond the year 2874 is also brought out on two different charts that are in the reprints. One is on R-3460

CHART ON REPRINT 3460

Notice the 1000 year period begins in 1914 when he felt the Church would be complete.

COMMENTS ON CHART ON REPRINT 3460

"This diagram views the **Millennium as beginning with the end of "Gentile Times," October 1914...** Does it not appear that the Lord so arranged this matter, and that he has now brought it to our attention, to be distributed to the household of faith for their comfort and encouragement at an opportune time? It surely does."

Again we have brought to our attention there is a 1000 year reign starting when Bro. Russell thought the Harvest would be over and the church would be complete, which in this case was 1914.

Another chart is found on R-3579 which has the same concept.

CHART ON REPRINT 3579

CHART ON REPRINT 3579 (Side ways)

Bro. Russell's comments on this chart.

"Below we give an outline chart **built upon the Bible Chronology presented in MILLENNIAL Dawn** and embodying our original "Chart of the Ages." It presents additionally several new features, "parallels," which no doubt will be both interesting and instructive."

Again we have brought to our attention there is a 1000 year reign starting when Bro. Russell thought the Harvest would be over and the Church would be complete, lasting until the kingdom is turned over to the Father.

Another point that tends to substantiate that Bro. Russell's view of the reign of Rev. 20:4 as starting when the church is complete and will go beyond 2874 is **how Bro. Russell changed the chart in 1913.**

CHART OF THE AGES IN VOLUME 1 - 1902 EDITION

In all the 1st Volume charts up to 1913 he referred to the period of THE REIGN OF CHRIST, as the MILLENNIAL AGE. This is the 1902 edition.

CHART OF THE AGES IN VOLUME 1 - 1913 - 4,163,000 EDITION

Up to the 4,163,000 edition of 1913 it still was called the MILLENNIAL age.

CHART OF THE AGES IN VOLUME 1 - 1913 - 4,214,000 EDITION

But now notice the change in this 1913 edition which continues to this day. Bro. Russell changed the name from the MILLENNIAL Age - to the **MESSIANIC AGE.** **WHY?**

He doesn't say why. But I would like to suggest a reason why. It was because he felt it would more accurately depict his view.

For we notice that he started the Messianic age at 1874 the time of our Lord's 2nd presence when the Harvest began. Then he calls this age the "Period of THE REIGN OF CHRIST," which he further elaborates on saying, "He must Reign until He hath put All Enemies under His Feet."

Which in the articles we have just read showed that his view was that the reign would continue to the end of the end of the little season.

MY CHART OF THE MESSIANIC AGE (SHOWN ON BACK PAGE OF HANDOUT)

We have seen from the many articles we have quoted that Bro. Russell believed the 1000 year reign of glory of Jesus and the Church would not begin until the church is complete, and it would then continue beyond 2874 to take in the little season.

For as he quotes on the 1st Volume chart, He must Reign until he had put all enemies under his feet. This would include Satan's death at the end of the little season.

Thus of necessity this **MESSIANIC AGE** time period that started in 1874 which began with our Lord's 2nd presence, would have to be more than 1000 years, for it continues to the end of the Little Season which you recall we often refer to as the MILLENNIAL Age Harvest.

Since the Jewish and Gospel Age harvests we believe are equal in length, it is not unreasonable that the Millennial Age Harvest will also be equal in length to the Gospel Age Harvest.

In a general way we still refer to this overall period as the Millennium, and it would be proper, as long as we have the understanding that it has a gradual beginning and gradual ending. There is an overlapping of the ages. It starts with a Harvest and ends with a harvest.

But if we were to be very exacting, since Millennium means 1000, it would not be exactly correct to refer to what we now call the Messianic Age, as the Millennial Age, for it is longer than 1000 years.

This is the reason why we believe Bro. Russell changed it's name to the **Messianic Age** which more accurately expressed his view.

It is the Messianic Age, because it begins with Messiah's invisible return, and continues until he turns over the kingdom to the Father at the end of the little season.

Thus with all enemies in this universe having been destroyed, the Messianic reign will have accomplished it's purpose.

The universe will have been cleansed of sin and God will be "everything to everyone," with all mankind praising God throughout eternity in perfect obedience.

We believe this understanding completely harmonizes all of Bro. Russell's 2nd Volume chronology.

Including the thought:

1. That at our Lord's 2nd presence in 1874, He began a reign that will last forever.
2. The 1000 year Judgment day has begun.
3. The 1000 year Day of The Lord's Parousia has begun.
4. The 7th 1000 year MILLENNIAL Sabbath Day has begun.
5. Earth's Great Grand 50,000th year Jubilee will start in 2874.
6. The 1000 year reign of Jesus and the Church of Rev.20 is yet future and will begin when the church is complete.
7. Jesus and the church's reign continues till the end of the little season, when all enemies are destroyed.

Thus brethren we have tried to present what we believe was Bro. Russell's view and harmonizes the greatest percentage of his writings. But this is just our opinion and we realize you may have a different one.

We know some brethren believe the 1000 year reign of Rev. 20:4-6 began in 1874, and is concurrent with the day of judgment. And some day we may find they were right.

Some brethren believe the 1000 year reign of Rev. 20:4-6 is future, beginning when the Church is complete, and the mediatorial reign will then be a full 1000 years, followed by the little season. And some day we may find that they were right.

And there are other views as well, but basically I think we can recognize the overall concept in all the views are basically very similar. They all harmonize with our basic understanding of God's plan.

That our Lord has returned invisibly.

That He has begun the process of setting up the kingdom.

That the sleeping saints have been raised.

That we are in the Harvest.

That the Mediatorial Kingdom is yet future, in which all mankind will be raised and blest.

The purpose of our study therefore as we mentioned is **NOT** to give the final dogmatic proof of what is "**THE ANSWER**" to the reign. It is a subject that is not as crystal clear as we would like it to be.

Even as Bro. Russell himself said in reprint:

R-2739

Apparently the matter of when the 1000 year period should be reckoned as **fully beginning** and **fully ending** will be an open question **until the close of the MILLENNIAL Age.**

Our desire in today's study is merely to help us to understand another point of view more fully. To realize why others have a conscientious plausible reason for their view.

To realize that some of those who have a different view than ours have it because they sincerely feel that is what the Harvest Messenger taught.

But in any case, what should be our attitude towards one another if they have a different view than ours on this subject?

Before we evaluate our answer it might be well to ask ourselves the question, can I be absolutely 100 percent sure my view is correct? For myself I cannot, and neither did Bro. Russell.

Thus as we consider our relationship to one another in the truth movement, may our hearts be touched with the realization that we have all been greatly blessed with the Harvest Message.

That in humility we can thank and praise God for the enlightenment we do have. But to also recognize we do not yet know all things perfectly.

And until we do, may we appreciate all our brethren who the Lord has called, and together strive to help one another fulfill our consecration vows, and together join hands in the great responsibility we have of being God's Ambassadors on the earth.

It is my prayer that if nothing else is remembered or accomplished from this study, that it will help us all in some small measure, to become a bit more understanding, and a bit more fully appreciative of all our brethren in the truth movement.

George Tabac
900 Brentwood Drive
Bensenville, IL 60106
U.S.A.

Telephone:
Home: 1-630-595-0984
Press: 1-847-288-9326

E-Mail: GTabac@attbi.com