

SESSION 02 MILLENNIUM: THE SAINTS VICTORY AND SATAN'S DEFEAT (REV. 20:1-6)

I. INTRODUCTION

Rev. 20 provides the revelation about the length of the Millennial Kingdom and what the saints will be doing functionally: kings and priests in the New Jerusalem and on the Millennial earth. The main theme of Rev. 20 is the final defeat and judgment of God's enemies and the eternal reward, victory and vindication of God's people. Rev. 20:1-10 has two distinct sections that give us detail of the two stages of Satan's defeat and judgment. First, his imprisonment where he is restrained against his will (Rev. 20:1-3) and second, his final desperate plan to reassert his control over the earth (Rev. 20:7-10). John shows the victory of the saints in resurrected bodies ruling the earth. They are now seen triumphing over the Antichrist in replacing his worldwide government. The saints rule the whole earth with Jesus as predicted in Dan. 7 (Rev. 20).

II. THREE MAIN INTERPRETATIONS OF REV. 20:1-10

- A. ***What is the Millennium?*** – it is a term that speaks of a literal 1,000 year period in which Jesus rules the earth (**millennium** is from the Latin “*mille*” or ‘a thousand’ and “*annus*” ‘a year’). At this time the Kingdom of God is openly manifest worldwide affecting every sphere of life (political, social, agricultural, economic, spiritual, etc.) This period of worldwide blessing is initiated by Jesus' Second Coming, at which time, God binds Satan resulting in a 1000-year period of peace, righteousness, prosperity, and unprecedented blessing for the whole earth as Jesus restores life to conditions seen in the Garden of Eden (Rev. 20:1-6; Is. 2:1-4; 9:6-9; 11:1-16; 51:1-8; 60-62; 65:17-25; Ps. 2:6-12; 110:1-7; Deut. 8; 28; Mt. 5:5; 6:10; 17:11; 19:28; 28:19; Acts 1:6; 3:21). Jesus as King of Kings, will personally govern a worldwide Kingdom from Jerusalem in partnership with resurrected saints who rule with Him in establishing a biblically based, social order.
- B. ***Pre-Millennialism*** – the literal interpretation in which Jesus reigns on earth for 1,000 years. This was the prominent view of the early Church fathers for approximately the first 300 years of Church history. The 1,000 year period begins immediately after the Second Coming. Jesus rules the entire world in perfect righteousness and continual peace from Jerusalem, with resurrected saints ruling with Him. People in the nations that survive the Great Tribulation will live on earth in natural bodies as the resurrected saints (in the New Jerusalem) rule with Jesus.

- C. **Amillennial** – there are two primary positions, historically, they see the resurrection as spiritual (the new birth), and the Millennium as God's reign in the heart of the Church. Thus, the Millennium began with Jesus' first coming and continues through the Church age. Today, many interpret the first resurrection as describing the entrance of the martyred saints into the "life" of the intermediate state. Thus the Millennium is the reign of the dead in Christ in heaven with Jesus throughout the course of the inter-advent age. In other words, in both cases, the Millennium is seen as occurring during the Church Age. Under this point of view, currently, we are living in the Millennium and in the Tribulation period. Events described in the Olivet Discourse (Matt. 24; Mk. 13; Lk. 21) and in most of the book of Revelation are seen as having already happened, or which are symbolic in nature and are not to be taken literally. This view was first popularized by Augustine who lived in 354-430 AD and served from 396-to 430 AD as the bishop of Hippo (Algeria).
- D. **Post-Millennial** – teaches that Jesus will return after the Millennium. In other words, the belief that the Christ will return AFTER the Church has Christianized the world. They believe that the 1000-year reign of peace must be established on earth by human beings and societies. Today, very few believe this. Postmillennialism is expressed today in different ways in different movements such as "Kingdom Now Theology," "Christian Reconstruction" (i.e. "Dominion Theology" which embraces Theonomy: society based on God's OT laws). Postmillennialism is expressed in different ways such as seeing the resurrection as a resurrection of biblical principles, and godly character as seen in the martyrs. The majority of postmillennialist today embrace a view as articulated by John Jefferson Davis ("Christ's Victorious Kingdom"), Keith Mathison, Lorainne Boettner and R. C. Sproul.

III. OUTLINE OF REV. 20

Rev. 20 unfolds in **chronological sequence** (not a recapitulation as Amillennialism insists) with the 1,000-year reign occurring after the Second Coming and Armageddon (Rev. 19:11-21).

Rev. 20:1-3 – Binding and imprisoning Satan (beginning of the Millennium).

