

# Why the Millennium is Necessary

by Lynn Andrew

We must understand that heaven's goal is to eliminate evil from the universe. Wasted time and lost opportunities are the result when we take one element of the plan to be the end in itself.

The effort to rid creation of evil will succeed. We are assured of that. Detention awaits Satan and his army of cohorts. But why wasn't Satan put away immediately after he rebelled?

Because there is an issue of justice to be settled. Satan argues, as anyone in his position would argue, that self-awareness necessitates some degree of independence and freedom to evaluate and with that comes liability to question, contradict, and even experimentally oppose the Creator. If exploring that gift leads to sin, the fault must be owned by the Author of self-awareness and free will, not by his creatures.

If this argument cannot be refuted, what can be done? Justice demands that Satan not be arbitrarily expelled.

By the way, this is vitally important to all of us. As soon as Satan goes to the Lake of Fire, every sinner must go with him. By leaving Satan go free, sinners have an opportunity to find salvation in Christ.

So Satan is safe for now. But his day of doom is uncertain as long as his argument has no answer. Since there is no answering it on the philosophical level, a real-life counterexample is needed.

Who might stand as evidence? All free-willed beings fall short except Jesus Christ who is not a created being. Even if a saint uncorrupted by sin were found, Satan's contention would not be disproved by an anomaly. It must be shown that God's design of free-willed human beings was not a recipe for rebellion.

Not one but a statistically significant number of counterexamples will be needed in order to honestly win the case.

To convincingly show that free-willed beings can be perfectly righteous and obedient to the laws of God, they must be given opportunities to sin. No experiment in isolation or on an unnatural earth will do. The trial must be carried out in the world we were meant to inhabit. There must be family and society and government. There must be incentives to selfish behavior and rivalry, for parallel incentives undoubtedly existed in the realm Satan inhabited when he took his own grandeur too seriously.

Critical to the case God is building against Satan's argument is a demonstration of the truth of his word when he "saw it was good" after creating the earth and its inhabitants. Satan and his corrupt followers maintain that it was not very good, and they have plenty of evidence.

It is not difficult to see what must be done. A great company of people must be prepared to serve as the answer to Satan's contention. Three steps are required:

First, their guilt must be erased—not arbitrarily but by an equitable and legally binding substitution. Where in the universe would such a substitute be found but only in God himself? This has been done, and Christ has accumulated a great company of legally unblemished saints. But with the old nature still in us, none are able to live above sin.

With new bodies in the Resurrection during the Millennium, saints will be free of the old nature, which in that regard is a reset to the Eden of Adam and Eve before the fall. Bind Satan so he doesn't interfere, and we have met the conditions for the test, right? If after a thousand years or so no sin is found among them then heaven has its proof.

"Not so fast," Satan would say. He speaks from experience.

"You'll soon find out that the majority of those saints have not the foggiest idea how to apply their potential to inter-personal relationships, let alone serve to maintain order and justice in the government. I have seen to that, for most of them have followed the advice I have dispensed in the world. Just being pristine in body and soul doesn't make one wise! So don't bother to run the experiment. I'll give you a hand with that and convince your theologians that the Millennium is unnecessary. Then no one will be disappointed when you call it off."

Satan is right. Salvation by the atoning blood of Christ is tremendous and wonderful, but we must not take it to be the end if we are to be used in achieving heaven's goal. Personal training in righteousness and wisdom and skills in arbitrating conflicts are needed as well. How shall we learn that? Not in heaven where the physical constraints of earth are absent. Not during the Millennium when each slip adds to Satan's side of the scoreboard. The practice must come in this life.

But Satan laughs at that conclusion because he has set many traps. When we attempt to learn righteousness and wisdom by the methods available to us in the world, we get tangled in its perversities.

No, the second step must be to learn and love true righteousness, for only then can we see clearly. The Bible, the Word of God, is the means heaven has provided for our education.

Finally, after studiously gaining heaven's perspective and clinging to it with the perseverance of love, we may take the third step in gaining the experience and wisdom that will enable us to participate successfully in the great purpose of the Millennium.

This is why salvation is not enough. People who have gone that far and think it sufficient are liable to miss out in achieving heaven's goal.

