

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

DECEMBER 14TH–15TH, 2024 // REVELATION

A GREAT CHAIN (REVELATION 20:1–3) ARMAGEDDON IS OVER

In Ch. 19 we saw the “battle” of Armageddon and the Antichrist and false prophet thrown into the “lake of fire that burns with sulfur.” Now Jesus deals with the source of the war.

- The same angel from Chapter 9 throws Satan into the abyss (Hades) that the demons had been released from.

THE ABYSS OR HADES

The abyss is the temporary place for Satan, demons, and evil humans until final judgment.

THE “GREAT CHAIN” IS NOT LITERAL

Satan is a spirit and cannot be held with iron. The chain is some kind of spiritual binding. Notice all the titles of Satan are used in this section, showing his binding will be secure.

UNTIL THE 1,000 YEARS WERE COMPLETED

The purpose of the 1,000 years that Satan will be bound is not for punishment, but to keep him from deceiving humanity for a millennium. After this 1,000 years, Satan will be released for a “short time” to deceive a large group of people.

- This is a largely ignored portion of the Bible.

INTERPRETATIONS OF THE MILLENNIAL REIGN

Premillennial: Christ will literally rule on earth for 1,000 years after Armageddon. **Amillennial:** The 1,000 year reign is currently taking place and is metaphorical of spiritual dominance. **Postmillennial:**

The church will set up a world where Christ reigns, and everyone becomes Christians.

AFTER THAT, SATAN MUST BE RELEASED?

Why would God loose Satan? There's much debate, but the best answer is that God will prove to humanity that **environment doesn't (or shouldn't) dictate our love for God.**

- **We often blame conditions for people's lack of faith, but even after 1,000 perfect years, many will still be drawn to evil.**

1,000 YEARS (REVELATION 20:4–6)

WHAT WOULD EARTH LOOK LIKE IF JESUS RAN IT?

After the armies led by the Antichrist are destroyed and Satan is bound, Jesus will literally set up His Kingdom on this Earth. There will be no war or hunger, and even the animals will not be savage (Isaiah 65:25).

- The redeemed people of God will rule with Christ in a repopulated Earth similar to Eden.

JOHN SEES PEOPLE SEATED ON THRONES

This is either all Christians throughout history or possibly just martyrs. These people will be given authority over all life on Earth. Imagine economics, entertainment, and government run by Christians in their “glorified” state.

- **The meek have literally inherited the earth** (Matthew 5:5).

LET THE TEXT SIMPLY SPEAK FOR ITSELF

If we read this at face value, it appears all Christians are resurrected after Christ binds Satan and are given different positions of authority on Earth along with the martyrs. Then, after the 1,000 years, all other people are raised from the dead to be judged by God.

- John calls this the “**first resurrection.**”

IF THERE'S A 1ST RESURRECTION, THERE'S A 2ND

There are several opinions on the two resurrections, but the text implies that the 1st resurrection is of all Believers, and the 2nd is of all the non-believers after the 1,000 years.

- John writes that those who experience the 1st resurrection are blessed because **the “second death has no power over them.”**

WHAT IS THE 2ND DEATH?

The 1st death is our physical bodies. The 2nd death is our spiritual bodies. V. 6 is simply saying that **those who are resurrected by Christ will not have to worry about eternal damnation.** This is explained more in v. 14.

WHY IS THIS SUCH A STRUGGLE?

The Millennial Reign is difficult because we rarely think of heaven in material ways. We just think Jesus shows up and zaps us into heaven, but that is not what the Bible tells us.

- **We have become so in love with instant gratification and comfort that we've grown to despise processes.**

REBELLION? (REVELATION 20:7–10) AGAIN, WE ASK “WHY?”

Some believe this is a retelling of Armageddon and others believe this shows God's commitment to free will and His sovereignty.

- **The best option is it shows environment shouldn't determine our love for God.** No one rebelled for 1,000 years because they were incapable (Satan bound).

FROM ALL CORNERS OF THE EARTH

The number of rebellious people is “like the sand of the sea,” indicating a huge number.

GOG AND MAGOG (GENESIS, EZEKIEL, 1 CHRONICLES)

Magog was the grandson of Noah and Gog was a prince from that area. This could be a specific area, but most likely represents rebellious people.

