

# The Millennial Week Calendar

## According to Scripture

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The pervasiveness of the millennial week chronology among the early Christian writers close to the Apostles cannot be denied. Many writers mentioned it as fact, but none gave a very full explanation of the biblical support for such a calendar. The primary justification offered was the claim that the creation week was both history and prophecy, and that God reckoned a day as a thousand years based on Psalm 90:4, cited also in 2 Peter 3:8-10.

Why would the early Christians think this, or so universally accept it as fact on such apparently flimsy evidence? It is not readily apparent that the seven days of creation in Genesis are both history and a prophetic pattern. The statement in the Psalms, that a day with God is as a thousand years, is insufficient evidence in itself for such a theory; nor is there any apparent connection between these passages. If the millennial week chronology was evident from the creation account and Psalm 90:4 alone, surely the Jews would have discerned it from the Hebrew Scriptures or the Septuagint. Yet, it seems they knew nothing of it. Here is the Septuagint's rendering of this verse.

*Psalm 90:4 LXX (My translation)*

*4 Because a thousand years in Your sight are as the day, the previous day which is past and a watch in the night.*

This passage draws a correlation between a millennium and "the day" from God's perspective. David's intent was clearly that God does not reckon time as do humans. The correlation between a millennium and "the day" could just be hyperbole.

Yet, if we take this verse literally it implies that God indeed acknowledges a millennial "day." But there is nothing here to suggest that this principle relates to a calendar counting down to the coming of Messiah. If there was, surely the Jews would have discovered it.

If Psalm 90:4 is meant literally, that God does indeed reckon time in millennial "days," where would David have gotten such an idea? The answer is to be found in Genesis.

Gen. 2:16-17 NKJV

16 And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, "Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; 17 but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, **for in the DAY that you eat of it you shall surely die.**"

Adam did not die within a twenty-four hour "day" of eating the forbidden fruit. Some have tried to explain away God's warning by claiming that only a *sentence* of death was passed on Adam that day, or that he only *began* to die that day. Yet, that is not what the text says. The Hebrew literally says, "*in the day you eat of it, dying you shall die.*" The Septuagint renders it, "*in the day you eat of it you shall die by death.*"

Some Christian interpreters, realizing the text demands the full execution (not only sentence) of death on that very day, appeal to allegorical interpretation, claiming Adam died "spiritually" that day. Such an interpretation denies any connection to physical death in God's threat. Yet, this clashes with Paul's commentary on the passage. "*Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, **and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men,** because all sinned ... Nevertheless **death reigned from Adam to Moses.**"<sup>1</sup> It is quite clear that Paul was referring to physical death (which reigned from Adam to Moses) as the result of Adam's sin, which was based on God's judgment predicted in Genesis 2:16-17. Paul understood the threat of "death" to Adam to be physical death.*

Notice the result of Adam's defying God's threat. "*Then to Adam He said, "Because you have heeded the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree of which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat of it': ... In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; **for dust you are, and to dust you shall return.**"<sup>2</sup> There can be no doubt that the last statement, "*for dust you are, and to dust you shall return,*" is precisely the same judgment predicted in God's prior warning: "*for in the day that you eat of it **you shall surely die.**"**

Paul was therefore correct in applying this threat to physical death, that God meant Adam would die **physically** "*in the day*" that he ate the forbidden fruit. Yet, if we understand "the day" to be a twenty-four hour period, then apparently God lied to Adam, and Satan told the truth to Eve!

The only way to maintain God's integrity and Paul's interpretation is to understand that the "day" God spoke of was the first millennium. The historical facts bear this out.

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<sup>1</sup> Rom. 5:12,14

<sup>2</sup> Gen. 2:17,19

Adam died just short of the end of the first millennium at 930 years old. The oldest man to ever live, Methuselah, died at 969 years old, also within the millennium in which he was born.

