

## Bible Study: Rev 20 The Millennium

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Audience: The seven churches of Asia Minor

Date: Approximately 95 A.D.

Location: Patmos

Theme: The revelation of Jesus Christ; things which must soon take place

Genre: Prophecy/apocalyptic

### Outline

The Millennial Kingdom (20:1-6)

The Final Rebellion of Humanity (20:7-10)

The Great White Throne Judgment (20:11-15)

### Observation

20:1 An angel from heaven has the key to the abyss and a chain (2Pet 2:4, Rev 9:1-3)

20:2 He binds Satan, the ancient serpent, with the chain for 1000 years (Gen 3:14-15)

20:3 He imprisons Satan in an abyss, not allowed to deceive the nations (Mt 24:21-22)

20:4 The saints are resurrected (first) and rule with Christ for 1000 years (Rev 5:9-10)

20:5 There are two resurrections at the start and end of the 1000 years (John 5:28-29)

20:6 The second death has no power over those in the first resurrection (1Cor 15:50-52)

20:7 Satan is released from his prison when the 1000 years are completed (2Pet 3:7-8)

20:8 He deceives the nations; Gog and Magog lead a vast army to battle (Ezek 38-39)

20:9 They surround the camp of the saints (Sukkot?); fire consumes them (Mt 7:13-14)

20:10 Satan is thrown into the lake of fire; they will be tormented forever (Matt 10:28)

20:12 The dead stand (resurrected) before the Great White Throne (John 5:22)

20:12 They are judged by what is written in the books, their deeds (Matt 12:36)

20:15 Anyone not found in the book of life is cast into the lake of fire (Heb 12:22-23)

### Interpretation

1. Won't the earth be empty for 1000 years (20:3)?

No. Various nations will survive the Great Tribulation and repopulate the earth; they are not resurrected saints because they are potentially susceptible to satanic deception (Rev 20:3). By the end of the Millennium, multitudes live at the four corners of the earth (Rev 20:8); they travel on the earth and fire devours (Gk. *katesthiō*) their physical bodies (Rev 20:9).

2. Where will the resurrected saints rule during the Millennium (20:4)?

When Christ returns with the saints, His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives (cf. Zech 14:4, Acts 1:11), and He will battle the armies of the earth assembled against Him (Rev 19:15). The saints will be kings and priests and rule with Christ on the earth (Rev 5:9-10, 20:6).

3. Who are Gog and Magog (20:8)?

“In Ezekiel 38 Gog was the ruler and Magog was the people, and both were in rebellion against God and were enemies of Israel.”<sup>1</sup> “**Magog** was the land of Gog, between Armenia and Cappadocia... The name represented Scythian hordes southwest of the Black Sea.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>*The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, 2:981.

<sup>2</sup>*The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, 1:42.

“Josephus’s *Antiquities* 1.6.1 equates Magog with the Scythians of the north who lived in the area of present-day Turkey and south-central Russia... In the OT, Magog is associated with Tubal and Meshech, geographical areas normally believed to lie in the mountainous region between, and south of, the Caspian and Black Seas.”<sup>3</sup>

4. Is the war in Rev 20:7-10 the same one mentioned Ezekiel 38-39?

There several reasons to believe that they are the same event:

- There are only two passages in the Bible where Gog and Magog are mentioned together.
- Gog and Magog are the principle antagonists in both battles (cf. Ezek 38:2, Rev 20:8).
- The destination of both armies is the land of Israel (cf. Ezek 38:8, Rev 20:9).
- Israel is at peace living in unwalled villages without bars or gates (Ezek 38:11), which is consistent with the end of the Millennium rather than the beginning.
- In both passages, heavenly fire consumes the enemies (cf. Ezek 38:22, 39:6, Rev 20:9).

