

UNIQUE REWARDS FOR CHURCH-AGE BELIEVERS: THREE CLEAR REFERENCES

Peter pointedly asked the Lord, “We have left all to follow you – WHAT ARE WE GOING TO GET OUT OF IT?” Jesus’ answer is telling. It and a few other passages inform us of some unique, future rewards for church-age believers, a subject of interest for every dedicated Christian.

I. Mt. 19:27-28 Special Rewards for the Twelve

Matthew 19:27-28 *Then Peter answered and said to Him, "See, we have left all and followed You. Therefore what shall we have?" So Jesus said to them, "Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*

1. The Promised Reward = 12 APOSTLES → Judging 12 TRIBES of Israel.
2. When? = “in the regeneration” = THE PALINGENESIA = THE REGENERATION of the cosmos
3. When qualified = “when the Son of Man sits on the THRONE of His glory”

When = THE 2nd Advent to establish the Kingdom as in Mt. 25:31-32

- Administrative roles for the Twelve in the Kingdom Age are clearly predicted by Jesus.
- They will sit on 12 thrones; that is, they will have administrative roles with judicial responsibilities.
- These administrative roles are directly associated with the literal Twelve Tribes of Israel, 12 tribes of ethnic Israel according to the words of Jesus.
- The Twelve will not function in these roles until the regeneration of planet earth when Jesus sits upon the throne of His glory ruling the nations! Israel’s 12 tribes are referred to in Rev. 7:4-8.

Remember: The 12 are transitional figures foundational to the Church Age, Eph. 2:20.

II. 1Cor. 6:2-3 Some Church Age Believers Will Occupy Dominant Administrative Roles in Christ’s Millennial Kingdom.

1 Corinthians 6:2-3 *Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world will be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Do you not know that we shall judge angels? How much more, things that pertain to this life?*

- A. The Kosmos = the world of human beings

B. Angels = fallen angels

These functional roles relate believers of this age working together with Messiah in the coming Kingdom age when He rules with a rod of iron, Psa. 2:8-9; Rev. 2:26-27.

III. Rev. 5:10 & 20:4-6 Some Believers Will Reign in the Millennial Kingdom

Revelation 5:10 *And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth.*"

Revelation 20:4-6 *And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them.*

Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. 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.

Conclusions & Applications

1. Rewards are valid INCENTIVES for faithful service in this age.
2. Rewards are often mentioned in the N.T, in association with Christ's MILLENNIAL reign.
3. In this regard, believers of this Age are said to co-reign with Christ here on earth. Rev. 5:10, 20:4-6.
4. Though these rewards are yet future, God in the present Church Age is preparing believers for administrative/judging roles in the Kingdom.
5. Such responsibilities in the Kingdom, including the close association with Messiah that they require, are a portion of rewards for faithful service in the Church Age.
6. These rewards are tangible, but never forget: "EYE HAS NOT SEEN, NOR EAR HEARD, NEITHER HAS ENTERED INTO THE HEART OF MAN, THE THINGS THAT GOD HAS PREPARED FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM." 1Cor. 2:9; Isa. 64:4. Believers are thus totally dependent upon the Word of God for future rewards.