That this was a very ancient Jewish interpretation of this passage is proven by the explanation in the Jewish apocryphal book called, “Jubilees,” written around the time of the Babylonian captivity.

*“... Adam died, and all his sons buried him in the land of his creation, ... And he lacked seventy years of one thousand years; for one thousand years are as one day in the testimony of the heavens and therefore was it written concerning the tree of knowledge: ‘On the day that ye eat thereof ye will die.’ For this reason he did not complete the years of this day; for he died during it.”<sup>3</sup>*

Notice the author’s quotation of David’s Psalm as the explanation for the “day” in God’s threat to Adam. This connection between the two passages was already well known to Jews about the time of the Babylonian captivity.

Early Christians had the same understanding as the Jews — that “the day” in this passage referred to a millennium, based on the same Psalm, as in the following quotation of Irenaeus.

*“Thus then, in the day that they did eat, in the same did they die, ... for since ‘a day of the Lord is as a thousand years,’ he did not overstep the thousand years, but died within them, thus bearing out the sentence of sin. ... [T]hat he [Adam] did not overstep the thousand years, but died within their limit, it follows that, in regard to all these significations, God is indeed true.”<sup>4</sup>*

Justin Martyr held the same opinion:

*“For as Adam was told that in the day he ate of the tree he would die, we know that he did not complete a thousand years. We have perceived, moreover, that the expression, ‘The day of the Lord is as a thousand years,’ is connected with this subject.”<sup>5</sup>*

Since God’s warning to Adam was true, the opening chapters of Genesis have already defined a “day” as a millennium from God’s perspective. David apparently discerned

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<sup>3</sup> Book of Jubilees, IV, 29-30

<sup>4</sup> Irenaeus, Against Heresies V, XXIII, 2

<sup>5</sup> Justin, Dialogue with Trypho, LXXXI

this from the Genesis account and therefore wrote, *"because a thousand years in Your sight are as the day,"* taking this principle from God's carrying out his threat to Adam in Genesis. It is evident therefore that David's statement is not hyperbole, but was meant literally. God indeed does reckon time in millennial "days."

However, there is nothing in either Genesis or the Psalms that justifies applying this principle to the creation week itself, interpreting the seven days as prophecy of a millennial week of human history. This is apparently why the Jews did not discover the millennial week chronology.

### **The Millennial Week was Apostolic Teaching**

We know that the Apostles spent their lives teaching the early Christians the things Jesus taught, and the things progressively revealed to them by the Holy Spirit after Jesus' ascension.<sup>6</sup> The vast majority of the Apostles' teaching was oral, and never written down. And there is no record of the oral teaching of most of the Apostles. The New Testament only contains small fragments of the teaching and preaching of a few of Jesus' Apostles.

There are statements in the New Testament that refer to specific teaching by the Apostles for which we have no direct written record. For example, Paul mentioned an epistle he wrote to the Laodiceans, yet this letter has not survived.<sup>7</sup> He reminded the Thessalonians of his previous oral teaching concerning the one who restrains the revelation of Antichrist.<sup>8</sup> Yet, nothing of this apostolic teaching has survived. If our claim is correct, that the millennial week chronology originated with the Apostles, we would expect to find evidence for it in the New Testament. And if there is such New Testament evidence, this would explain why the Jews knew nothing of it, and why it was so universally accepted by those closest to the Apostles. We are not disappointed in our search. We have two witnesses to this apostolic teaching from both Paul and Peter. The millennial week chronology is referred to in both Hebrews and 2 Peter.

### **The Millennial Week According to Peter**

Peter's second epistle was written just before his martyrdom. It was intended to prepare his readers for *"an abundant entrance into the age enduring Kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ."*<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> John 16:12-13

<sup>7</sup> Col. 4:16

<sup>8</sup> 2 Thess. 2:5-6

<sup>9</sup> 2 Peter 1:11 my translation

Peter set out to do this through a brief reminder of what the prophets had spoken about the arrival of Christ's Kingdom, and the apostolic preaching concerning it.

