

***Supplemental Notes:***

## **Thy Kingdom Come**

For anyone who takes the Bible seriously, the numerous explicit prophecies by God that the Messiah would literally rule from Zion cannot be ignored or explained away. In fact, it was the linchpin of Jesus' teachings. Sadly, it is now one of the most controversial and misunderstood teachings in the Church today.

In this briefing, Chuck Missler and Albert Israeli will explore mysteries of the Kingdom teachings, including the detailed Millennial Temple and the confinement and release of the evil one.

Take a glimpse into the past and the future of the Church in this fundamental teaching on the Kingdom of God.

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## Thy Kingdom Come

*But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem...*

Micah 4:1, 2

### The Return of Christ to Rule

It is tragic that most of the major denominations—Roman Catholic and Protestant—embrace an eschatology (“study of last things”) that is **amillennial**: a view that does not envision a literal rule of Christ on the Throne of David on the Planet Earth. While there are many different, yet defensible, views regarding many aspects of end-time prophecies, this basic divergence—denying a literal Millennium—is particularly dangerous in that it would appear to be an attack on the very character of God! It does violence to His numerous and explicit promises and commitments that pervade both the Old and New Testaments.

The Old Testament is replete with commitments for a literal Messiah ultimately ruling the world through Israel from His throne in Jerusalem. There are at least 1,845 references in the Old Testament and 17 books give prominence to the event. The ancient rabbinical aspirations were dominated by it. In fact, this obsession obscured their recognizing the Messiah when He made His initial appearance.

There are at least 318 references in 216 chapters of the New Testament and 23 of its 27 books give prominence to the event. The early church looked longingly for His promised return as their “Blessed Hope” to rid their desperate world of its evil rulers. How and where did this skepticism known as “Amillennialism” begin?

### Origen

Pious, popular, and persuasive, Origen stands out as one of the great figures of the 3<sup>rd</sup> century church. Even at the age of 18, he stood out spectacularly well as a teacher in Alexandria. (In misguided obedience to Matthew 19:12, he emasculated himself, which he later regretted.) Later, as a prolific writer based in Caesarea, his *De Principiis* systematically laid out Christian doctrine in terms of Hellenic thinking and set the pattern for most subsequent theological thought for many years. His numerous sermons and commentaries, however, tragically also established an extreme pattern of allegorizing Scripture, which was to strongly influence Augustine in subsequent years.

### Augustine

Augustine, the Bishop of Hippo (A.D. 354-430), was one of the most influential leaders of the Western church, living during the turbulent days of the disintegration of the Roman Empire.

He lived a sensuous, dissolute life, but following a dramatic conversion he experienced a total change of character. In 391 he was ordained as a priest in North Africa and four years later was elevated to the Bishop of Hippo. He embarked on a writing career and his extensive doctrinal writings deeply affected the Medieval Roman Catholic Church. Augustine’s most elaborate writing, *The City of God*, was written as the Empire lay crumbling under a

siege by half-civilized tribes. It portrayed the Church as a new civic order in the midst of the ruins of the Roman Empire. Augustine died while the Vandals were besieging the very gates of Hippo in A.D. 430.

Although his writings effectively defeated a number of heresies emerging in those turbulent times, the allegorizing influences of Origen left an amillennial eschatology in their wake. As the Church had increasingly become an instrument of the state, it wasn't politically expedient to look toward a literal return of Christ to rid the world of its evil rulers! The allegorical reposturing of those passages was more "politically correct." (This reminds me of the saying among the data processing profession: "If you torture the data long enough, it will confess to anything!")

### The Reformation Shortfall

A thousand years later, under the influences of Martin Luther and others, the Reformation brought an intensive return to the authority of the Scriptures which, in turn, resulted in the subsequent reform in soteriology (the study of salvation) with its emphasis on salvation by faith alone. Many were willingly burned at the stake for their commitment to a Biblical perspective. However, one of the unfortunate shortcomings of the Reformation was that it failed to also reexamine the *eschatology* of the Medieval Church in the light of Scripture. Thus, the allegorizing alchemy of Origen, institutionalized by Augustine, left a denial of the Millennium that still continues to pervade the doctrines of most Protestant denominations today.

### From Augustine to Auschwitz

One of the derivative aspects of an amillennial perspective is that it denies Israel's future role in God's plans. This also leads to a "replacement theology"

in which the Church is viewed as replacing Israel in God's program for mankind. In addition to forcing an allegorization of many key passages of Scripture, this also led to the tragedy of the Holocaust in Europe. The responsibility for the six million Jews who were systematically murdered in the concentration camps has to include the silent pulpits who had embraced this heretical eschatology and its attendant anti-Semitism.

### Reality of the Millennium

For anyone who takes the Bible seriously, the numerous explicit commitments of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that the Messiah would literally rule from Zion cannot be ignored or explained away. This was promised to David (2 Sam 7:12-17; 23:5; and under oath in Ps 89:34-37) and predicted in the Psalms and the Prophets (Ps 2; 45; 110; Isa 2:1-5; 4:1-6; 11:1-9; 12:1-6; 30:18-26; 35:1-10; 60, 61:3-62; 66; Jer 23:3-8; 32:37-44; Ezek 40-48; Dan 2:44-45; 7:13-14; 12:2-3; Mic 4:1-8; and Zech 12:10-14:21). God's explicit and unconditional commitment of the land of Israel to the descendants of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob is the very issue that is being challenged by the world today! And the resurgence of amillennialism, and its attendant doctrines, are again setting the stage for the *next* holocaust.<sup>1</sup>

In the New Testament, these commitments are reconfirmed. Every Christmas we are reminded that Gabriel promised Mary that her son was destined to sit on the Throne of David (which did not exist during the days of His ministry).<sup>2</sup> It is yet to be fulfilled. In fact, He taught us to pray specifically for it: "Thy Kingdom come...." What does that mean?

The thousand-year reign, from which the Millennium takes its label, is detailed in numerous passages including Revelation 20, Isaiah 65, and Ezekiel 40-48, among others. Ezekiel's detailed tour of the

Millennial Temple virtually defies any skeptic's attempt to treat it allegorically (see diagrams on the following page). Encompassing a Temple area 50 miles on a side, substantially to the north of Jerusalem, as a source of a river that flows toward both the Mediterranean to the west and the Dead Sea to the east, Ezekiel's description implies a total change of topography, which is explicit in the Scripture (Zech 4:9; Isa 35:1-10). In the Millennium the curse is lifted (Isa 11:6-9) and creation is redeemed (Gen 3; Rom 8:20-22). The earth is in full knowledge of the Lord (Isa 11:9; Hab 2:14).

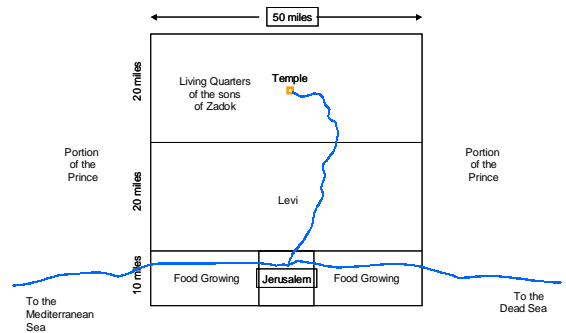
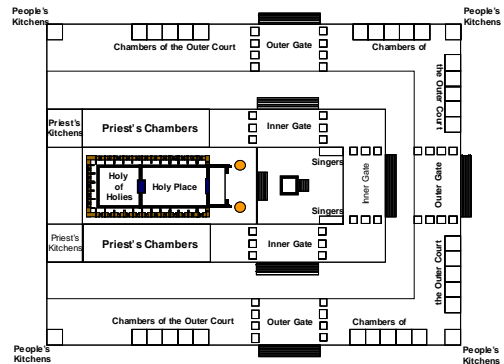
However, the more we learn about the Millennium, the more questions it raises. It is not heaven: it is clearly distinctive in contrast to the eternal state which follows (Revelation 21). It will be characterized by a limited amount of evil, which Christ will judge perfectly and immediately.<sup>3</sup> Neither is it the "new earth" that God will yet create;<sup>4</sup> for therein righteousness dwells, which is something not true of the Millennium.

### Millennium Paradoxes

As an example of some of the ostensible paradoxes of the Millennium is the strange question of death. Dr. Arnold Fruchtenbaum, a dear friend and highly respected Messianic scholar, suggests that death in the Millennium will be for unbelievers only. Nowhere in the Bible does it speak of a resurrection of Millennial saints. This may be why the resurrection of the tribulation saints is said to complete the "first resurrection" (Rev 20:4-6).

From the New Covenant in Jeremiah 31:31-34, it would seem that there will be no Jewish unbelievers in the kingdom; all Jews born during the Millennium will accept the Messiah before their 100<sup>th</sup> year.<sup>5</sup> Unbelief would thus be among the Gentiles only, and therefore, death would exist only among the

### Ezekiel 40 - 48



Gentiles.<sup>6</sup> [Jer 31:35-37 refutes "Reconstructionism" and similar heresies.] Another strange issue is the prominence of sacrifices in the Millennium. It would seem that they are memorials after the fact, just as the sacrifices in the Old Testament were memorials in advance.<sup>7</sup>

## A Time to Study

As recent events have so dramatically emphasized to all of us, it is, indeed, a time to reexamine our perspectives, and to *acknowledge in our personal priorities* that history includes some shocking “non-linearities”: even our most cherished presumptions are subject to cataclysmic challenges! It is time to refresh our understanding from the bedrock of Scripture and to recognize the urgency of the times.

Are *you* ready? Maranatha!

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### Notes:

1. See our briefing package, *The Next Holocaust and the Refuge in Edom*. Also, Hal Lindsey's *Road to Holocaust*, Bantam Books, is a definitive study of these issues.
2. Luke 1:32.
3. Isaiah 11:1-16.
4. Isaiah 65:17; 66:22; 2 Peter 3:13; Rev 21:1.
5. Isaiah 65:20.
6. Arnold Fruchtenbaum, *Footsteps of the Messiah*, p.273. Cf. *Jerusalem in the Millennium*: pp.330ff.
7. Hebrews 10:4ff.

## Bibliography

Fruchtenbaum, Arnold G., *The Footsteps of the Messiah*, Ariel Press, Tustin CA, 1982.

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John W. Schmitt & J. Carl Laney, *Messiah's Coming Temple*, Kregel Publications, Grand Rapids MI, 1997.

## Tape 2 Interview with Albert Israeli

### Background (excerpted from www.cjo.org)

Albert Israeli was born in Soviet Georgia, the home of one of the most ancient Jewish communities in the Diaspora. Despite anti-religious indoctrination by the Soviet authorities for the past seventy years, Georgian Jews succeeded in maintaining Jewish traditions and customs, both at the synagogues and in their homes.

For centuries, all generations of Albert's people concluded the Passover Seder with these words: "Next year in Jerusalem." The hope of two thousand years was finally realized when Albert's father, Abraham, announced that they were making Aliyah to the land of their fathers.

The Israelis arrived at Ben Gurion Airport in Tel-Aviv in February 1973. Albert was twelve years old at the time. In October of that year, they lived through the horror of the Yom Kippur War. His father was lost somewhere on the Syrian front, and for a week no one knew whether he was dead or alive. They finally learned that he was alive, though lightly wounded. Several years later, Albert's parents decided that this definitely was not a country "flowing with milk and honey." Upon arriving in Toronto, Canada, Albert met his future wife who, just like Albert, had moved from the Ukraine to Israel, and later to Toronto.

Albert and Gretta married and became parents of two daughters. Even with having such a wonderful family, Albert couldn't find the peace or fulfillment he wanted. The light came suddenly into Albert's life when he met a young Jewish fellow who claimed

that Jesus of Nazareth was the promised Messiah of Israel. Albert felt compelled to show this “ignoramus” how easy it was to prove from the Scriptures the absurdity of his faith. But as time went on, he found himself no longer trying to prove his friend wrong; he discovered, instead, that he was trying to prove himself wrong! On the second day of Passover in 1984, Albert gave his heart to Yeshua.

The love and forgiveness that Albert experienced set him on fire to tell everyone about the Good News of the Messiah. Several Jewish people came to faith at that time, and one was his wife, Gretta. As time passed, more and more people came to a saving knowledge of the One of whom Moses in the Law and the Prophets did write: Jesus of Nazareth. Albert found himself being the spiritual leader by default, since he was the oldest believer in the group. This group of believers grew spiritually and in numbers to become congregation “Beit Sar Shalom” (House of the Prince of Peace) which now meets in North York, Toronto.

In 1989, the Lord opened the door of ministry in the former USSR, where hundreds of Jews and Gentiles have come to faith. Fellowships, including congregation “Beit El Gibor” in Kiev, were planted; later some were also planted in the cities of Lvov and Charkov.

In 1991, Albert and Gretta moved back to Israel, now with their third child, David Ben-Zion. During the next four years, Albert served eight months in the Israeli Armed Forces. As the Lord enabled him to share His love with the people in Israel (through mass evangelism and personal sharing), Albert saw many come to faith in the Messiah. Thus, “Beit Sar Shalom” the Tel-Aviv congregation, was planted.

Albert was also the founder of, and the announcer for, the radio program *Light of Israel*. This program was beamed into Israel from Lebanon, and into the

Soviet Union from Saipan and Monte Carlo. In 1995, the Israelis moved to Toronto, and six months later were led to join The Christian Jew Foundation. Albert presently serves as the Russian-Jewish Ministries Director for the Foundation—and also leads CJF tours to Israel, along with Gary Hedrick, CJF president.

In Israel, more fellowships are being planted in Tel Aviv, as well as Petach Tikvah and Rehovoth. As Albert coordinates missionary activities in Israel, it is his fervent hope and prayer that the Lord will provide the financial support for the ministry there, and in the former Soviet Union. His vision is to plant churches in every area around the world that has a major Jewish population.

Church ministry is another aspect of Albert’s work. He has spoken at numerous conferences and in many churches in the United States, Canada, the Middle East, and Europe. He considers this ministry of utmost importance in being able to reach this brethren, “the lost sheep of the House of Israel,” with the Gospel of Christ Jesus.

Albert’s goal, in teaching the Biblical responsibility of the local church, is to instruct and equip believers around the world to preach the Gospel “to the Jew first, and also to the Greek” (Rom 1:16). His presentations include a Jewish Evangelism Seminar—and topics such as “Israel and the Church in God’s Plan of Salvation,” “Israel in Prophecy,” and “Israel in the Feasts of the Lord.” He teaches salvation in the picture of the Tabernacle, through a slide presentation; and, he also gives “Messiah in the Passover” demonstrations.

[Albert Israeli can be contacted via email at [Albert@cjo.org](mailto:Albert@cjo.org) or you may write him at The Christian Jew Outreach, PO Box 35135, London, Ontario N2W 3M0, CANADA. (Or in the U.S. at 611 Broadway, San Antonio, TX 78215 (800) 926-5397.)



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