

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

DECEMBER 15TH, 2024 // REVELATION

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

In Chapter 19, we see the brief "battle" at Armageddon, where the Antichrist and false prophet are 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) from which the demons had been released.

THE ABYSS OR HADES

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

THE "GREAT CHAIN" PROBABLY ISN'T LITERAL

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

UNTIL THE THOUSAND 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 a metaphor (not literal) for spiritual dominance.
- **Postmillennial:** The Church will set up a world where Christ reigns. In other words, everyone becomes a Christian.

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 say that if conditions were better, more people would follow Christ, but even after 1,000 perfect years, many would still be drawn to evil things.**

1,000 YEARS (REVELATION 20:4-6)

WHAT WOULD EARTH LOOK LIKE IF JESUS RAN IT?

After the evil armies led by the Antichrist are destroyed and Satan has been bound, Jesus will literally set up His kingdom on this Earth. No war or hunger will exist, 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 Adam in the Garden.

JOHN SEES PEOPLE SEATED ON THRONES

This is all Christians throughout history or possibly just the martyrs of Christ. These people will be given authority over all corners of life on Earth. Imagine all banks, entertainment, housing, 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 as though all Christians are resurrected after Christ binds Satan, and then we are given different positions of authority on Earth along with the martyrs. Then, after 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 first resurrection is for all Believers, and the second is for all the non-believers after the 1,000 years.

- John writes that those who experience the first resurrection are blessed because the "**second death has no power over them.**"

WHAT IS THE SECOND DEATH?

The first death is our physical bodies, and the second death is our spiritual bodies. V. 6 simply says that **those whom Christ resurrects 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 for many people 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 hate processes.**

REBELLION (REVELATION 20:7-10)

AGAIN, WE INSTANTLY 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 that it shows that environment should not be the determining factor in us loving God.** No one rebelled during the 1,000 years because they were incapable.

FROM ALL FOUR CORNERS OF THE EARTH

John says the number of rebellious people was "like the sand of the sea," indicating it was a huge number.

GOG AND MAGOG

Magog was Noah's grandson, and Gog was a prince from that area. This could be a specific area, but it 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 the battle at 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."

A THRONE AND A BOOK (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 (HCSB)

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 when the second resurrection takes place. All the dead, "great and small," stand before the throne, and the "books were opened."

THE FIRST PIECE OF EVIDENCE

Jesus Christ, being the perfect Judge, will use two things to determine our eternities. The first is the books containing the deeds we've performed during our lives (Matthew 16:27). **This is a reminder that action always follows true faith!**

- **Fruit follows faith. Faith without works isn't saving faith.**

THE SECOND 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 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 SECOND DEATH

All people will receive another body after our first death. Those who have given their lives to Christ will live glorified with Him for eternity. Those who have not will have their new bodies tormented forever in a lake of fire.

- **Whether the second 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

EXCUSES AND ETERNITIES

- How often do we blame our environment or circumstances for our lack of commitment to God?
- If environment does play a role, why aren't we proactive in changing what we can about ours? **Maybe if we weren't around sin so much, we wouldn't fall to it.**
- Would we still love Jesus if the uncontrollable aspects of our environment and circumstances never changed? **Are we in love with the benefits of following Jesus more than Jesus Himself?**
- **Do we fully comprehend that one day we will be eternally with God or eternally separated from Him?**
- Shouldn't this change how we live? Shouldn't this change how we communicate with others? **Shouldn't this prod a sense of urgency in us?**