*2 Peter 1:12-15 NKJV*

*12 For this reason I will not be negligent to **remind** you always of these things, though **you know** and are established in the present truth. 13 Yes, I think it is right, as long as I am in this tent, to **stir you up by reminding you**, 14 knowing that shortly I must put off my tent, just as our Lord Jesus Christ showed me. 15 Moreover I will be careful to ensure that you always have **a reminder** of these things after my decease.*

*2 Peter 3:1-2 NKJV*

*1 Beloved, I now write to you this second epistle (in both of which I stir up your pure minds **by way of reminder**), 2 that you may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior.*

2 Peter is a reminder of previous apostolic oral preaching. Peter deemed his last words to be critically important for his readers to remember in order to ensure "an abundant entrance into the age enduring Kingdom of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ."<sup>10</sup>

In the following verses, Peter reminded his readers that "the prophetic word" (the words of the Prophets) had been "confirmed" when Jesus gave Peter, James, and John a brief glimpse of His coming Kingdom on the Mount of Transfiguration. This confirmation to the Apostles, having been chosen by Jesus to be eyewitnesses to a special preview of His coming Kingdom, was the basis of the apostolic preaching which Peter wanted his readers to recall. It was to assure them of the certainty of the prophecies which had been confirmed through the Transfiguration experience. Let's review Mark's account of that incident before considering Peter's comments.

*Mark 8:38 – 9:7 KJV*

*38 Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, **when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.***

*9:1 And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, **till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power.***

*2 And **after six days** Jesus taketh with him Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them up into an high mountain apart by themselves: and he was transfigured before*

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<sup>10</sup> 2 Peter 1:11 my translation

*them. 3 And his raiment became shining, exceeding white as snow; so as no fuller on earth can white them. ...*

*7 And there was a cloud that overshadowed them: and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him.*

Verse 1 has often been abused by amillennialists to prove that the Kingdom is not visible but mystical, and that it was fully established in the lifetimes of the original Apostles. Yet, such an interpretation completely misses the point, and ignores Peter's own explanation of this event. It was a preview of the coming of Christ's Kingdom meant to confirm the prophets' predictions for Christians.

The very next verse says, "*after six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John up into a high mountain ... and was transfigured before them.*" It goes on to say that a voice came from heaven, "*This is My Beloved Son.*" There is little question that the voice from heaven was referencing the second Psalm, which describes Jesus as God's "Son," and His inauguration as King of the whole earth. In this Psalm, Christ the King is promised that He will "*shepherd*"<sup>11</sup> all the nations "*with a rod of iron,*" and receive the whole inhabited earth as His inheritance. On the Mount of Transfiguration, Peter, James, and John received a preview of the fulfillment of Psalm 2, vividly experiencing the coming Kingdom of Jesus Christ in power, as a special preview.

Notice also that the preview of Jesus' coming Kingdom took place "*after six days.*" This is mentioned here for a reason. Jesus took the three disciples up into the mountain after six literal 24 hour days had elapsed. Why did Jesus wait six days before fulfilling His promise of showing them His Kingdom? It is very likely Jesus waited six full days for a very good reason, to establish a prophetic type, (a prophetic account of six millennia of God's working to redeem His creation, based on the creation week). This is of course an assumption on my part, and is not exegetically drawn from the text. However, Peter himself understood their mountain-top experience on *the seventh day* as a preview of Jesus' coming Kingdom, as is quite clear from his own explanation of this event.

