

## Societal Structure of Millennial Kingdom

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The kingdom of God in the millennium as well as in the eternal state will be **structured** as a human society with divine and human rule. There will be leaders and followers; there will be people involved in all kinds of things; there will be physical activities happening. The Kingdom will have elements including spiritual, political, ecclesiastical, economic, physical, and moral. We can see these elements clearly laid out in the Bible:

Characteristic of the Kingdom	Definition	Old and New Testament Prophecy
Spiritual	Not the opposite of physical. Rather, having to do with righteousness and a relationship with God through salvation.	Isaiah 61:10; Zech. 9:9, 12:10; Jer. 23:6.
Political/governmental	The function of rule and administration. There will be nations.	Matthew 25:31; Psalm 110:1-3. Isaiah 60:5, 11.
Ecclesiastical	There is a “churchy” or worship service in the kingdom.	There is a priest king, Zec. 6:12-13, Psalm 110:4. There will be sacrifice Ezekiel 40-48.
Economic	Financial elements.	Deut 15:6, 28:12
Physical	Having to do with material things, agriculture, technology, etc.	Water Isaiah 30:25 Climate Isaiah 30:26 Fruitfulness Isa. 32:15 Animal harmony Isa 11:7 Physical health Isa 33:24 Protection Psalm 91:10
Moral	As an outgrowth of the spiritual, governmental and ecclesiastical, aspects, the kingdom will be a place of high individual and societal morals. For example, abortion will not be legal, nor many of the other currently vices that are “in vogue.”	The teachings of our Lord about morality in the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5–7.

The pre-eternity kingdom is a lesser reflection (a shadow?) of the eternal state. Eternity itself will be a society with nations (Rev. 21:24), a literal city new Jerusalem (21:9-27), trees (22:2), service to God (21:3), and a reigning function (21:5). So too will the earlier millennial kingdom.

So above we described the general structure. But who are the **constituents or people** in this kingdom? A passage in Hebrews 12:22-23 gives us a clue. Although this passage is a reference to the heavenly society in the heavenly Jerusalem, it is helpful as to the constituents of the

immediately prior millennial kingdom (because of the parallel or “shadow” mentioned above). These ones are:

1. Innumerable company of angels
2. General assembly and church of the firstborn, i.e. the church
3. God the Judge of all
4. Spirits of just men made perfect, i.e. the Old Testament saints and probably Tribulation and millennial saints.
5. Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant

Our focus will be on #2 and #4 above. There are four groups in the “ruling” class, three of which happen to be resurrected saints. Two groups will be present in their natural pre-resurrection bodies: the living Jews and the Gentiles who make it to the end of the tribulation still alive and are allowed into the kingdom.

### **1. The King – Isa. 32:1a; Matt. 25:31; Jer. 23:5; Psalm 2:9; Rev. 12:5, 19:15**

The king is the Lord Jesus Christ. His role is obvious: He rules over everything. He is the God-man, the human-divine mediatorial ruler standing between God and mankind, perfectly ruling a kingdom under his authority.

### **2. Resurrected Church – 2 Tim. 2:12; Rev. 2:27, 3:21; 1 Cor. 6:3; Rev. 20:4a**

By virtue of its union with Christ brought about by Spirit-baptism, the Church has a special relationship to Christ. The Church is the bride of Christ (Rev. 19:7-9). I believe this refers to the wedding supper of the lamb, at which the saints like the patriarchs will be privileged to dine. Unbelievers will be prevented from participating.

The Church will reign with Christ (Rev. 20:4a, 1 Cor. 4:8, 2 Timothy 2:12, Matt. 19:28).

### **3. Resurrected OT Saints – Isa. 32:1b; Dan. 12:2-3**

Note that the resurrection in Daniel 12:2 is in two parts: those who awake to life, and those who awake to shame and contempt. This is similar to John 5:29 where both the first resurrection and the second are mentioned right next to each other. This does *not* mean that the two resurrections happen at the same time. Rev. 20:6-7 show that there is 1000 years separating these resurrections.

Included in the first group are, among many others:

1. Abraham, who will personally receive his promise (Gen. 13:15, Acts 7:5).
2. David, who will rule as a king/prince over the nation (Ez. 37:24-25).
3. Zerubbabel, who will be made a ‘signet ring’ (Hag. 2:23)

### **4. Resurrected Tribulation Saints – Rev. 20:4b**

In Rev. 20:4, it is clear that these were martyred saints of the tribulation, since they:

1. Were beheaded.
2. Were Christ’s witnesses.
3. Were witnesses to the Word of God.

4. Had not worshiped the beast or his image.
5. Had not received the mark of the beast on their bodies.

These are said explicitly to be resurrected (“lived”) and to rule (“reign”) with Christ during the 1000 year kingdom.

Rev. 20:6 indicates that this group is the last to be involved in the “first resurrection.” All other people in the grave must wait for the 1000 years to be over and they experience the second resurrection (the resurrection of the unjust) and the second death.

## **5. Living Israel – Matt. 24:22; Ezek. 20:33-38; Rom. 11:26; Isa. 60; Amos 9:13**

First, how do they make it into the kingdom?

1. They must survive the tribulation period (Matt. 10:22, 24:22).
2. They must pass the judgment in the “wilderness of the peoples” (Ezek. 20:33-38). The unsaved are purged out of the nation at this point (20:38) and are not allowed to enter the land. These receive the death penalty. Thus, all Israel entering the land and the kingdom will be saved (Rom. 11:26).
3. The basis of the judgment is their response to the gospel of the kingdom proclaimed throughout the tribulation period by the 144,000 witnesses (Matt. 24:14).
4. This judgment occurs during the 75 days after the tribulation. Dan. 12:12 mentions 1335 days. Subtracting 1260 for the last half of the tribulation, we get 75 days which are evidently a clean-up or set-up period.

Second, what is their role in the kingdom? (See the whole of Isa. 60.)

1. They will at long last fulfill their mission as a nation of priests (Ex. 19:6; Isa. 61:6).
2. They will be the most respected nation, “at the top of the heap” if you will (Deut. 15:5-6; 28:13).
3. Other nations will look to them and Jerusalem and support them (Isa. 60:3, 5-6, 10-11, 61:5-6; Zech. 14:16-21). Nations which do not will be destroyed (Isa. 60:12; Zech. 14:18-19).
4. They will physically prosper (Amos 9:13).

## **6. Living Gentiles – Joel 3:1-2; Matt. 25:31-46; Micah 4; Zech. 8:20-23**

First, how do they make it into the kingdom?

1. They must also survive the tribulation period.
2. They must pass the judgment outlined in Joel 3:1-2 at the Valley of Jehosphaphat. This is also mentioned in Matt. 25:31-46 as the judgment of the sheep and goat nations.
3. The basis of the judgment is the response to the gospel of the kingdom and the resulting treatment of living Israel during the tribulation. Phrases such as “on account of my people” in Joel and “my brothers” in Matthew indicate this. See Pentecost, *Things to Come*, p. 420-21 for reasons why this ultimately amounts to judgment of individuals and not nations as blocks *per se*. Saved enter the kingdom and unsaved face the death penalty.

4. This judgment also occurs in the “cleanup period” of 75 days after the tribulation.

Second, what is their role in the kingdom? (See the whole of Micah 4.)

1. They will fulfill their role in blessing Israel (see above).
2. They will learn about God and His laws through Israel (Micah 4:2) and they will worship God in Jerusalem (Zech. 8:20-23).
3. They will bring their tribute and glory into Jerusalem (Isaiah 60:11).

You might want to know what happens to living saints in the last two categories above when eternity begins—are they “resurrected” or “raptured” or how exactly do they get a spiritual body? I do not know. The Bible apparently is silent on this—presumably they “merge into” the eternal kingdom (1 Cor. 15:24) and so would at that point get a body suited for heaven (1 Cor. 15:50 and previous context indicates the need for such). They do not face the Great White Throne judgment, as only unbelievers are there (Rev. 20:11-15).

At least some of these saints are mentioned in Rev. 20:9 as being under attack by Satan and the deceived nations who make one last stand against God at the end of the millennium.

For many of the points above, there are scads of other Biblical texts. Large chunks of prophetic literature are devoted to the re-gathering of Israel and its future prosperity, for example.

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