Rev. 20:4-6 – The 1,000-year reign of Jesus with His saints (during Millennium)

Rev. 20:7-9 – Release of Satan to lead a final global rebellion (end of the Millennium)

Rev. 20:10 – Satan cast into the Lake of Fire forever

Rev. 20:11-15 – All God's enemies (unbelievers) are cast into the Lake of Fire forever

IV. BINDING AND IMPRISONING SATAN (REV. 20:1-3)

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. (Rev. 20:1-3)

But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, 13 from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool. (Hebrews 10:12-13)

- A. Who is the "angel" who lays hold of Satan? It is not Jesus but rather a mighty angel (three times an angel is described as coming down from heaven: Rev. 10:1; 18:1). This angel must come to earth since Satan was cast out of heaven and confined to the earth (Rev. 12:7-12). This angel has two things, **a key and a great chain** (Rev. 20:1). He has the key to the bottomless pit (which is kept locked) just as the angel in Rev. 9:1 does. Many assume this is the same angel. The bottomless pit is (11:7; 17:8) not the lake of fire (Rev. 20:10), which is Satan's final place of torment and eternal judgment. Demonic spirits and evil kings are also put in prison like Satan as prophesied by Isaiah.

The LORD will punish on high the host of exalted ones (demonic principalities etc.), and on the earth the kings of the earth. 22 They will be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit (bottomless pit), and will be shut up in the prison (as in Rev. 20:1-3); after many days (1,000 years) they will be punished (ultimately in the Lake of Fire). Then the moon will be disgraced and the sun ashamed; for the LORD of hosts will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem (in the Millennium) and before His elders, gloriously. (Isaiah 24:23)

- B. The bottomless pit is a temporary place of prison for fallen angels that will be released in the End-Times (fifth trumpet). The final judgment for Satan and his angels is the lake of fire, not the bottomless pit (abyss). The Lake of Fire is called hell (Mt. 25:41; Rev. 19:20; 20:10). There is a huge shaft extending from the earth's surface to its depths that is currently sealed up needing an angel with a key to open it. The smoke is real in this real prison. In this deep pit the Beast/Antichrist dwells (Rev. 11:7; 17:8) along with a demonic king named Abaddon (Rev. 9:11) plus a multitude of demonic locusts. To simplify the bottomless pit as symbolic of evil is to allow the passage to say just about anything. The bottomless pit or the abyss is not actually 'bottomless' if it is in the earth. What does the abyss actually mean in the Greek? Does it include the idea of 'bottomless?' In Rev. 9:1-4, demonic locusts (supernatural beings) came out of this locked shaft (bottomless pit). Out of the smoke came a demonic army of locusts (Rev. 9:3).

He opened the bottomless pit, and smoke arose out of the pit like...a great furnace. (Rev. 9:2)

God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment (2 Pet. 2:4)

The angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day (Jude 6)

Christ...being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, 19 by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, 20 who formerly were disobedient...in the days of Noah (1 Pet. 3:18-20).

- C. Satan called Lucifer (v. 12) will be cast to the lowest chambers in hell (v. 15).

Hell from beneath is excited about you, to meet you at your coming...11 Your pomp is brought down to Sheol...' 12 "How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, you who weakened the nations! 13 For you have said in your heart: 'I will ascend into heaven...14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.' 15 Yet you shall be brought down to Sheol, to the lowest depths of the Pit." (Isa. 14:9-15)