2 Peter 1:16-19 (my translation)

*16 For not by following cunningly devised myths did we make known to you **the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ**, but having become eyewitnesses of His **majesty**. 17 For having received from God the Father honor and glory from the voice which came to Him from the magnificent glory: "**This is My beloved Son** in whom I am well pleased." 18 And we heard this voice carried from heaven when we were with Him on the holy mountain.*

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<sup>11</sup> Quoting the LXX, see also the Greek text of Rev. 12:5 & 19:15

19 And [so] we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you are rightly heeding as a lamp appearing in a dark place until the Day dawns and the One clothed with light<sup>12</sup> arises.<sup>13</sup>

Peter understood that in the Transfiguration experience he had witnessed “*the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ*” in “*His majesty.*” The words “power” and “coming” were part of Jesus’ initial promise: “*there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power.*”<sup>14</sup> Mark’s Gospel was written from Peter’s recollections (Mark being Peter’s nephew). Peter obviously thought it necessary to have Mark record that their preview of Jesus’ Kingdom took place “*after six days,*” on the seventh day.

Peter then referred to the arrival of the Kingdom as the dawning of “*that Day*” (ου ημερα). Like Genesis 2, Peter has established a precedent, using the word *Day* in reference to the Kingdom, which Revelation identifies as a millennium.<sup>15</sup>

In the third chapter Peter went on to apply Psalm 90:4 in a way that the Jews had not done. He associated the millennial days with the countdown to the Messianic age.

2 Peter 3:8-10 NKJV

8 But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. 9 The Lord is not slack concerning His promise,

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<sup>12</sup> The Greek word φωσφορος is incorrectly rendered “Daystar” in many translations. The word is **NOT** φωσφερος - derived from φως (light) and φερω (bearer) as many lexicons incorrectly suppose. It is φωσφορος derived from φως (light) and φορεω (to wear – see: Matt. 11:8; Jn. 19:5; 1 Cor. 15:49; Jas. 2:3). The English word “phosphorus” (a luminescent element) is the direct transliteration of this Greek word, and has precisely the same meaning – to be clothed with light. In the masculine singular form, as it appears in 2 Peter 1:19, it literally means, “*the One clothed with light.*” When Peter wrote, “*until that Day dawns, and the One clothed in light arises,*” he was referring to the coming of Christ’s Kingdom, and to Jesus as He appeared to the three disciples on the Mount of Transfiguration – “*His clothes became shining, exceedingly white, like snow, such as no launderer on earth can whiten them.*” The “dawning” and “arising” metaphor Peter used is based on Malachi’s prophecy of Christ’s Kingdom (that Day), and the arising of the “Sun of Righteousness,” who is Jesus Christ, (Mal. 4:1-3).

<sup>13</sup> Most translations add “in your hearts” to the end of verse 20. However, this prepositional phrase is better understood as beginning the next verse. “*In your hearts knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation.*” In Greek it is proper to begin a sentence or dependent clause with a prepositional phrase when one wishes to emphasize the prepositional phrase, (cf. 1 John 4:9,10). In this case, it emphasizes an applied “heart knowledge” of the prophetic Scriptures, to which Peter’s readers had taken “heed,” because the Old Testament prophecies had been “confirmed” by the Apostles’ eyewitness testimony to what they observed on the Mount of Transfiguration.

<sup>14</sup> Mark 9:1 KJV

<sup>15</sup> Rev. 20:1-5

*as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance. 10 But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night..."*

Note that Peter reminded his readers of something they already knew, (do not forget this one thing). He wanted them to recall the previous apostolic preaching about Psalm 90:4, and its application to Christ's return, explaining the delay. The natural inference of Peter's statement, as an explanation for the delay in Christ's return, is that the millennial Days are not yet complete.

He began this chapter saying that his purpose was to remind his readers of *"the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us, the apostles of the Lord and Savior"* <sup>16</sup> (that is the apostolic preaching). The word *"commandment"* (Gr. *"εντολη"*) was just used only 3 verses earlier to refer to the totality of the apostolic preaching.

The second epistle of Peter strongly suggests Chiliasm's millennial week. Peter referred to the Apostles' eyewitness accounts of the preview of Christ's Kingdom which occurred *"after six days."*<sup>17</sup> He referred to the dawn of *"that day,"* using the word *"day"* in reference to Christ's coming Kingdom. Peter's apostolic preaching and testimony about Christ's second coming was based on this event confirming the Old Testament prophecies. And he explained the delay in the coming of Christ's Kingdom in terms of millennial days, referring his readers to David's Psalm that a *"day"* in God's reckoning is a millennium.

