

REVELATION 20:6

“Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Messiah and will reign with Him for a thousand years.”

In discussions over eschatology, there are certainly discussions and debates witnessed among differing schools of thought, regarding what “a thousand years” represents. While this writer is convinced that following the return of the Messiah, there will be a thousand-year Millennial reign on Planet Earth from Jerusalem—it is actually more important that this period is associated with how those who participate in the first resurrection, *esontai hierois tou Theou kai tou Christou* (ἔσονται ἱερεῖς τοῦ θεοῦ καὶ τοῦ Χριστοῦ), “they will be priests of God and of Christ” (Revelation 20:6, YLT). It is notably not just enough that those who participate in the first resurrection are priests of God; “they will be *cohanim* of God and of the Messiah” (CJB/CJSB). Mounce makes the general observation of how the vocation of being priests is taken directly from the original Tanach instruction about Ancient Israel being a kingdom of priests:

“At Sinai God promised the Israelites that if they would obey his voice and keep his commandments they would be to him a kingdom of priests and a holy nation (Ex 19:6). The faithful, by remaining true to Christ in the final trial by Antichrist, are thus priests of God and Christ. As a royal priesthood (cf. I Pet 2:5, 9; Rev 1:6; 5:10) they reign with him a thousand years.”⁸⁵

It would not have been out of place if Revelation 20:6 had simply read, “they will be priests of God and will reign for a thousand years” (NASU modified), but this is not what Revelation 20:6 says. The priestly service indicated in Revelation 20:6 is one which co-jointly serves both the Father and the Son. As Morris points out, “they are to be *priests of God and of Christ* (cf. 5:10; Is. 61:6; note also the close connection between God and Christ).”⁸⁶ Beale more clearly explains, “In 1:6 and 5:10 saints have been said only to be ‘priests to God,’ but now it is said that they will be ‘priests of God and of Christ.’ This suggests that Christ is on a par with God, which is underscored elsewhere in the Apocalypse (e.g., 5:13-14; 7:9-17).”⁸⁷ Fee directly concludes, “Here again the reader can hardly miss the high Christology, in which the Father and Son are once more brought together at the Eschaton.”⁸⁸ Would one actually expect a priesthood to service the interests of the Father and Son, unless they were both Divine, with the Son integrated into a plural *Elohim* Godhead?

REVELATION 21:1-8

“Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer *any* sea. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, ‘Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be *any* death; there will no longer be *any* mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.’ And He who sits on the throne said, ‘Behold, I am making all things new.’ And He said, ‘Write, for these words are faithful and true.’ Then He said to me, ‘It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the

⁸⁵ Mounce, *Revelation*, 360.

⁸⁶ Morris, *Revelation*, pp 231-232.

⁸⁷ Beale, 1003.

⁸⁸ Fee, *Revelation*, 284.