

20:1-15 The Millennial Kingdom  
1-10 Millennium and Satan bound  
11-15 Great White Throne Judgment

INTRO: In the twentieth chapter we are dealing with the Millennium in relationship to Christ, Satan, man, the tribulation saints, the resurrections, the earth, and the Great White Throne. Chapter 20 is the division point for the three main schools of eschatology:

### THREE VIEWS:

1. Amillennialism: literal coming of Christ but spiritualizes the 1000 year reign - no millennium. They accept the angel, heaven, pit, Satan, nations, and resurrections as literal. The addition of the prefix a- simply negates the belief in the Millennium. Amillennialism holds out no false optimism and has, for the most part, emphasized the coming of Christ. Its chief weakness is that it spiritualizes the thousand years, as it does all the Book of Revelation. It fits the Millennium into the present age. Most amillennialists fit the Millennium into the present age, and all the events recorded in Revelation are somehow fitted into the facts of history like pieces are fitted into a crazy quilt. Ps. 90:4; 2 Peter 3:8; Matt. 24:29-30.

2. Post-millennialism: literal return of Christ and 1000 years. Man, through his own effort, will bring in the kingdom and then Christ's coming. Postmillennialism assumed that Christ would come at the conclusion of the one thousand years. Man would bring in the Kingdom by the preaching of the gospel. This was an optimistic view which prevailed at the turn of the century. At that time it looked like there might be a great worldwide turning to Christ and the world would be converted. This viewpoint has become obsolete as it could not weather the first half of the twentieth century, which produced two world wars, a global depression, the rise of communism, and the atom bomb

3. Pre-millennial: Rev. 20 interpreted literally. Fulfill promise to king David

- a. God will rule for 1000 years in the person of Christ. Ps. 2:6-9; Jere. 23:5-6
- b. The seat of God's rule will be Jerusalem. Deut. 28:13
- c. Peace among animals, and men, one language (curse of Babel removed)
- d. Creation delivered from the curse — Rom. 8:19-20

Premillennialism, takes chapter 20 at face value, as it does all of the Book of Revelation, applying the literalist interpretation unless the context instructs otherwise. In the premillennialist interpretation, the one thousand years are treated as one thousand years, and Christ comes at the beginning of the Millennium. Chapter 20 makes it clear that there can be no Millennium until Christ coming

1. There can be no Millennium until Satan is removed from the earthly scene.
2. The curse of sin must be removed from the physical earth before a Millennium can be established.
3. Third place, the resurrection of the Old Testament saints must take place at the beginning of the thousand years. If they were raised before the Great Tribulation, they would have to stand around and wait for the Millennium. There is no need for them to do that, and the Lord is not going to raise them until the Tribulation is over. Only Christ will raise the dead (see John 5:21, 25, 28-29), so He must come for that purpose.
4. The Tribulation saints are included in the resurrection of the Old Testament saints, and they reign with Christ during the Millennium.
5. The Millennium is the final testing of man under ideal conditions. This is the answer to those who say there is nothing wrong in man which circumstances and conditions cannot change. Man is an incurable, an incorrigible sinner. Even at the end of the Millennium, he is still in rebellion against God. The rebellion in the human heart and the depraved nature of man are impossible for any man to comprehend. If you and I could see ourselves as God sees us, we could not stand ourselves. But we think we are pretty good and that we are very nice people.
6. The Millennium is God's answer to the prayer, "Thy kingdom come." That is the Kingdom which He is going to establish here on earth, and it is called the Millennium. This is the Kingdom which was promised to David (see 2 Sam. 7:12-17; 2 Sam. 23:5).
7. God took an oath relative to its establishment (see Ps. 89:34-37). This is the Kingdom predicted in the psalms and in the prophets (see Ps. 2; 4 Ps. 45; 110; Isa. 2:1-5; Isa. 11:1-9; 6 Isa. 60; Isa. 61:3-62; 6 Isa. 66; Jer. 23:3-8; Jer. 32:37-44; Ezek. 40 -- Ezek. 48; Dan. 2:44-45; Dan. 7:13-14; Dan. 12:2-3; Mic. 4:1-8; Zech. 12:10 -- Zech. 14:21). All of the prophets spoke of this Kingdom, the minor prophets as well as the major prophets -- not one of them missed it.