Peter did not attempt to explain the full apostolic teaching on this subject in his epistle. Rather, he said plainly that his purpose was only to offer a brief reminder of the previous apostolic preaching which provided confirmation and explanation of the prophets. All of this implicitly suggests that Peter taught the millennial week chronology. Most of the necessary components are there. The only thing lacking is specific mention of the number of millennial days, the direct connection to the seven days of the week. Yet, there would be no reason to do this specifically if Peter merely meant to remind them of previous apostolic preaching. It is apparent that Peter's last recorded words, what he wished to stress to the early churches, concerned the affirmation of what the prophets taught about the coming of Christ's Kingdom, that

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<sup>16</sup> 2 Peter 3:2

<sup>17</sup> I say Peter referred to the transfiguration being after six days because it is contained in Mark's account. Mark was written as the recollections of Peter's preaching according to Eusebius' Church history (Bk II, ch. xv). That the preview of Christ's Kingdom took place *"after six days"* was therefore a part of Peter's apostolic preaching, about which he reminded his readers.



Jesus had provided proof and confirmation to His Apostles, and that the remaining time until it would come is to be measured in millennial days.

### **The Millennial Week According to Paul**

Hebrews was one of Paul's last epistles. In chapters 3-4, he expounding upon two Old Testament texts which refer to Christ's coming Kingdom as "*the seventh day*," the "*Sabbath*," and "*God's Rest*." He stated plainly that the creation week in Genesis refers to God's future Sabbath Rest, in which believers will share. His two prophetic texts were Psalm 95:8-11 and Genesis 2:2-3.

*Psalm 95:8-11 LXX (my translation)*

*8 "This day, if you hear His voice, you should not harden your hearts as in the provocation, as in the day of testing in the wilderness 9 where your fathers tried me, they tested Me and saw My works. 10 Forty years I was disgusted with that generation. And I said, 'They are always straying in their heart and they do not know my ways,' 11 as I swore in My anger whether they shall enter into My Rest."*

*Genesis 2:2-3 LXX*

*2 And God finished on the sixth day his works which he made, and he ceased on the seventh day from all his works which he made. 3 And God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it, because in it he ceased from all his works which God began to do.*

Psalm 95 was an exhortation by David to Israel not to follow the example of their forefathers "this day," when God's people would be given a second opportunity to inherit the Promised Land. David understood that Israel had failed to realize the promise to Abraham of the eternal land inheritance. He foresaw the ultimate fulfillment of the permanent Abrahamic land inheritance as future.<sup>18</sup> The warning David used was the "rebellion," when Israel wandered in the wilderness for forty years until that whole generation died off. Only their children went into the land that God promised to Abraham. And even then, they did not attain under Joshua the permanent rest and possession of the Land God promised to Abraham and his seed, since they had been ejected from the land during the Babylonian captivity, and again in AD 70.

In Hebrews 3-4, Paul turned to Psalm 95 and Genesis 2:2-3, using these two passages to repeat David's warning, reminding his readers of the future promise of the eternal Land inheritance, which he called the "*Sabbath Rest*," the "*seventh day*." Below is my translation.

