

"THE BOOK OF REVELATION"

Chapter Twenty

Previous chapters have illustrated the defeat of agents used by Satan to persecute God's people. One by one we have seen the fall of Babylon, the beast, the false prophet, and the armies they had gathered. What about Satan, the dragon who gave authority to the beast in his efforts to wage war against the saints (Re 12:17-13:7)? And what of those killed by the agents of Satan?

This chapter reveals **the binding of Satan** for "*a 1000 years*". It most likely depicts a long period of time in which Satan is no longer able to deceive the nations as he did during the time of the Roman empire (cf. Re 13:14; 20:3). It began following the end of Roman persecution and would continue for some time in the future. During this period, John sees **souls reigning with Christ**, who were beheaded for their faithfulness to Jesus and the word of God. No mention is made of reigning on the earth, so my conclusion is that they reign with Christ in heaven during this period (cf. Re 2:26-27; 3:21). This "*first resurrection*" may be a special blessing for the martyrs of Christ during the intermediate state (between death and the bodily resurrection at the end of time), while Re 7:9-17 may describe the intermediate state for the average Christian. Truly those who had been beheaded for the witness of Christ are "*blessed and holy*" (1-6)!

After the "*1000 years*" are over, Satan is released for a short time where he once again seeks to "*deceive the nations*" to persecute the people of God (cf. Re 13:14; 20:3,8,10). The mention of "*Gog and Magog*" is likely an apocalyptic reference to forces of evil at Satan's disposal during this time, not any particular nation or nations. But **the final attempt of Satan** is quickly thwarted by the Lord, and the devil is cast into the lake of fire, where the beast and false prophet were (cf. Re 19:20). If any section of Revelation pertains to the time just prior to the Lord's final coming, I believe it to be this one. The description is brief, for the book was written for the benefit of Christians in Asia Minor about things to shortly come to pass (cf. Re 1:1-4; 22:6,10). Those Christians would not experience this last attempt of Satan. But to assure them (and us!) that Satan would ultimately be defeated, we have the description found in these few verses (7-10).

The chapter closes with a description of **the final judgment**. Before the great white throne and Him who sat on it, all the dead are judged. Books are opened, including the Book of Life, and judgment is based upon their works. None escape the judgment, for the sea, Death, and Hades give up all the dead that are in them. Death and Hades are cast into the lake and fire, described as the "*second death*". The same end is given to those whose names were not written in the Book of Life (11-15).

POINTS TO PONDER

- * The binding, future release, and ultimate defeat of Satan
- * The "thousand year" reign described in this chapter, and who will reign with Christ
- * The criteria used in the final judgment, and the importance of the

OUTLINE

I. THE THOUSAND YEAR REIGN (1-6)

A. SATAN BOUND FOR 1000 YEARS (1-3)

1. John sees an angel come down from heaven
 - a. Having the key to the bottomless pit
 - b. With a great chain in his hand
 2. The angel binds Satan for a thousand years
 - a. Casting him into the bottomless pit, shutting him up and setting a seal on him
 - b. So that he should deceive the nations no more for a thousand years
- But afterward he will be released for a little while

B. SAINTS REIGN WITH CHRIST FOR 1000 YEARS (4-6)

1. John sees souls upon thrones, to whom judgment was committed
 - a. Who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and the word of God
 - b. Who had not worshiped the beast or his image
 - c. Who had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands
2. These souls lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years
 - a. The rest of the dead not live again until the thousand years were finished
 - b. This is the first resurrection
 - 1) Blessed and holy are those who have a part in the first resurrection
 - 2) Over such the second death has no power
 - 3) They shall be priests of God and of Christ
 - 4) They shall reign with Christ a thousand years

II. SATAN'S FINAL ATTEMPT AND DEFEAT (7-10)

A. HIS RELEASE FROM PRISON (7-8)

1. After the thousand years were completed
2. He will go out to deceive the nations
 - a. Those in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog
 - b. To gather them to battle

B. HIS FINAL ATTEMPT AND DEFEAT (9)

1. To have the nations surround the camp of the saints and the beloved city
2. But fire from God out of heaven devoured those Satan had deceived

C. HIS ETERNAL TORMENT (10)

1. The devil who deceived the nations was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone
2. The same place where the beast and the false prophet are
3. They will be tormented day and night forever and ever

III. THE FINAL JUDGMENT (11-15)

A. THE ONE ON THE GREAT WHITE THRONE (11)

1. John sees a great white throne and Him who sat on it
2. Before Whose face the earth and heaven fled away so no place was found for them

B. THE JUDGMENT OF THE DEAD (12-13)

1. John sees the dead, small and great, standing before God
2. Books were opened, including the Book of Life
 - a. The dead were judged according to their works
 - b. The dead were judged by the things written in the books
3. All the dead were judged, each according to his works
 - a. For the sea gave the dead who were in it
 - b. For Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them

C. THE LAKE OF FIRE (14-15)

1. Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire (which is the second death)
2. Anyone not found written in the Book of Life were cast into the lake of fire

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1) What are the main points of this chapter?

- The thousand year reign (1-6)
- Satan's final attempt and defeat (7-10)
- The final judgment (11-15)

2) What did John see coming down from heaven? (1)

- An angel, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand

3) What did the angel do to Satan? (2-3)

- Laid hold of him and bound him for a thousand years
- Cast him into the bottomless pit and set a seal upon him

4) Why did the angel do this to Satan? (3)

- So that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were completed

5) What souls did John see sitting on thrones? (4)

- 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
- Who had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands

6) How long did they live? With whom did they reign? (4)

- A thousand years; Christ

7) What is this reigning with Christ called? Why are those who have a part considered blessed and holy? (5-6)

- The first resurrection
- Over such the second death has no power, and they shall be priests of God and Christ and reign with Him a thousand years

8) What happens when the thousand years have expired? (7)

- Satan will be released

9) What will he do? (8-9)

- Deceive the nations in the four corners of the earth to gather them for battle
- To surround the camp of the saints and the beloved city

10) What will happen before they succeed? (9)

- Fire from God out of heaven will devour them

11) What will happen to the devil? (10)

- He will be cast into the lake of fire, where the beast and false prophet are
- They will be tormented day and night forever and every

12) What does John see next? What about the earth and the heaven? (11)

- A great white throne and Him who sat on it
- They fled away; no place was found for them

13) Who does John see standing before the throne? What was opened (12)

- The dead, both small and great
- Books, including the Book of Life

14) How were the dead judged? (12)

- According to their works
- By the things which were written in the books

15) Who had given up the dead? (13)

- The sea, Death and Hades

16) What is the lake of fire called? Who was cast into it? (14-15)

- The second death
- Death and Hades, and anyone not found written in the Book of Life