#### 20:1-3 SATAN BOUND FOR A THOUSAND YEARS

20:1, *And I saw an angel come down from heaven*, - Καὶ εἶδον ἄγγελον καταβαίνοντα ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, -

*having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand*. - ἔχοντα τὴν κλεῖδα τῆς ἀβύσσου, καὶ ἄλυσιν μεγάλην ἐπὶ τὴν χεῖρα αὐτοῦ.

20:2, *And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent*, - καὶ ἐκράτησε τὸν δράκοντα, τὸν ὄφιν τὸν ἀρχαῖον, -

*which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years*, - ὅς ἐστι διάβολος καὶ Σατανᾶς, καὶ ἔδησεν αὐτὸν χίλια ἔτη,

20:3, *And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up*, - καὶ ἔβαλεν αὐτὸν εἰς τὴν ἄβυσσον, καὶ ἔκλεισεν αὐτόν, -

*and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled*: - καὶ ἐσφράγισεν ἐπάνω αὐτοῦ, ἵνα μὴ πλανήσῃ τὰ ἔθνη ἔτι, ἄχρι τελεσθῆ τὰ χίλια ἔτη· -

*and after that he must be loosed a little season*. - καὶ μετὰ ταῦτα δεῖ αὐτὸν λυθῆναι μικρὸν χρόνον.

His withdrawal makes way for the Millennium, for with him loose, there can be no Millennium. Therefore, we see that Satan's relationship to the Millennium is this: he must be removed from the earth's scene before it can take place. Men talk about bringing peace on this earth, and about producing prosperity. The world system will finally be headed up in the Antichrist, and he will not be able to accomplish peace and prosperity, although for a while it will look as if he may. As long as Satan is in this world, you cannot have world peace.

"The bottomless pit" is an "abyss." It is not the lake of fire, we shall see in verse 10." After that he must be loosed for a little time." Why? Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer: "If you will tell me why God let him loose in the first place, I'll tell you why God let him loose in the second place."

This is the great problem of evil: Why has God permitted it? Wickedness and evil must be great and beyond the ability of man to deal with, so that we can experience the greatness of God's grace and consequently give God glory for all that is done.

20:4-6 The saints reign with Christ 1000 years

20:4, **And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them:** - Καὶ εἶδον θρόνους, καὶ ἐκάθισαν ἐπ’ αὐτούς, καὶ κρίμα ἐδόθη αὐτοῖς· -

**and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus,** - καὶ τὰς ψυχὰς τῶν πεπελεκισμένων διὰ τὴν μαρτυρίαν Ἰησοῦ, -

**and for the word of God,** - καὶ διὰ τὸν λόγον τοῦ Θεοῦ, -

**and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image,** - καὶ οἵτινες οὐ προσεκύνησαν τῷ θηρίῳ, -

**neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands;** - οὔτε τὴν εἰκόνα αὐτοῦ, καὶ οὐκ ἔλαβον τὸ χάραγμα ἐπὶ τὸ μέτωπον αὐτῶν, -

**and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.** - καὶ ἐπὶ τὴν χεῖρα αὐτῶν· καὶ ἔζησαν, καὶ ἐβασίλευσαν μετὰ Χριστοῦ χίλια ἔτη.

20:5, **But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished.** οἱ δὲ λοιποὶ τῶν νεκρῶν οὐκ ἀνέζησαν ἕως τελεσθῆ τὰ χίλια ἔτη.

**This is the first resurrection.** - αὕτη ἡ ἀνάστασις ἡ πρώτη.

20:6, **Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection:** - μακάριος καὶ ἅγιος ὁ ἔχων μέρος ἐν τῇ ἀναστάσει τῇ πρώτῃ· -

**on such the second death hath no power,** - ἐπὶ τούτων ὁ θάνατος ὁ δεύτερος οὐκ ἔχει ἐξουσίαν, -

**but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.** - ἀλλ’ ἔσονται ἱερεῖς τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ τοῦ Χριστοῦ, καὶ βασιλεύσουσι μετ’ αὐτοῦ χίλια ἔτη.

Many are going to die for Christ in the Great Tribulation period, but they will live again and reign with Christ one thousand years. The Tribulation saints are going to trade three and one-half years for one thousand years. The thrones are literal; the martyrs are literal; Jesus is literal; the Word of God is literal; the Beast is literal; the image is literal; the mark of the Beast is literal; their foreheads and their hands are literal; and the thousand years are literal. It is all literal. A thousand years means a thousand years. If God meant that it was eternal, He would have said so.

1. The first resurrection began with the resurrection of Christ.

2. Followed by the Rapture.
3. At the end of the Great Tribulation is the resurrection of both the Tribulation saints ("the souls of them that had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus, and for the Word of God; and whosoever worshiped not the wild beast") and the Old Testament saints (see Dan. 12:1-2). Christ, the first fruits of resurrection, leads the way. The Tribulation saints and the Old Testament saints will evidently reign on this earth with Christ. "They shall be priests of God."

20:7, **And when the thousand years are expired**, - Καὶ ὅταν τελεσθῇ τὰ χίλια ἔτη, -

**Satan shall be loosed out of his prison**, - λυθήσεται ὁ Σατανᾶς ἐκ τῆς φυλακῆς αὐτοῦ,

20:8, **And shall go out to deceive the nations** - καὶ ἐξελεύσεται πλανῆσαι τὰ ἔθνη -

**which are in the four quarters of the earth**, - τὰ ἐν ταῖς τέσσαρσι γωνίαις τῆς γῆς, -

**Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.** - τὸν Γὼγ καὶ τὸν Μαγῶγ, συναγαγεῖν αὐτοὺς εἰς πόλεμον· ὧν ὁ ἀριθμὸς ὡς ἡ ἄμμος τῆς θαλάσσης.

20:9, **And they went up on the breadth of the earth**, - καὶ ἀνέβησαν ἐπὶ τὸ πλάτος τῆς γῆς, -

**and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city:** - καὶ ἐκύκλωσαν τὴν παρεμβολὴν τῶν ἁγίων καὶ τὴν πόλιν τὴν ἡγαπημένην· -

**and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.** - καὶ κατέβη πῦρ ἀπὸ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἐκ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, καὶ κατέφαγεν αὐτούς.

As soon as Satan is released, a great company, who have been under the personal reign of Christ under ideal circumstances, goes over to Satan. From where did such a company come is a worthy question. The answer lies in the fact that not only do multitudes enter the Millennium, but multitudes also are born during the Millennium (see Isa. 11:6; Isa. 65:20). This will be the time of the earth's greatest population explosion. Disease will be eliminated, since the curse of sin will be removed from the physical earth.

The human heart alone remains unchanged under these circumstances, and many will turn their backs on God and will go after Satan. This seems unbelievable, but what about today? Satan is doing pretty well in our day. This rebellion following the Millennium reveals how terrible the heart of man is. Jeremiah said, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jer. 17:9). When the opportunity is offered to them to rebel, they rebel. The nations of the earth again will

come under the spell of Satan and will plot a rebellion.

20:10, *And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone,* και ὁ διάβολος ὁ πλανῶν αὐτοὺς ἐβλήθη εἰς τὴν λίμνην τοῦ πυρὸς καὶ θείου,

*where the beast and the false prophet are,* - ὅπου τὸ θηρίον καὶ ὁ ψευδοπροφήτης -

*and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.* – καὶ βασανισθήσονται ἡμέρας καὶ νυκτὸς εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων.

The devil cast into the Lake of Fire - It is a relief to God's child to know that the enemy will at last be brought to permanent justice.

First of all, the Devil is not in hell today. He is the prince of the power of the air. He is the one who controls this world to a large extent. God has limited him in our day, but in the Great Tribulation period, he will have full rein for a while.

In the second place, the Devil is not the first to be cast into hell. The wild Beast and the False Prophet will precede him by one thousand years.

Finally, hell is described as a lake of fire and brimstone. The Lord Jesus is the One who gave the most solemn description of hell. "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels" (Matt. 25:41). "But the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness: there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 8:12)

This ought to make anyone stop and think: How can hell be outer darkness and also a literal fire? Jesus Christ also said: "And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth" (Matt. 13:42). "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched" (Mark 9:44).

A man asked Dr. Bill Anderson, "Suppose we get over there and find out that what you preach about hell is not true at all?" Dr. Anderson replied, "Then I will just have to apologize and say that I must have misunderstood the Lord. But suppose we get over there and find that it is true? What then?" The reality far exceeds the description, and human language is insufficient to describe the awful reality. Hell is a place; it is also a state. It is a place of conscious torment.

20:11-12 The Great White throne Judgment

20:11, **And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it**, - Καὶ εἶδον θρόνον λευκὸν μέγαν, καὶ τὸν καθήμενον ἐπ' αὐτοῦ οὗ -

**from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away**; - ἀπὸ προσώπου ἔφυγεν ἡ γῆ καὶ ὁ οὐρανός, -

**and there was found no place for them**. - καὶ τόπος οὐχ εὐρέθη αὐτοῖς.

20:12, **And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God**; - καὶ εἶδον τοὺς νεκρούς, μικροὺς καὶ μεγάλους, ἐστῶτας ἐνώπιον τοῦ Θεοῦ, -

**and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life**: καὶ βιβλία ἠνεώχθησαν· καὶ βιβλίον ἄλλο ἠνεώχθη, ὃ ἐστι τῆς ζωῆς·

**and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books**, - καὶ ἐκρίθησαν οἱ νεκροὶ ἐκ τῶν γεγραμμένων ἐν τοῖς βιβλίοις, -

**according to their works**. - κατὰ τὰ ἔργα αὐτῶν.

This is the Great White Throne, and the holiness of this throne is revealed in the reaction of heaven and earth to it: "from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away." Of this, John F. Walvoord, in his book *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, comments:

"The most natural interpretation of the fact that earth and heaven flee away is that the present earth and heaven are destroyed and will be replaced by the new heaven and new earth. This is also confirmed by the additional statement in Rev. 21:1 where John sees a new heaven and a new earth replacing the first heaven and the first earth which have passed away."

They are all lost, for evidently some do not have their names written in the Book of Life. They had never turned to God for salvation. The Lord Jesus said that in His generation ". . . ye will not come to me, that ye might have life" (John 5:40). Those standing before His throne had not come. These are books which record the works of all individuals. God keeps the tapes, and He will play them at the right time.

20:13, **And the sea gave up the dead which were in it**; - καὶ ἔδωκεν ἡ θάλασσα τοὺς ἐν αὐτῇ νεκρούς, -

**and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them**: - καὶ ὁ θάνατος καὶ ὁ ᾅδης ἔδωκαν τοὺς ἐν αὐτοῖς νεκρούς· -

**and they were judged every man according to their works**. - καὶ ἐκρίθησαν ἕκαστος κατὰ τὰ ἔργα αὐτῶν.

20:14, *And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire.* - καὶ ὁ θάνατος καὶ ὁ ᾅδης ἐβλήθησαν εἰς τὴν λίμνην τοῦ πυρός· -

*This is the second death.* - οὗτός ἐστιν ὁ δεύτερος θάνατος.

20:15, *And whosoever was not found written in the book of life* - καὶ εἴ τις οὐχ εὐρέθη ἐν τῇ βίβλῳ τῆς ζωῆς γεγραμμένος, -

*was cast into the lake of fire.* – ἐβλήθη εἰς τὴν λίμνην τοῦ πυρός.