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<sup>18</sup> cf. Gen. 13:15, 17:8 & Psalm 37

*Hebrews 3:5 – 4:11*

*5 And Moses was indeed faithful in all his household as a servant, as a witness of what would be spoken later. 6 But Christ is as a Son over His own household, of whose household we are if we clutch the confidence and rejoicing of the confirmed hope<sup>19</sup> unto the consummation,<sup>20</sup> 7 according to which<sup>21</sup> the Holy Spirit says: “This day, if you hear His voice, 8 you should not harden your hearts as in the provocation, as in the day of testing in the wilderness 9 where your fathers tried me, they tested Me and saw My works. 10 Forty years I was disgusted with that generation. And I said, ‘They are always straying in their heart and they do not know my ways,’ 11 as I swore in My anger whether they shall enter into My Rest.”<sup>22</sup>*

*12 Beware brothers, if at that time<sup>23</sup> a wicked heart of unbelief shall<sup>24</sup> be found in any of you, in apostatizing from the living God. 13 But encourage one another each day until<sup>25</sup> that [day] which is called ‘This day,’ so that none from among you may be hardened by the seduction of sin. 14 For we have become partakers of the Christ<sup>26</sup> if we should clutch the original confirmed foundation<sup>27</sup> unto the consummation,<sup>28</sup> 15 when it is to be proclaimed:<sup>29</sup> “This day, if you hear His voice, you should not harden your hearts as in the provocation.”*

*16 For some having heard, provoked [God], but not all who came out of Egypt by Moses.*

*17 Yet with whom was He disgusted forty years? Was it not the ones sinning, whose corpses fell in the wilderness? 18 And to whom did He swear would not enter His Rest, except those who were unconvinced? 19 And we see that they were unable to enter because of disbelief.*

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<sup>19</sup> The permanent land inheritance of the Abrahamic Covenant, taken hold of and proclaimed by Jesus Christ, and confirmed by the Apostles’ testimony (Heb. 2:3). It was further confirmed by supernatural signs of the Holy Spirit accompanying the Apostles (Heb. 2:4). And also confirmed by God’s oath to Abraham (Heb. 6:13-20). It was fully confirmed to the Apostles’ Peter, James, and John on the Mount of Transfiguration. And it was conformed to Paul’s readers by the eyewitness testimony of these Apostles.

<sup>20</sup> The end of the age (Matt. 10:22; Matt. 24:6,13,14; 1 Cor. 1:8; Rev. 2:26)

<sup>21</sup> Psalm 95 is a prophecy about the “consummation.”

<sup>22</sup> at the “consummation,” when Psalm 95:7-11 will be proclaimed

<sup>23</sup> μηποτε – referring to the “consummation” to which “this day ...” refers.

<sup>24</sup> future tense, referring again to the consummation.

<sup>25</sup> Most translations incorrectly render this, “while it is called Today.”

<sup>26</sup> sharers in the inheritance of the “Son” in Psalm 2.

<sup>27</sup> υποστασις – lit. “what stands beneath” (the thing that supports). The whole clause, “the original confirmed foundation” refers back to Heb. 2:3-4, the original testimony of the Apostles to Jesus’ teaching, confirmed by the supernatural signs of the Holy Spirit.

<sup>28</sup> We must maintain the pristine Faith handed down by the Apostles until the coming of Christ. (vs. 6)

<sup>29</sup> The exhortation in Psalm 95, “This day...” is to be proclaimed at the consummation of the age.

4:1 We should fear then, if at that time<sup>30</sup> any of you might appear to have fallen short<sup>31</sup> of the remaining promise<sup>32</sup> to enter into His<sup>33</sup> Rest.<sup>34</sup> 2 For we also have been told the good message as they were (but the message heard [by them] had no benefit, not having been mixed with faith in the hearers).<sup>35</sup> 3. For we – the ones who believed – are entering<sup>36</sup> the Rest, (just as He said: “As I swore in My anger, whether they shall come into My Rest,”)<sup>37</sup> although the labors have been performed<sup>38</sup> since the founding of the world.<sup>39</sup> 4 For He has declared somewhere concerning the seventh [day] thus: “And God ceased in the seventh day from all His works.”<sup>40</sup> 5 And thus again: “whether they shall come into My Rest.”<sup>41</sup> 6 Since then it remains for some to enter into it, and those to whom it was previously announced did not enter because of stubbornness, He specifies another set day – ‘This day.’ 7 After such a long time<sup>42</sup> He says in [the Psalm of] David, according as was previously proclaimed,<sup>43</sup> “This day if you hear His voice, you should not harden your hearts.”<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> μηποτε – “if at such time” refers to the future ‘Kadesh Barnea’ when the believer’s faith in God’s promise of the inheritance (Rest) will be put to the test in the time of great tribulation.

