

Ps. 46:6 The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved: he uttered his voice, the earth melted. ... ⁹ He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire. ... ¹⁰ *Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.*

This chapter consists of two sections, firstly, concerning the Millennium (v.1-10), and secondly, concerning the Judgment (v.11-15). The interpretations have caused much debate within the Church as to how both events are to be understood.

The three most dominant views among evangelicals are ...

Firstly, proponents of *amillennialism* [*'no millennium'*] do not believe in a literal one-thousand-year reign of Christ. They understand it to be symbolical, and they claim we are presently *in* the Millennium which stretches from Christ's resurrection to when He will return and take us to the New Heaven and New Earth [succinctly described, Like the other numerical values in this book, the thousand years are not to be taken literally; they symbolize the long period of time between the chaining up of Satan (a symbol for Christ's resurrection-victory over death and the forces of evil) and the end of the world. During this time God's people share in the glorious reign of God (<https://bible.usccb.org/bible/revelation/20>)].

Secondly, *postmillennialism* posits that through Christian influence the world improves until it reaches a sufficiently ideal state, at which point the Church will herald in the Millennial Kingdom, and Christ will return [*'after the millennium'*].

Thirdly, *premillennialism* teaches the Millennium is a future literal one-thousand-year reign when Christ will establish His Kingdom on earth, centred in Jerusalem, after which creation will be destroyed and replaced by the New Heaven and New Earth. This is the basis upon which our studies through Revelation have been progressing, and in particular, the historic premillennial understanding which was the eschatology of the early Church (e.g. Polycarp, Irenaeus, Papias, Justin Martyr).

The chapter begins with the binding of Satan, **Rev. 20:1** And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit *Ἰάβυσσος, 9:1-6, the place out of which the demonic locusts swarmed forth to torture the world's unbelievers ... also the home of the beast, out of which he ascends, 11:7*] and a great chain in his [*the angel's*] hand. Presently, Satan *is not* bound for he is roaming the world like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour (I Peter 5:8). In the future though, ² he [*the angel come down from heaven, v.1*] laid hold [*seized*] on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, *and bound him a thousand years,* ³ And cast [*βάλλω*] him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more.

Presently, while he continues to 'roam', Satan he must work within the restraints placed upon him by God, cf. Job 1-2. At this point though, - yet in the future, - for one thousand years he will be 'locked away securely', unable to 'personally' deceive the world by his powers and activities. However, his incarceration in the abyss does not mean his previous influence is gone ... and he *will* re-emerge *after*

the Millennium, ³ ... shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled [also v. 7-8].

During the one thousand years, Christ will reign on earth from Jerusalem with His saints, ⁴ And I saw thrones, and they [*the saints*] sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them [^{5:9} *And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;* ¹⁰ *And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth*]. ... I Cor. 6:2 Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? *I*. ... During the Millennium there will be righteousness and peace on the earth (Is. 32:17; 12:3-4; 61:3,7), Is. 2:2 the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. ³ And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. The curse will be lifted (Is. 11:6-10; 30:23,24; 35:1,2,7), food will be plentiful (Joel 2:21-27), physical wellness (Is. 33:24; 35:5,6), long life (Is. 65:20) ... Is. 9:6 and the government shall be upon his [*Messiah's*] shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. ⁷ Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. ... Is. 24:23 ... when the LORD of hosts shall reign in mount Zion, and in Jerusalem, and before his ancients gloriously.

John elaborates, ⁴ and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for [*because of*] the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and *they* [*the Redeemed*] lived [*they received new incorruptible bodies, cf. I Cor. 15:51-53*] and reigned with Christ a thousand years. These are they who ^{2:26} overcome, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power [*ἐξουσία, authority*] over the nations ... Mt. 24:13 he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. ...

