Sunday, November 29, 2026 am

WHAT GOD HAS NOT JOINED TOGETHER
The Lord's Return and Reestablishing Jerusalem

Today we continue our 2026 theme, What God has (and has NOT) joined together. We are currently addressing some things He has not joined that man wants to join together – such as the church & entertainment, the church and general benevolence, the denominational concept of the church, fellowship with unbelievers and those in error, etc.

Today I want to address a timely subject, especially as we consider the troubling times in the world and our society. I want to address a specific element of a doctrine known as premillennialism. In brief summary, this doctrine teaches that Jesus intends to return to this earth and reign for 1000 years of utopia on the throne of David in Jerusalem. A few years ago, I presented a series of lessons on why premillennialism is false. Today I want to address a specific element of this doctrine, Is Jesus going to return and physically reign on this earth in Jerusalem?

At the outset, I believe God has NOT joined the return of Jesus with a literal earthly reign. So let us notice a few things the Bible says about the Lord's return.

I. Introductory observations

a. I do believe the Lord is going to return. That is clearly taught in scripture. And while we do not know when, there are details outlined in scripture about what will happen. A study of the details says NOTHING about Jesus literally returning to Jerusalem.

b. A brief history – in AD 70, when Rome destroyed Jerusalem, that brought to a complete end the Jewish system of worship under the Law of Moses. Since then, Jews have not been able to follow it. And they know it! They do not have a temple, a Levitical priesthood, tribal distinctions, etc. The way Jews worship today is revised in anticipation that the messiah is still going to return. They follow what they can, but they KNOW their religion is incomplete. For 1900 years, a period LONGER than the nation itself existed (from ~1500 BC to 70 AD) the messiah they anticipate has not returned. NOTE: To me (TAT) that is one of the strongest points establishing that the LOM is no longer valid to God. Of course, the NT clearly teaches it was "nailed to the cross" (Colossians 2:13-14). The NT also proclaims that Jesus WAS (is) the promised Messiah they were to be looking for.

c. Enter premillennialism. While in the 2nd century a few early writers believed in a coming 1000 year reign (Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Tertullian, etc.), it basically died out within about 200 years. It was not strongly resurrected until the 1800s by men like John Darby and C.I Scofield who described it as "dispensationalism". In the 1970s, it gained greater popularity in the west by men like Hal Lindsey (<u>The Late, Great Planet Earth</u>), and Tim LaHaye's and Jerry Jenkin's "Left Behind" series. For many it has been assumed to be something in the near future.

d. The formation of modern Israel has fueled some of the speculation about this doctrine. Following WW2, on May 14, 1948, the United Nations declared an area of Palestine as "The Republic of Israel." It was a compromise due to an influx of Jews to that region, following WW1 and the holocaust. Jews purchased land from the Arabs, but such was resented by some of wealthier Arabs of the region. The problem was turned over to the United Nations who divided the land into 2 states – one Jewish and one Palestinian. This was the beginning of modern Israel. Premillennialists used this event to declare the beginning of the fulfillment of the end time prophecies as outlined in Revelation and other prophetic passages. As NOTED, the premillennial doctrine had already been in circulation for half a century, but modern theologians ran with it and many begin filling in the blanks. Does anyone remember the booklet, "88 Reasons Why The Rapture Will Be In in 1988"? That's 40 years after the events of 1948. The institution of the nation of Israel at that time by the United Nations is a hot bed topic of premillennialism.

e. NOTE: In America (and western nations) there is a fascination with uniting the modern Jewish faith with the Christian faith. We find organizations that are seeking to unite us. America's relationship with Israel is partly a result of this belief. It is based on premillennialism and the belief that one day, many orthodox Jews will come to accept Jesus as their promised Messiah. Incidentally, there are already Jews (mostly premillennial) who do believe that Jesus was their promised Messiah.

f. In this lesson I want to notice why God has NOT joined together modern Israel and the Lord's return.

II. Biblical considerations

a. Old Testament prophecies make Jesus reigning on the earth contradictory –

i. Genesis 12:1-3, 7 – note: proponents of premillennialism teach that the land portion, while partially fulfilled was taken away and needs to be reinstated.

1. Nation promise – as they left Egypt, they were described as God's nation. Deuteronomy 4:7-8 -Moses described them as a great nation. They were about to inherit their land.
2. Land promise –
    a. The book of Joshua describes the conquest of the land of Canaan and dividing it into tribes. Joshua 21:43-45 notes the fulfillment of His promise.
    b. Also the borders of Genesis 15:18 finds the promise to give Abraham the land from the river of Egypt (not the Nile) to the River Euphrates. On a map, this territory is described as fulfilled during the reign of Solomon – 1 Kings 4:21-25
    c. NOTE: Giving the land was the promise. KEEPING the land was conditional - Deuteronomy 28 describes blessings and cursing dependent on their faithfulness. They lost the land, EVEN in AD 70 because of their rejection of Him.
3. The Seed promise – fulfilled in Jesus dying on the cross. Salvation is available to everyone. Galatians 3:8-9 quotes this and references it to the Gentiles. The point being through Jesus salvation would be made available to all. In vs. 16 he further elaborates that the seed is Christ. Also Acts 3:25-26 Peter quotes this text and applies it to salvation in Christ.

ii. Jeremiah 22:30 – Coniah was the last king of Judah. He was wicked and rebellious against the LORD. The prophecy declared that none of his descendants would prosper sitting on the throne of David ruling in Judah. According to Matthew 1:12 Jesus was a descendent of Coniah, though possibly through the lineage of Joseph. Regardless, as a descendant of Coniah, Jesus could not reign IN JUDAH. He is reigning in heaven.

iii. Daniel 2:44 – established the timing of His coming kingdom. This is so specific that SOME premillennialists teach that the church was established as a temporal substitute until He can return to establish His kingdom as He intended to do when He came the first time.

iv. Isaiah 2:2-3 – described the beginning of this kingdom out of Jerusalem. This is also fulfilled on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2)

v. 2 Samuel 7:12-13 – the throne of David established forever. Jesus is NOW on that throne – Acts 2:29-36 explains several psalms of David, including one where He declares Jesus Lord (Psalm 110:1).

vi. Other texts could be added to these, but the point is Jesus fulfilled prophecy AS planned, following His time on earth.

b. The kingdom was established AS INTENDED in the first century.

i. NOTE: This kingdom was established on Pentecost – Acts 2

ii. Matthew 3:2, 4:17 – Both John the Baptist and Jesus declared, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

iii. Matthew 16:18-19 – Jesus told His apostles He would give them the keys to the kingdom of heaven (and build His church). They were to "open the kingdom" to Jews first then the world. This began as recorded in Acts 2.
iv. Mark 9:1 – some standing here who will not taste death till they see the kingdom present…
v. The church IS the kingdom (both are descriptive of the same group of the saved).
vi. Jesus is NOW reigning – 1Corinthains 15:22-26.

c. The nature of the kingdom is spiritual –
i. John 18:33-38 – Jesus before Pilate declared that His kingdom was not of this world. It was NOT intended to be "of this world". A physical reign in Jerusalem IS "of this world".
ii. Luke 17:20-21 – the kingdom is within you
iii. Romans 14:17 – the kingdom is not eating and drinking, but righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.
iv. Colossians 1:13-14 – describes us as being translated into His kingdom when we obey the gospel. It is IN existence as Paul wrote this.

d. What does the Bible say about the second coming of Jesus?
i. We do not know when it will be. 2 Peter 3:10
ii. When He comes all things physical will cease – melting with fervent heat (3:10-12)
iii. We will meet with Jesus in the air – 1 Thessalonians 4:17. NOTE that this text (nor any other text) does NOT say Jesus will set foot on the earth again. Even Acts 1:9-11 speaks of Him returning from heaven. But again, no reference to a reign on earth.
iv. There will be ONE judgment day – John 5:28-29; 2 Corinthians 5:10-11, Romans 14:10-12.

e. But what about Revelation 20:1-6? This passage is the foundation of the entire theory of premillennialism. Time will not permit a detailed explanation of this text, but here are a few observations. This is the only text that mentions saints reigning with Christ for 1000 years and Satan being bound during that time. But as you read the text in its context, there are many questions left unanswered.
i. Is it literal or figurative? Considering the book of Revelation describes itself as figurative in its introduction (Revelation). And while there are some literal applications in places, as you examine our text you find much figurative language there. Consider in the text that Satan in bound with chains and cast into a bottomless pit. Satan is described as a dragon. Are these literal or figurative? IF they are figurative, could the 1000 years also be figurative for a length of time (a fairly long time – such as the time between Pentecost and now??)?
ii. Consider also what is NOT found in this text: - 1) Christ's second coming; 2) A kingdom established; 3) reigning on earth, 4) physical bodies on earth for those who had been beheaded who refused to worship the beast; 5) the throne of David, 6) Jerusalem, etc. Yet all of these are assumed with the Lord returning to reign on earth for a 1000 years in Jerusalem.
iii. The overall point of the text is how those who were faithful till they died physically are rewarded while awaiting the coming day of judgment. They are NOW reigning with Him – Hebrews 12:28.

Much more could be said about this, but I hope we have revealed enough to know that when the Lord returns, that will be the end. The work of the Jewish nation was completed when Christ was died and arose. NOW, as Peter declared in Acts 15:10-11, *Now therefore, why do you test God by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved in the same manner as they*." Peter is answering the question about keeping the LOM today. The answer is NO! In fact he also answers the question: How can a Jew be saved? The answer is: The same way as a Gentile. Paul said it clearly in Galatians 3:26-28. So no, God has NOT joined together the Lord's return and a

physical reign in Jerusalem. BUT He IS going to return. The question of concern: Are you ready for that day? Think about it!