<sup>31</sup> “have fallen short” – the verb is in the perfect tense (a past completed action with continuous results). The sense is that when the future trial of our faith comes, some might discover that they have already fallen short, unable to recover. Jesus’ parable of the wise and foolish virgins illustrates the same point graphically (Matt. 25:1-13).

<sup>32</sup> The “remaining promise” is the future fulfillment of the promise of entering His rest implied in the quotation of Psalm 95. (Psalm 37 shows that David had the same understanding).

<sup>33</sup> The personal pronoun “His” refers to the Creator, whom Paul has already identified as Christ (Heb. 1:2; Heb. 2:10).

<sup>34</sup> The word “Sabbath” in Hebrew means “rest.” The original “Sabbath day” on which God rested (Gen. 2:2-3) and the weekly Sabbath day the Jewish – Christian readers observed (Ex. 20:11) was symbolic of the ultimate eschatological “Rest” of Christ the Creator.

<sup>35</sup> The “good news” was preached to the Israelites at Kadesh Barnea by Joshua and Caleb, but they rejected it, (Num. 13:30; 14:6-9). “And all the congregation said to stone them with stones.” (Num. 14:10)

<sup>36</sup> Paul was still speaking from the perspective of the future Kadesh Barnea (the time of testing just before Christ’s Kingdom arrives) which he introduced in verse 1 with the words, “at such time.” This is why he used the present tense “we ... are entering,” and the aorist tense “the ones who believed,” just as in verse 1 he used the perfect tense “appear to have fallen short.” His verb tenses in verses 1-3 are from the perspective of the consummation of the age.

<sup>37</sup> Psalm 95:11 LXX

<sup>38</sup> Some translations read “finished.” But the Greek word means to occur, to come to be, to be performed.

<sup>39</sup> Contrasting the future “Rest” of Psalm 95 with the labor of mankind under the curse since the “foundation of the world.” It is the same contrasting relationship that the 6 days of creation had to the Creator’s Sabbath rest, and the 6 day work week has to the Sabbath day.

<sup>40</sup> Gen. 2:2

<sup>41</sup> Psalm 95:11 LXX

<sup>42</sup> Such a long time after the rebellion in the wilderness David wrote this Psalm which placed the opportunity to realize God’s Rest in the future.

<sup>43</sup> Joshua and Caleb (Num. 14:6-9) and Moses (Deut. 1:29) previously pleaded with the Israelites at Kadesh Barnea to trust God and go into the Land.

<sup>44</sup> Psalm 95:8 LXX

8 For if Joshua [had provided] them the Rest, He<sup>45</sup> would not have been speaking of another day after those. 9 Consequently, a Sabbatical<sup>46</sup> awaits the people of God. 10 For the one entering into His Rest, he has also ceased from his own labors<sup>47</sup> just as God did from His. 11 Therefore, we should be diligent to enter into that Rest, so that none fall into the same pattern of stubbornness.

Paul understood the term, “this day,” in Psalm 95 to refer to the end times, when another opportunity to enter the Promised Land would be given to God’s people. In chapter 4, he went on to draw a most interesting conclusion from this Psalm regarding the future hope of believers. “We should fear then, if at that time any of you might appear to have fallen short of the remaining promise to enter into His Rest.” Paul inferred a second opportunity to enter “His rest” from this prophetic Psalm.

He then explained what the “Rest” was in Psalm 95. “‘As I swore in My anger, whether they shall come into My Rest,’ although the labors have been performed since the founding of the world.” Since God was speaking in this Psalm, “My Rest” refers to God’s rest. And this refers to the seventh day of creation when God rested from all His labor. The next clause, “although the labors have been performed since the founding of the world” refers to man’s toiling under the curse for the last six millennia which precede God’s Rest.

Paul then unmistakably stated that our future hope, the promise of entering into God’s Rest, is the “seventh day.” “For He has declared somewhere concerning the seventh [day] thus: ‘And God ceased in the seventh day from all His works.’ [From Genesis 2] And thus again: ‘whether they shall come into My Rest.’” [from Psalm 95]

Paul said plainly that God has spoken of “the seventh day” in both Genesis 2:2 and in the promised “Rest” of Psalm 95, which he has placed as our future hope. Paul stated unmistakably that the Kingdom of the Messiah is the “Seventh Day.” He went on in verse 9 to state plainly that “a Sabbatical awaits the people of God.” The Greek word literally means, “a keeping of the Sabbath.”

Just as the weekly Sabbath is the seventh day of the week, a Seventh Day Kingdom necessitates six previous “days” also, otherwise it would not be the “seventh day.” There is no escaping the clear implication of six ages followed by the seventh Kingdom age in this passage. Granted, Paul did not define this “seventh day” Sabbath rest as a

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<sup>45</sup> God through David in Psalm 95

<sup>46</sup> A Sabbath to be kept (a Sabbath awaits). Paul has clearly called the Kingdom age the “Sabbath.”

<sup>47</sup> When the faithful believer enters God’s rest (the 7<sup>th</sup> Millennium, the “Sabbatical”), he has reached the end of his own labors, just like God did at the very end of His creation labor.

millennium. However, Peter did define the previous “days” as millennia. It was therefore a part of the apostolic preaching, and Paul’s readers understood it as such.

### **The Millennial Week According to John**

John’s contribution to the discussion comes from the twentieth chapter of Revelation where he speaks of Christ and the saints rule over the nations as being one millennium. Of course, John did not mention this millennium as being preceded by six others. However, when we accumulate all of the information provided by Peter, Paul, and John, we have all of the components of the millennial week chronology explicitly taught in the New Testament.

- God’s millennial “Days” in Psalm 90:4 are applied to the duration of our living under the curse prior to Christ’s coming to establish His Kingdom. (Peter)
- The Kingdom is referred to as a “Day” in the context of David’s statement about God’s millennial days. (Peter)
- Our hope of Christ’s Kingdom is called the “seventh day,” “Sabbatical,” and “God’s Rest.” (Paul)
- The Kingdom is defined as a millennium (John)

That the early Christians claimed the creation account was both history and prophecy should not come as a surprise given all of this evidence from the New Testament. Yet, there is one more reason to suppose they were right.

*Isaiah 46:9-10 LXX*

*9 “I am God, and there is none like Me, declaring the end from the beginning.”*

The Hebrew word rendered “from” means “out of” or “at.” This verse states that God has declared the end “out of” the beginning. The creation account is the beginning – “*in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.*” Therefore, the creation account prophesied of the end according to this verse. And this is precisely how the early Christians understood the creation account.

Based on this accumulated Scriptural evidence, and the fact that the disciples of the Apostles unanimously held this view, it is absolutely certain that Christ’s reign over the nations will begin on the six thousandth year from the day of Adam’s sin and expulsion from Eden.

Chiliasm is not some heresy that the early Christians borrowed from the Jews or the heretic Cerinthus, as Amillennialists claim. It is explicitly taught in Scripture. This means we are very near to the fulfillment of God’s promise to His only begotten Son

when sending Him to earth: *“I will declare the decree: The LORD has said to Me, ‘You are My Son, Today I have begotten You. Ask of Me, and I will give You The nations for Your inheritance, And the ends of the earth for Your possession. You shall shepherd them with a rod of iron. You shall dash them to pieces like a potter’s vessel.’”*<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Psalm 2:7-9 LXX