5. Why will so many people follow Satan after he is released (20:9)?

“Those who survive the Tribulation will enter the Millennium in their natural bodies, and they will bear children and repopulate the earth (Isa. 65:18-25). Under ideal circumstances in which all know about Jesus Christ (cf. Jer. 31:33-34), many will outwardly profess faith in Christ without actually placing faith in Him for salvation. The shallowness of their professions will become apparent when Satan is released. The multitudes who follow Satan are evidently those who have never been born again in the millennial kingdom.”<sup>4</sup>

“The Millennium will reveal that man's rebellion against God lies deep in man's own heart, not in the devil's deception. Even when Satan is bound and righteousness prevails in the world, some people will still rebel against God. The final release of Satan will openly draw out this hidden evil.”<sup>5</sup>

6. If humans are mortal, why aren't the beast and false prophet burned up (20:10)?

The beast and false prophet are demon possessed individuals (Rev 16:12-14)

Demonic possession creates a composite identity & personality (Mark 5:8-9)

The Lord will consume and destroy the Antichrist at His coming (2Thes 2:8)

Hellfire consumes people (Mt 10:28), not angels or demons (e.g., Satan)

7. Who is seated on the Great White Throne (20:11)?

The Bible hints that it is Jesus Christ (cf. Mt 25:31-32, John 5:22; 2Cor 5:10).

8. What does the Bible teach about Judgment Day (20:12)?

All the dead will be resurrected together (Mt 12:41-42)

Every word we speak is recorded for judgment (Mt 12:36-37)

God's judgment depends on the circumstances (cf. Mt 10:14-15, 11:20-24)

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<sup>3</sup> *Tyndale Bible Dictionary*, 845.

<sup>4</sup> *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, 2:981.

<sup>5</sup> *Expositor's Bible Commentary*, s.v. Rev 20:1-6.

Application

An example to follow: Be willing to lay down our lives for Jesus Christ (20:4)

A challenge to face: Don't fall for Satan's deceptions and turn from God (20:8)

An error to avoid: The heresy of the immortal soul doctrine (20:10)

A challenge to face: Everything we say or do will be recorded for judgment (20:13)

A condition to meet: Make sure our names are written in the book of life (20:15)

Important Cross References

2Pet 2:4 For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment

Rev 9:1 Then the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star from heaven which had fallen to the earth; and the key of the bottomless pit was given to him. 2 He opened the bottomless pit, and smoke went up out of the pit, like the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by the smoke of the pit. 3 Then out of the smoke came locusts upon the earth, and power was given them, as the scorpions of the earth have power.

Gen 3:14 The LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field; on your belly you will go, and dust you will eat All the days of your life; 15 And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed; he shall bruise you on the head, and you shall bruise him on the heel."

Mt 24:21 For then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will. 22 Unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short.

Rev 5:9 And they sang a new song, saying, "Worthy are You to take the book and to break its seals; for You were slain, and purchased for God with Your blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation. 10 You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to our God; and they will reign upon the earth."

John 5:28 Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, 29 and will come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment.

1Cor 15:50 Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. 51 Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will all be changed, 52 in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed.

2Pet 3:7 But by His word the present heavens and earth are being reserved for fire, kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men. 8 But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day.

**1.94** παρεμβολή<sup>a</sup>, ἧς *f*: a temporary population center consisting of an encampment—‘camp.’ τούτων τὰ σώματα κατακαίεται ἔξω τῆς παρεμβολῆς ‘but the bodies of the animals are burned outside the camp’ He 13:11. The equivalent of ‘camp’ in the context of He 13:11 is often ‘a city of tents’ or ‘where people lived only for a short time.’<sup>16</sup>

Mt 7:13 "Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and there are many who enter through it. 14 "For the gate is small and the way is narrow that leads to life, and there are few who find it.

Mt 10:28 Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.

John 5:22 For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son

Mt 12:36 But I tell you that every careless word that people speak, they shall give an accounting for it in the day of judgment.

Heb 12:22 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, 23 to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect