

10/25/2025

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REVELATION

## Chapter 20

### A THOUSAND YEAR REIGN

#### I. INTRODUCTION

- A. In our last study we saw the KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS victorious at the battle of Armageddon!
1. All those that opposed the lord and His saints were killed, and a great feast of flesh was provided for the vultures!
  2. And the beast and the false prophet were eternally cast into the lake of fire!
  3. The war is not over yet!
    - a) You see, for 1,000 years, the earth will experience a peace that it has not known since the Garden of Eden!
  4. This morning, we will be studying **Chapter 20** and what is referred to as “The Millennium”!
    - a) Before we begin, I must explain that there are 3 major viewpoints regarding the millennium and the interpretation thereof.
      - (1) **Premillennialism** = which is a literal approach to the interpretation of these passages.
        - (a) In other words, there will be a personal return of Christ to the earth.
        - (b) Followed by a literal binding of satan in Hades.
        - (c) And a literal 1,000-year reign of Christ with the saints on the earth!
      - (2) **Postmillennialism** = which teaches a partially literal approach.
        - (a) There will be a literal period of Christian righteousness on the earth.
        - (b) Christ’s reign however will not be literal. It will be spiritual through His church, which will of course have been won to HIM through worldwide evangelism and teaching.
        - (c) And His personal return to the earth will be at the end of the thousand year reign, at the establishment of the new heaven and earth!
      - (3) **Amillennialism** = which interprets these passages as completely spiritual!
        - (a) In other words, the thousand-year reign is actually the Church Age.
        - (b) Christ’s kingdom was actually established with the defeat of Satan at the cross. We are now living in the millennium!
        - (c) And this point of view holds that Christ’s personal return will come at the end of the Church Age for a general judgment!
    5. We will, as we have throughout Revelation - take the literal interpretation wherever possible in our study, which is the premillennial point of view!
      - a) I think as we progress, you will understand why!

#### II. **REVELATION 20:1-3** 1 THEN I SAW AN ANGEL COMING DOWN FROM HEAVEN,

HAVING THE KEY TO THE BOTTOMLESS PIT AND A GREAT CHAIN IN HIS HAND. **2** HE LAID HOLD OF THE DRAGON, THAT SERPENT OF OLD, WHO IS THE DEVIL AND SATAN, AND BOUND HIM FOR A THOUSAND YEARS; **3** AND HE CAST HIM INTO THE BOTTOMLESS PIT, AND SHUT HIM UP, AND SET A SEAL ON HIM, SO THAT HE SHOULD DECEIVE THE NATIONS NO MORE TILL THE THOUSAND YEARS WERE FINISHED. BUT AFTER THESE THINGS HE MUST BE RELEASED FOR A LITTLE WHILE. (NKJV)

- A. In the King James the first word in **verse 1** is “and” meaning that this chapter is a continuing record of events.
- B. This angel has the key to the bottomless pit. Christ claimed those keys earlier in **Chapter 1:18**
  - 1. But this angel is not Jesus nor Michael. This is an “unnamed angel!”
    - a) It is not uncommon for Christians to think of satan as a “equal yet opposite of Jesus”.
      - (1) But that is so far from the truth!
        - (a) It took only one “unnamed angel” to put him away for a thousand years!
  - 2. Notice that he has a great chain in his hand.
    - a) **Mark 3:27 (NKJV) 27 "No one can enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man. And then he will plunder his house.**
    - b) This chain is not just an iron chain as we know it, for it must bind the spirit of satan not just the physical!
- C. He laid hold of the **dragon**, old **serpent**, the devil, satan.
  - 1. Do we need to guess who this is?
  - 2. Also, this is the first plain reference to the “**thousand years**”
    - a) There is nothing in the verse to indicate anything except a literal 1,000-year period of time!
    - b) John refers to this period of time as “**a thousand years**” no less than 6 times in **verses 2-7**!
      - (1) It is as though he doesn’t want us to misunderstand what he means!
    - c) There are a few important points that need to be made here!
      - (1) In the modern calendar, we label all years with B.C. (**before Christ**) or A.D. (**anno domini**, or “in the year of our lord”). There is no “zero” year -- in this system, the year Christ was born is 1 A.D., and the year preceding it is 1 B.C.
      - (2) If the millennium corresponds to the Church Age, as is the Amillennial point of view, the 1,000-year period known as the millennium, is already almost 2,025 years!
      - (3) Also, **verses 2 and 3** tell us that satan **is bound . . for a thousand years; and . . cast into the bottomless pit, and shut . . up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished.**
        - (a) It seems to me that satan has been more active during the last 2,025 years than in all of history, trying to “undo” the

work of the cross!

- (i) **1 Peter 5:8 8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. (NKJV)**
  - (a) There is no indication by Peter (in this verse) that satan is presently bound and powerless!
  - (b) And neither are his “hosts” according to **Ephesians 6!**
    - (i) **Ephesians 6:10–13 (NKJV) — 10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. 11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*. 13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.**
      - (c) I don’t see how we could currently be living in the millennium as the Amillennialists believe.
      - (d) So, I believe that negates any point of view except the “literal” interpretation of the millemmium!

D. This “bottomless pit” is abussos the Greek word meaning literally “without depth”!

- 1. The entrance of this place will be “sealed” by the Lord and only the Lord will remove the seal, but not until after the 1,000 years!
  - a) You might ask, “Why would the Lord ever let him out?”
  - b) It seems that those born during the millennium must also have the opportunity of “choice”.
  - c) They too must be tried by satan and sin - and they too must decide for or against Christ!

III. **REVELATION 20:4-6 4 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. 5 BUT THE REST OF THE DEAD DID NOT LIVE AGAIN UNTIL THE THOUSAND YEARS WERE FINISHED. THIS IS THE FIRST RESURRECTION. 6 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. (NKJV)**

- A. Who are these kings that judge? And whom do they judge?
1. Remember the saints all dressed in white wedding robes?
  2. Well, it seems that those “white robes” are also the garments of kings and priests!
    - a) **Revelation 1:6 . . . has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. (NKJV)**
  3. You see, the saints during the millennium, will be assigned individual thrones of authority and judgment and co-reign with Christ.

B. John said he saw their “souls” here in **verse 4**.

1. John also says, “**they lived**” in **verse 4**!
  - a) Based upon **verse 5** which says, “**. . .the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years are finished**”, John must be referring to a “bodily” resurrection!
  - b) The “souls” of these martyrs’ John is referring to, had all along been very much alive. Now their bodies will live again! **THIS IS THE FIRST RESURRECTION!**
    - (1) Notice, these “kings and priests” will not face a second death! **vrs 6**
    - (2) The “rest of the dead” John refers to in **verse 5** is of course the unsaved men and women whose souls are in Hades!
    - (3) John’s reference to them “living again” would be meaningless if it meant souls, because souls live forever!
    - (4) After 1,000 years these unsaved will experience a “bodily” resurrection and face the Lord!

**IV. REVELATION 20:7-9 7 NOW WHEN THE THOUSAND YEARS HAVE EXPIRED, SATAN WILL BE RELEASED FROM HIS PRISON 8 AND WILL GO OUT TO DECEIVE THE NATIONS WHICH ARE IN THE FOUR CORNERS OF THE EARTH, GOG AND MAGOG, TO GATHER THEM TOGETHER TO BATTLE, WHOSE NUMBER IS AS THE SAND OF THE SEA. 9 THEY WENT UP ON THE BREADTH OF THE EARTH AND SURROUNDED THE CAMP OF THE SAINTS AND THE BELOVED CITY. AND FIRE CAME DOWN FROM GOD OUT OF HEAVEN AND DEVoured THEM. (NKJV)**

- A. If this doesn’t convince us of man’s true nature, nothing will!
1. After 1,000 years of being in the very presence of the Lord Himself.
  2. After experiencing His goodness, His peace, and His prosperity of the earth: there will still be a multitude of men and women on the earth ready to take up arms against the Lord at first chance!!
    - a) Please notice that satan doesn’t escape! He is let loose by the Lord!
    - b) During the millennium, sin will be prevented by the Lord and His “kings and priests” - and there will be some who will resent that they have to be “holy by lack of opportunity”.
      - (1) You see, in their hearts they do not love the Lord!
        - (a) In the past they could blame not living for the Lord on poverty, pornography, war, or even pressure at work.
        - (b) But now, those things had been removed for a 1,000 years!
        - (c) There is no excuse but their own sinful hearts, and they must

- be confronted with that!
  - (d) Because it is only in accepting that we are sinners, that salvation can exist!
- c) Notice also - 1,000 years in the "pit" hasn't changed satan's character one bit!
  - (1) He quickly mobilizes Gog and Magog (symbolic of the enemies of the Lord), (historically, Magog is Russia. Gog seems to be the leader of the people of Magog!
    - (a) I think it is important not to limit this reference to just Russia, but to all who oppose the Lord at this time!!
    - (b) This will be the one final assault upon the Lord and His people, and of course it fails!
      - (i) **Malachi 4:1 1 "For behold, the day is coming, Burning like an oven, And all the proud, yes, all who do wickedly will be stubble. And the day which is coming shall burn them up," Says the LORD of hosts, "That will leave them neither root nor branch. (NKJV)**

**V. REVELATION 20:10-15 10 THE DEVIL, WHO DECEIVED THEM, WAS CAST INTO THE LAKE OF FIRE AND BRIMSTONE WHERE THE BEAST AND THE FALSE PROPHET ARE. AND THEY WILL BE TORMENTED DAY AND NIGHT FOREVER AND EVER.**

- A. Finally, here is the end of the angels - turned demon - that fell from heaven with lucifer.
1. It is the end of satan and his reign of terror, the beast and the false prophet.
  2. It is the end of all that opposes the Lord!
  3. This is not just a "holding tank" in which "good old boys" party down!
    - a) It is torment forever!!

**VI. REVELATION 20:11-15 THEN I SAW A GREAT WHITE THRONE AND HIM WHO SAT ON IT, FROM WHOSE FACE THE EARTH AND THE HEAVEN FLED AWAY. AND THERE WAS FOUND NO PLACE FOR THEM. 12 AND I SAW THE DEAD, SMALL AND GREAT, STANDING BEFORE GOD, AND BOOKS WERE OPENED. AND ANOTHER BOOK WAS OPENED, WHICH IS THE BOOK OF LIFE. AND THE DEAD WERE JUDGED ACCORDING TO THEIR WORKS, BY THE THINGS WHICH WERE WRITTEN IN THE BOOKS. 13 THE SEA GAVE UP THE DEAD WHO WERE IN IT, AND DEATH AND HADES DELIVERED UP THE DEAD WHO WERE IN THEM. AND THEY WERE JUDGED, EACH ONE ACCORDING TO HIS WORKS. 14 THEN DEATH AND HADES WERE CAST INTO THE LAKE OF FIRE. THIS IS THE SECOND DEATH. 15 AND ANYONE NOT FOUND WRITTEN IN THE BOOK OF LIFE WAS CAST INTO THE LAKE OF FIRE. (NKJV)**

**VII. CONCLUSION**

- A. John sees the Lord so glorious that everything disintegrates in His path that is not holy!
1. The fallen earth and heavens are vaporized!
  2. Every human being ever created is seen standing before the Lord giving account for their lives!
    - a) That is - except for the Christians.
      - (1) They will not appear before this throne at all!

- (2) Their sins have been taken care of at the cross.
- (3) The Lord is not willing that any should perish so this book called **"The Book of Life"**, at one time had every person ever born in it.
- (4) Some have been "blotted out" by their own choice.
  - (a) They have chosen death instead of life!
    - (i) As they give account for their lives, the record precedes them.
    - (ii) You see, they made a willful choice to "do it on their own", so they will be judged according their "works", not the forgiveness of the cross!