Meanwhile, during this one-thousand-years, - while the saints are reigning with Christ on earth, - ⁵ the rest of the dead [*... the unbelievers, the unsaved masses who refused to believe and accept the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ*] lived not again until the thousand years were finished [*cf. v.12*]. This is the first resurrection. ... Isaiah explains the unbelievers' incarceration during the Millennium, Is. 24:21 it shall come to pass in that day, that the LORD shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high, and the kings of the earth upon the earth. ²² And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be visited. ... John concludes, Rev. 20:6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection [*the Redeemed*]: on such the second death hath no power [*cf. v.14*], but they [*the Redeemed*] shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

At the conclusion of the one-thousand-year reign of Christ on earth, ⁷ Satan shall be loosed *Ἰλύω* out of his prison, ⁸ And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog *Irepresenting the totality of the anti-God rebels living at that time, cf. Is. 24:22b1*, to gather them together to battle *ἰπόλεμος*, *a single battle*, the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. ... Bubbling underneath the surface, and powerless to rise to the top because of the Messiah's Millennial reign, when the thousand years is ended, the hosts of Hell will be unleashed upon the earth to join with the unbelievers living on the earth at that time and they will rise up for one last opportunity to defy God. They will march on Jerusalem, ⁹ And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city, intent on destroying anything and everything to do with God and His Redeemed ... and God will once and for all *stop* them 'in their tracks', and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.

Previously, the beast and the false prophet have been cast into the lake of fire (19:20-21), and the 'armies' of 'Gog' and 'Magog' have been obliterated (20:8,9). Now, it is Satan's turn, ¹⁰ And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever. ... This is the 'everlasting fire' Jesus referred to, prepared for the devil and his angels (Mt. 25:41), ... and Isaiah, *Is. 14:15* Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.

Concluding this eventful chapter, after the destruction of Satan, John witnesses the final judgment which decides the eternal destiny, *Rom. 14:10* we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. (Rom. 14:10) ... *Rom. 25* ... against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; ⁶ Who will render to every man according to his deeds. ... *Rev. 20:11* And I saw a great white throne, and him *the Lord Jesus*, *Jn. 5:22* For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son ... ²⁷ And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. ²⁸ Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, ²⁹ And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation / that sat on it, *Idisplaying the glory and majesty of God, - the standard to which all will be judged* / from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found *no place* for them *the horrendous fear of the unsaved ... no escape*. ¹² And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life *the Book of Life, which contains the names of all who believed in Christ for their salvation*: and the dead *the unsaved* were judged out of those things which were written in the books, *according to their works*.

When the books of judgment are opened, against every name is either one of two statements ... for the Redeemed, "Paid in full!" by the blood of Christ on Calvary ... or against the name of those who refused to believe and accept Jesus as their Saviour, "Payment required" ... to such, Jesus the Judge will make the most

devastating declaration, ^{Mt. 7:23} I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity ... and they will begin to forever pay in Hell for rejecting God's free offer of grace while they had the opportunity on earth.

With nowhere to hide, ¹³ the sea gave up the dead [*the unbelievers, who were not involved in the first resurrection of the believers, cf. v.5,6*] which were in it; and death and hell [*those remaining in Hades during the Millennium, all the unsaved*] delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works [*i.e. their rejection of Christ and God's grace*]. ... It is impossible for us to understand with our limited minds and vocabulary, and yet we understand sufficiently to recognise the gravity of what is being announced, ¹⁴ death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. ... How can death die a second time?! John explains, ¹⁵ whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire ... as Paul wrote, ²³ the wages of sin is death; ... eternal and everlasting forever death! ... Death and Hell themselves *die* and will be *thrown* (*βάλλω*) into the endlessly burning lake of fire, - God's forever judgment on the unrepentant out of which there is no escape. It is the place originally made for Satan and his hosts of demons, not for God's creation because when He looked on the first two people He created in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them (Gen. 1:27), they were holy, sinless, perfect, after His design ... but when sin entered, their disobedience required to be punished, and the only means acceptable to God, by which His eternal wrath can be appeased and satisfied is in this present life by believing to have our sins forgiven through the blood of His Son shed on the cross of Calvary.

Oh, the love that sought me!

Oh, the blood that bought me!

Oh, the grace that brought me to the fold,

Wondrous grace that brought me to the fold!