- D. A natural chain obviously could not restrain a demonic spirit. Demons are restrained by chains of some sort called **"everlasting chains"** (Jude 6) and **"chains of darkness,"** that reserve fallen angels for judgment (2 Pet. 2:4). Four evil angels are currently bound with chains (?) at the Euphrates river they will be released to lead a large demonic cavalry to kill 1/3 of the human race (Rev. 9:14-15). This is a literal and full restraint of Satan, not a symbolic nor partial one as Amillennialist claim.
- E. **Four titles of Satan** (Rev. 20:2) – this titles are used to indict Satan at the bar of justice for his crimes against humanity. Each title depicts different dimensions of Satan's crimes. He is first called the **"dragon,"** which is the title that John used more than any other (Rev. 12:3, 4, 7, 13, 16, 17; 13:2, 4, 11; 16:13). John again uses the names he referred to in Rev. 12:9. The **"serpent of old"** ties him back to the garden of Eden in Gen. 3, giving a hint of the Millennial rebellion in (Rev. 20:7-9). He is also called the **"Devil"** (Rev. 2:10; 12:9, 12; 20:10) and **"Satan"** (Rev. 2:9, 13, 24; 3:9; 12:9).
- F. **A Literal 1,000 year period** – John is the first one in Scripture to give the specific length of the Messianic Kingdom on earth. Peter hinted at it in 2 Pet. 3:8 (as Moses did in Ps. 90:4). One day with God is actually as a 1,000 years is to man. The length of the imprisonment will be a literal thousand years (not a symbolic number). This number is emphasized plainly and clearly six times (Rev. 20:3, 4, 5, 6, 7). There is no precedent in Scripture for a symbolic number to be given six times. This is a literal 1,000 years. Nothing in Scripture is contradicted by this 1,000 years time frame. John's point is that the Messianic Kingdom will only be allowed for a restricted time frame, which is only as one day to God. It will not continue through eternity. It has several dynamic purposes of which one is revealed in Rev. 20:7-9. Amillennialism wrongly sees 1,000 years as symbolic of the Church age and sees Satan being cast from heaven (Rev. 12:7-9) as synonymous with being bound in the bottomless pit (Rev. 20:3).
- G. **There are no numbers in Revelation that can be substantially proven as symbolic.** The seven stars, seven golden lampstands, seven angels and seven churches (Rev. 1:20) are all literally seven. The "half an hour" (Rev. 8:1) is a half hour. The four angels (Rev. 7:1) are four. The 144,000 Jewish bond slaves are 144,000 (Rev. 7:4; 14:1-4). The three unclean spirits (Rev. 16:13) and the three angels with three last woes (Rev. 8:13) are three. The 42 months (Rev. 11:2; 13:5); 1260 days (Rev. 11:3; 12:6) are 3½ years. The twelve apostles and twelve tribes of Israel are literally twelve (Rev. 21:12-14). The seven thunders (Rev. 10:4) are seven. The four living creatures are four (Rev 4:6, 8, 9; 5:6, 8, 11, 14; 6:1, 6:6; 7:11; 8:9; 14:3; 15:7; 19:4) as the 24 elders are 24 (Rev 4:4, 10; 5:5, 6, 8, 11, 14; 7:11, 13; 11:16; 14:3; 19:4). The seven angels with seven trumpets are seven (Rev. 8:2, 6). The seven thunders messages are seven (Rev. 10:6). The seven seals, trumpets, and bowls are each literally seven (Rev. 6-7; 8-9; 15-16). **When John communicates an unspecified amount of time,** he said "a little time" as in verse 3 or a "short time." (Rev. 12:12). All the timing phrases and numbers in Revelation are literal. Those who refuse this usually do so to support an Amillennialism symbolic view of Revelation.

- H. *Satan is fully and completely bound* (Rev. 20:2) so that he **CANNOT** deceive the nations for 1,000 years (Rev. 20:3). Satan is put in prison below the earth to keep him from influencing the people on the earth for 1,000 years. Satan is currently deceiving, tormenting and persecuting people rather than being bound as Amillennialism teaches (12:9; 13:14; 18:23). Amillennialists get around this text by deducing the definition of Satan being bound to merely limited or restricted in his deception rather than a complete termination of it. The text requires us to understand that Satan is fully incarcerated in a prison in the bottomless pit with a total cessation of his evil work. Satan's binding and imprisonment cannot be reduced being "bound within the Church." The text insists on a full ceasing of his evil operations on earth. ***He cannot deceive the nations (20:3) at all.*** Amillennialism has no adequate answer (most do not even attempt one) for Satan's release in leading a global rebellion at the conclusion of the 1,000 years. They must answer what limitations that Satan has now that will be lifted at the end of the Millennial Kingdom. Of course, there is no answer to this and some Amillennialist freely acknowledge this. I must repeat, ***He cannot deceive the nations (20:3) at all*** (these are nations that survive the Great Tribulation). The nations that survive the Great Tribulation enjoy the 1,000 years without Satan deceiving or tormenting them. Only the kings and their armies were killed in the final battle related to Armageddon (Rev. 19:19-21).
- I. The NT makes it clear that Satan is not bound in this deceiving of the nations during the Church age before the Second Coming. Satan will be more active as we approach the end-of-the-age (Rev. 12:12). Satan was not bound in the Book of Acts after the cross. In Acts 5:3, Satan filled Ananias and Sapphira's heart to lie to the Holy Spirit. In 2 Cor 4:3-4, Satan blinds the minds of unbelievers. In 2 Cor 11:14, Satan appears as an angel of light to deceive the church. In Eph 2:2, people live "according to prince of power of air, that works in the unbelievers. In 1 Thes 2:18, Satan hindered Paul's coming to them. In 2 Timothy 2:26, unsaved people are taken captive by Satan. In 1 Peter 5:8, Satan as our adversary roams the earth as a roaring lion seeking to devour. In other words, Satan is not now bound and he is fully able to deceive the nations. Scripture makes it clear that Satan is a lion loosed, roaring and seeking someone to devour.

But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, 13 from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool. (Hebrews 10:12-13)

V. THE ANGEL DID SIX THINGS

The angel laid hold of Satan, bound him, cast him into the Pit, shut him up and set a seal on him, then possibly released him. The angel did to Satan what Satan did to Daniel in the lion's den (Dan. 6:17).

- A. ***Laid hold of Satan*** (Rev. 20:2) – which is a very dramatic and possibly violent episode. Satan is filled with rage at such a restrictive action taken against him (Rev. 12:12).
- B. ***Bound him*** (Rev. 20:2) – put supernatural chains on him. God's reason for chaining him in prison so he could "not deceive the nations" as he did through history and the End-Times before he was put in prison (Rev. 13:14; 16:13-14) and as he will do again (Rev. 20:8).

- C. **Cast him into the Pit** (Rev. 20:3) – put him in prison. The bottomless pit is the prison for fallen angels (Jude 6; 2 Pet. 2:4; Rev. 9:1) and the place the Antichrist dwelt and then ascended from (11:7; 17:8).
- D. **Shut him up** (Rev. 20:3) – kept him from any communication with or activity on the earth
- E. **Set a seal on him** (Rev. 20:3) – to stop him from breaking out of prison
- F. **Released him** (Rev. 20:3) – that he might deceive the nations again
- G. **After the these things (Millennium), Satan “must” be released for a little while (Rev. 20:3).** Why? **BEFORE** the final judgment at the Lake of Fire (Rev. 20:11-15), God will openly manifest and reveal the truth about the **depth of human sin and hatred of God** (called the mystery of lawlessness in 2 Thes. 2:7) and about **Satan as incurably evil**. Satan immediately deceives the nations revealing that there was no rehabilitation or change in his character during his 1,000 year prison sentence. During the Great Tribulation, Satan deceives the earth through giving his authority to the Antichrist, False Prophet and the ten nation confederation (Gog/Magog of Ezek. 38-39), but now he has revived his plan during his prison time. The "little time" given to Satan after the Millennium is the same phrase as a "little time" (Rev. 12:12) given him during the Great Tribulation (this may correspond).

VI. THOUSAND-YEAR REIGN OF JESUS WITH HIS SAINTS (REV. 20:4-6)

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. (Rev. 20:4-6)

- A. The Millennial or Messianic Kingdom on earth is prophesied often in the OT. Those who remain true to Jesus (Rev. 20:4-6) are set in deliberate contrast with the other “great falling away” in the section immediately following (Rev. 20:7-9).
- B. John reveals seven key events that unfold chronologically after Satan is cast into prison (20:4-10) God’s judgment is committed to resurrected saints (20:4); the martyrs raised to reigned for a thousand years (20:4); unbelievers brought to life after the thousand years (20:5); Satan released from his prison (20:7); Satan deceive the nations to gather them to battle (20:8); fire devours the nations (20:9), and Satan cast into the lake of fire forever (20:10).

- C. The saint's roles in the Millennial Kingdom – priests (worshipping, etc) and kings (ruling). Jesus is King of kings (Rev. 19:16; 17:14; 15:3) who rules the kings of the earth (Rev. 1:5). In Revelation, the saints are twice called 'kings' who reign on the earth." (Rev. 1:6; 5:10). They are called three times called priests who shall reign on earth (Rev. 1:6; 5:10; 20:6 as in Isa. 61:6). Once they are said to reign without specifically being called kings or priests (Rev. 22:5).
- D. **Priests** – worship, intercession and mediating the knowledge of God to others (non- resurrected people on the Millennial earth, to one another in the New Jerusalem and to angels, etc.)
- E. **Kings who rule** – royal status who reign (rule) with judicial responsibility and authority. This role involves evaluating the past (judging) and helping to set the future action plan for area of authority they are entrusted with. This involves the ruling saints appointing people into positions within the Kingdom of God infrastructure which includes training and managing those people.
- F. The saints are the unspecified subject of the of verb "they sat" (Rev. 20:4). The "they" points back to the saints just mentioned, who participated with Jesus at His Second Coming (Rev. 19:14, 19 who were dressed in bright linen as seen in Rev. 19:7-8). Next, the resurrection martyrs in v.4. promises that all overcomers reign with Jesus, not only End-Time martyrs (Rev. 2: 26-27; 3:21; 5:10; 20:4-6; 22:5; Mt. 19:28; 20:21-23; 25:23; Lk. 19:17-19; 22:29-30; 1 Cor. 6:2-3; 2 Tim. 2:12; Rom 8:17). The saints have been repeatedly promised that they would reign with Jesus (Rev. 2:26-28; 3:21; 5:10). The scene witnessed by Daniel is now coming to pass (Dan. 7:22-27). All the righteous dead are raised first in the rapture (1 Thes. 4:16-17). The special category of the End-Time martyrs (Rev. 6:9; 15:2-4; 18:24; 19:2) – "souls of those beheaded." John sees their souls as he did in Rev. 6:11. They were killed because they stayed true to Jesus' testimony and to preach the Word of God (1:9; 6:9; 12:17). The number of End-Times martyrs will be unprecedented in history. John emphasizes martyrs since this will be the largest number of all who rule. Rev. 20 will be essential for these believers to understand.
- For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. 22 And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened. (Mt. 24:21-22)***
- G. These martyrs are clearly End-Times martyrs physically raised from the dead that are being described as "those who did not worship the beast nor his image nor received mark (Rev. 13:14-17).
- H. Amillennialism sees these as born-again believers (with new life not physical resurrection) living on earth through Church history who were loyal to Jesus as seen in symbolic depictions of the mark of the Beast, etc. The Amillennials see this as reigning with Jesus in heaven. Amillennialism gives no credible answer to the details of this text such as which born-again believers have lived and ruled on earth for 1,000 years after being beheaded or after refusing to receive the mark of the Beast or that really are first martyred then later brought to life (born-again). They obviously dismiss the essential details of this text.

- I. ***The two uses of "they lived"*** refers first to the martyrs in (Rev. 20:4) and next to unbelievers (Rev. 20:5). In both cases speaking of being resurrected. The Amillennial view sees the first group (martyrs of Rev. 20:4) as being raised spiritually, while the second group (rest of the dead, i.e., unbelievers) as being raised physically. To interpret one resurrection as spiritual but the other as physical is not a hermeneutically sound way to interpret words within the same context. It is manipulating the Scripture to make it say what they want it to say, while dismissing clear meaning of the language. The hermeneutically consistent way is to interpret "they lived" (v. 4) as physical resurrection of the End-Time martyrs and then to do the same with the verb "live" in v5, which refers to the rest of the dead or unbelievers. The place of reigning is the same domain in which the nations are deceived by the devil (Rev. 20:3, 8-9). John stated the reign is on earth as a key point of the Book of Revelation with the seals, trumpets and bowls getting people ready for Dan. 7 ruling via the Great Tribulation unto the earthly reign of Rev. 5:10.
- J. The title 'first resurrection' is the first time this title is given to the resurrection of the righteous and gives insight into the double fulfillment of Jn. 5:28 and Dan. 12:2 as having time a gap between the two events. The "rest of the dead" speaks of all the rest of the unbelievers who are not raised in the first resurrection and thus are to be judged by the second death (Lake of Fire). The first death is physical death and the second death is being thrown body and soul in the Lake of Fire (Mt. 10:28). Jesus referred to this as the resurrection of "condemnation" (Jn. 5:29). Daniel called it the resurrection to "shame and everlasting contempt" (Dan. 12:2). Unbelievers do not experience the first resurrection at the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom at the time of the rapture (1 Thess. 4:16-17). The First Resurrection is the first widespread corporate physical resurrection of the righteous. The fifth beatitude in v. 6 (1:3; 14:13; 16:15; 19:9; 22:7, 14) – they are priests (Rev. 1:6; 5:10), who reign and enjoy holiness without any fear of the second death (Lake of Fire) as seen in Rev. 2:11; 20:14; 21:8. The function and work of the resurrected saints in the Millennial earth is generalized as priests reigning.
- K. Many people are called (invited to inherit great things) yet only a few are chosen or esteemed by God as worthy ruling with Jesus at the time of His coming (2 Thes. 1:10-11). This means that God sees them as proven in meek obedience under the varied pressures of opportunity, temptation and resistance. This is essential revelation that ***only a few will have a sufficient mature of meek obedience so as to share in the Millennial government.*** There are only two passages in the Bible with this phrase (Mt. 20:16; 22:14).