

The Thousand Year Therapy Session

How the Great Psychotherapist Will Treat the Deepest Wounds

Psychotherapy once lasted as long as the client desired. Insurance covered unlimited sessions because no one knew when to stop. Eventually the insurance companies tired of paying for all those sessions and began reforming the mental health system through “managed care.” Now insurance providers require psychotherapists to make a clear diagnosis, use empirically-validated methods, and end therapy in usually 10 to 20 sessions.

No more endless therapy! At least not for free.

Managed care will go out the window during the 1000-year period of time the Bible calls the millennium. Our divine Psychotherapist will go the distance with us, healing our deepest wounds and most devastated relationships. He’ll take all the time we need, and do it all for free.

The therapy will be made more effective by the absence of sin. Our natures will have been “changed in the twinkling of an eye” (1 Corinthians 15:52) at the coming of Jesus. Satan being confined to an extended timeout on planet earth while we live in heaven, our constant temptations and trials will cease. These advantages should facilitate the healing process.

But it’s bigger than us. The 1000-year period that begins with the coming of Jesus and ends with the final judgment and the creation of a New Earth will heal more than our souls and relationships. It will heal the universe of the ravages of sin. With this big picture in mind, let’s map out the timeline of the millennium, nailing down the significant events—the resurrection of the just, the perishing of the lost, and the 1000 years and its end.

The Resurrection of the Just

The raising of Lazarus (John 11:1-46) and Jairus’ daughter (Matthew 9:18-26) were Jesus’ show-and-tell for the time when “all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth” (John 5:28). The same Creator who spoke the worlds into existence will speak life to the accumulated billions of dead.

Jesus spoke of two resurrections, one for “those who have done good, to the resurrection of life,” and one for “those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation” (John 5:29). Paul said that the resurrection would come, “each in his own turn: Christ the firstfruits, then when He comes, those who belong to Him. Then the end will come” (1 Corinthians 15:24).

God is a God of order. He will resurrect “each in his own turn.” First, “the dead in Christ will rise” (1 Thessalonians 4:16). From the far corners of the earth, believers of all ages will come together as one. Then, “we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air,” (1 Thessalonians 4:17). Since Jesus’ feet never touch the earth, those of us alive at His coming must fly up to Him. The sky will be crowded that day with exuberant believers.

The Perishing of the Lost

In contrast to the resplendent image of the rejoicing saved, we see a gut-wrenching picture of the condition of the lost at Christ's coming. They are from every strata of society—privileged and poor, powerful and weak, enslaved and free. With one accord they clamor for shelter from the “wrath of the Lamb,” (Revelation 6:16). Notice that they say, “The great day of *their* wrath has come, and who can stand?” (vs. 17). In the second coming, the Godhead join as one in confronting evil. The God whose infinite Gift was spurned, the Spirit whose pleadings were ignored, and the Son whose poured-out life was passed by for the pleasures of sin, join in revealing their glory. The unjust find this so horrifying that they prefer that falling rocks crush out their lives.

The wrath of a gentle creature is the most devastating kind, because it obviously doesn't spring from personal hostility. The Bible calls God's judgment a “strange act” (see Isaiah 28:21), but in the face of millennia of injustice and oppression, a loving God must actively and directly reprove evil or be guilty of complicity.

We read in Romans 1:18 that God's wrath is primarily directed against *ungodliness*, as opposed to *people*. It is only when ungodly *people* totally identify with their ungodliness, wedding themselves to sin by persistent choice, that they perish along with it. If God had His way, not one person would perish (see 2 Peter 3:9). He created the fires of hell for the devil and his angels, not for any human being (see Matthew 25:41). Only our insistence can put us in those flames!

Recall the times in the Old Testament when the glory of God was like a “devouring fire” (See Exodus 24:17). God told Moses that no one could see His face and live (See Exodus 33:20). Then when Moses came down from the mountain, his shining face frightened the children of Israel simply because he had been in God's presence (See Exodus 34:30). Avoidance is the sinful heart's natural reaction to holiness. But no one will avoid God's glory when Jesus returns. Sin-darkened hearts recoil at “the brightness of His coming” (2 Thessalonians 2:8).

The net result of the second coming is that all the righteous dead rise, the righteous living join them with Jesus in the air, and the living wicked die.

The 1000 Years

Speaking of the multitudes of saved believers, John says, “They lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years” (Revelation 20:4). We know this refers to the resurrected saints, because immediately afterward John says, “Blessed and holy is *he who has part in the first resurrection*. Over 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” (vs. 6). As if for emphasis, John mentions the thousand years of reigning with Christ twice.

The prophet Isaiah describes the earth during that time: “The Lord makes the earth empty and makes it waste” (24:1). As the earth remains a wasteland, the saved live and reign with Christ. Can you imagine the saints as these things transpire?

First of all, they take it all in. The throngs of believers from every age gather together in one place. Talk about a mega-church and rich fellowship!

Yet there will be surprises:

- I can't believe so-and-so didn't make it!
- I can't believe so-and-so made it!
- I can't believe *I* made it!

Next, they engage in research. Revelation 20:12 pictures the saints standing before God while books are opened. "And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books." According to 1 Corinthians 6: 2-3, "The saints will judge the world." Psalm 149:9 tells us that the godly are "to execute upon them the written judgment, *this honor have all His saints.*"

Saints judging their fellow human beings is a very solemn thought. How slow we must always be to judge others, being so flawed ourselves! But there are very practical reasons why this process of examination will be helpful, even therapeutic:

- We've "been there and done that" and know what temptation is like.
- We will have questions about people that will be answered by what the books reveal.
- Observing the effects of sin so carefully will help inoculate us against it for eternity.

Finally, the saints ask all their "Why God?" questions. God has set aside the uninterrupted centuries for the purpose of addressing each faith-shaking personal tragedy. The Everlasting Counselor, our Divine Psychotherapist, holds session after session as we process through our most unspeakable traumas. And He holds a few joint sessions to help patch up broken relationships! Full healing finally comes under His divine care.

And what of Satan? He will be "bound" for the thousand years. He is "bound up. . . so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years [are] finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while" (Revelation 20:3). Think about it. Because humans are either in heaven or the grave, separated from Satan, he cannot indulge his favorite pastime of tempting, oppressing, and destroying poor, weak, frail human beings. He stalks the earth for a thousand years, "bound" by circumstances. He's alone, with no one to victimize.

Jeremiah 4:33 says, "And at that day the slain of the Lord shall be from one end of the earth even to the other end of the earth. They shall not be lamented, or gathered, or buried; they shall become refuse on the ground." It is a scene of utter desolation, with rotting carcasses strewn about the bleak landscape. Satan trudges about like pouting child, frustrated to the point of insanity.

The End of the 1000 Years

Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number *is* as the sand of the sea. Revelation 20:7-8

Gog and Magog symbolize the godless who rise from the dead (See Ezekiel 38:3-4). They come forth from the grave with the same corrupt characters with which they entered it: “They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city” (Revelation 20:9). Still bent in opposition to God and His people, they surround the city for one last military coup. But they fail.

And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them. The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet *are*. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever. Revelation 20:9-10

Expanding on the judgment and destruction of the wicked, Revelation 20:12 says:

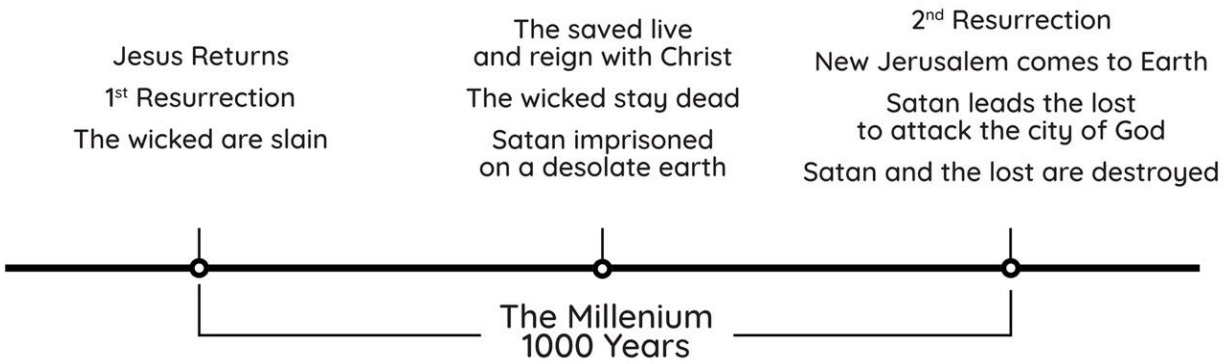
And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.

After the thorough examination of the books during the 1000 years, the executive phase of the judgment ensues, and punishment comes. And what is the punishment for sin? “The wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23). Jesus said those who believe would not “perish” (John 3:16). Annihilation is the punishment for sin. Eternal, irreversible non-existence.

But what about that “tormented day and night forever and ever” (Revelation 20:10)? Consider that the original Greek of these eternal-sounding words is *aion* and means “an age.” Jude 7 says that Sodom and Gomorrah were burned with “eternal fire,” (*aionios pur*), but they are not burning today. This kind of wording is speaking of the finality of God’s judgments, rather than the perpetuity of the process of judgment. The punishment of the wicked ends in “the second death” (Revelation 20:14). God will completely annihilate Satan and his servants.

Then “the elements will melt with fervent heat,” (1 Peter 3:12). This indicates that the ravaged landscape of our planet will be cleansed away with fire, after which “we, according to His promise, look for a new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells” (vs. 13).

Let’s summarize this all in a simple illustration. Our timeline is of 1000 years. First, Jesus comes, the first resurrection occurs, and the wicked are slain. During the 1000 years, the saved live and reign with Christ, the wicked remain dead, and Satan is imprisoned on earth. At the end of the 1000 years, the second resurrection occurs, Satan leads the lost to attack the city of God, and Satan and all the lost are destroyed. Oh, and the New Jerusalem comes to earth (Revelation 21:2). We’ll dive into that wonderful topic in a separate study.



Jesus Returns
1st Resurrection
The wicked are slain

The saved live
and reign with Christ
The wicked stay dead
Satan imprisoned
on a desolate earth

2nd Resurrection
New Jerusalem comes to Earth
Satan leads the lost
to attack the city of God
Satan and the lost are destroyed

The Takeaway

We've taken a breathtaking journey through the events surrounding the 1000-year period the Bible calls the millennium. We are told simply that at the end of that time, "God will wipe away every tear from their eyes" (Revelation 21:4). While God will immortalize our bodies and take us to heaven, He will not, in an instant, remove every reason to cry. We will face some somber realities during that time. But we will do it with a special kind of help from our Divine Psychotherapist.

Quiz

1. The 1000-year period beginning after Jesus comes is called the _____.
2. There are two resurrections—the resurrection of _____, and the resurrection of _____.
3. God's wrath is primarily directed against _____ rather than ungodly people.
4. During the millennium, Satan will be _____ for 1000 years.
5. The saved will _____ with Christ for 1000 years.
6. After the second resurrection, Satan and his people surround the city for one last military _____.
7. "Forever" is from *aion* and means "an _____."
8. The earth will be cleansed with _____.

Answer Key

1. Millennium
2. Life, condemnation
3. Ungodliness
4. Bound
5. Live, reign
6. Coup
7. Age
8. Fire