“THE ENCAMPMENT OF THE SAINTS”

John uses OT imagery to describe how the rebellious armies surrounded the people of God. In the OT camps, the tabernacle, a temporary temple, was in the center. V. 9 foreshadows Jesus replacing the temple permanently in heaven.

THIS ANTICLIMACTIC BATTLE SOUNDS FAMILIAR

Much like Armageddon, this rebellion is very short-lived. The big difference between this rebellion and Armageddon is this one marks the definitive end of all evil for eternity.

- Jesus easily casts Satan into the lake of fire with the Antichrist and false prophet to be “tormented...forever.”

BOOKS AND A THRONE (REVELATION 20:11–15) MAKING EVERYTHING NEW

If one uses their imagination, v. 11 is absolutely mind-blowing! John sees the great throne of God, and “Earth and heaven fled from His presence.” In other words, God undoes everything He has created.

- When God lays down His final judgment, there will be no heaven, Earth, or universe.
- 2 Peter 3:10 (CSB)

ALL THAT REMAINS BEFORE ETERNITY

After the heavens and Earth flee from God's presence, all that remains are Him, His throne, humanity, and the books that contain our deeds. This is the 2nd resurrection.

- All the dead, “the great and the small,” stand before the throne and the “books were opened.”

THE 1ST PIECE OF EVIDENCE

Jesus Christ, being the perfect Judge, will use two things to determine our eternities. The 1st is the books containing the deeds we have performed in life (Matthew 16:27).

- **This is a reminder that action always follows true faith! Fruit follows faith. Faith without works isn't saving faith.**

THE 2ND PIECE OF EVIDENCE

“Another book was opened, which is the book of life, and the dead were judged according to their works by what was written in the books.” **Anyone's name that was not found in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire.**

- **It is unpopular and uncomfortable, but eternal damnation is real.**

THIS IS THE 2ND DEATH

All people receive another body after the 1st death. Those who've given their lives to Christ will live glorified with Him. Those who haven't will be tormented forever in a “lake of fire.”

- **Whether the 2nd death is a literal fire or not, an eternity without God would be indescribably awful.**

COMMON GRACE

Even if people do not acknowledge God, He gives all people a certain level of grace called Common Grace. **Imagine an existence where any trace of God has been removed.** Even without Satan, it would be an unfathomable hell.

JUST TO KEEP THINGS IN ORDER

- 7 years of tribulation
- Armageddon
- Millennial Reign (1st resurrection)
- Satan loosed and the rebellion
- Rebellion crushed
- Judgment (2nd resurrection)
- Eternity

ENVIRONMENT

- Because the world is currently “under the sway of the evil one” (1 John 5:19), we have to learn to depend on Christ, His Spirit, and the principles of His Word until He returns. But **how often do we blame environment or circumstances for a lack of commitment to God?**
- Would we still love Jesus if uncontrollable aspects of our environment and circumstances never change?
- Do we use circumstances as an excuse to do sinful things?
- **What are we doing about the controllable parts of our environment?**

WHAT WE CAN CONTROL

- If environment is crucial, why aren't we more proactive in changing what we can about ours? **Maybe if we weren't around evil things so much, we wouldn't fall to sin so often.** Though many aspects of our surroundings are uncontrollable, there are many that are.

PRACTICAL WAYS TO ALTER ENVIRONMENT

- Prayer and the Word (Matthew 26:41; Romans 10:17).
- Choose to think on good things and take thoughts captive (Philippians 4; 2 Corinthians 10:5).
- Be around wise and godly people (Proverbs 27:17; Hebrews 10:25).
- Avoid the influence of evil people, sights, sounds, and places (1 Corinthians 15; Matthew 6:22).

“MORE THAN CONQUERORS” (ROMANS 8)

- **We don't lean on the Spirit enough!** When we proactively seek Jesus and obey His commands, we become increasingly full of His Spirit and this gives us **the ability to overcome temptations, unhealthy environments, difficult circumstances, and the culture of the world.**
- Salvation is more than avoiding hell, it is being **equipped** to live an abundant and God-honoring life now (Galatians 5; 1 Corinthians 12).
- Is it easy? Of course not! But if **we will be humble, repentant, and faithful, God will give us the power to live a life freed from sin's claims and ramifications** (Romans 6).