

Supplemental Study

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REVELATION

OUR FINAL VICTORY

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Heaven on Earth

Revelation 20:1-15 (NKJV) – Bible passage [my explanatory notes]

Major Views of the Millennium

From: www.danielakin.com, "The Second Coming and Final Judgment"

1. **Premillennialism:** Christ's second coming will occur **before** a literal 1,000-year millennium. Christ will return to reign on earth for 1,000 years. During the millennium, Israel will experience the blessings promised to Abraham and David. New Testament believers are grafted into these covenant blessings. The millennium is a literal, intermediate kingdom before the eternal state. **Advocates:** Clement of Rome (1st century), Polycarp, Ignatius of Antioch, Tertullian, Cyprian, William Tyndale, some Anabaptists, Moravians, Mennonites, John Wesley, Charles Ryrie, John Walvoord, Billy Graham, W. A. Criswell, Al Mohler, Chuck Swindoll, John MacArthur, Wayne Grudem, Danny Akin, Millard Erickson, and Josh Franklin.
2. **Postmillennialism:** Christ's second coming will occur **after** the millennium, which is a symbolic period of gospel triumph and global transformation. The church will bring in the kingdom through the preaching of the gospel. Christ will not physically reign on earth during the millennium but will rule in the hearts of believers. The promises to Abraham and David are fulfilled spiritually through the church. **Advocates:** Daniel Whitby (1638–1726), who formalized postmillennialism, Jonathan Edwards, Charles Hodge, B. H. Carroll, and R. J. Rushdoony (1916–2001, Christian Reconstructionism).
3. **Amillennialism:** There is **no literal** 1,000-year reign of Christ on earth. The "millennium" is symbolic of Christ's current rule through His church and saints. His second coming ushers in the eternal state. The kingdom is spiritual, existing now between Christ's first and second comings. The promises to Israel (land, seed, throne) are fulfilled spiritually in the church. Christ is ruling now, and Satan is bound between Christ's two advents. **Advocates include:** Origen (185–254), Augustine of Hippo (354–430, City of God), The Roman Catholic Church (Adopted amillennialism as its official eschatology), John Wycliffe, Martin Luther, John Calvin, Huldrych Zwingli, B. B. Warfield, Louis Berkhof, G. K. Beale, and William Hendriksen.

1) Righteousness Will Reign (**Rev. 20:1-6**)

¹ Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. [The key and the chain symbolize the divine authority given to the angel to bind Satan. The "bottomless pit" (Greek: abyssos) is a prison for certain fallen angels and demonic forces (see Genesis 6:1-4; Luke 8:31; 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6). Satan will be confined here and will not have any influence during Christ's 1,000-year reign on earth.]

² He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for **a thousand years**; [Four titles are used for Satan here: "dragon" (his ferocity), "serpent of old" (his deception from Genesis 3), "Devil" (accuser), and "Satan" (adversary).]

³ and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till **the thousand years** were finished. [The bottomless pit, or abyss, is not the lake of fire but a temporary holding place for Satan. His removal prevents him from deceiving or causing chaos.] But after these things he must be released for a little while. [This exposes the unchanged sinful nature of the unsaved during Jesus' reign.]

⁴ And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of 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, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for **a thousand years**. [These believers include the church, Old Testament saints, and Tribulation martyrs who refused to worship the beast. Their faithfulness is rewarded with participation in Christ's righteous rule over the earth.]

⁵ But the rest of the dead did not live again until **the thousand years** were finished [The "rest of the dead" refers to the unsaved, who will not be resurrected until after the Millennium for the Great White Throne Judgment (Rev. 20:11-15).]. **This is the first resurrection.** [This includes all believers who are raised to eternal life to reign with Christ during the Millennium.]
⁶ Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him **a thousand years.** [Two key blessings are highlighted: freedom from the second death (eternal separation from God) and the privilege of serving as priests and rulers with Christ. The phrase "blessed and holy" emphasizes the joy and purity of those who belong to Him.]

2) Rebellion Will Be Released (**Rev. 20:7-10**)

⁷ Now when **the thousand years** have expired, Satan will be released from his prison [Satan's release reveals the unchanged sinful nature of those who reject God, even after experiencing Christ's perfect rule during the millennium.]

⁸ and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea. [Satan resumes his role as deceiver, rallying rebels from all over the world ("four corners of the earth"). "Gog and Magog" symbolize the collective rebellion of humanity against God. Despite Satan's long absence, countless people will join him, revealing the depth of human depravity.]

⁹ They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them. [The rebels surround Jerusalem, the "beloved city" where Christ reigns, but their rebellion is utterly destroyed by fire from heaven, demonstrating the futility of opposing Him.]

¹⁰ The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever. [Satan is permanently cast into the lake of fire, joining the beast and false prophet, who have already been there for 1,000 years. This eternal torment confirms the unending nature of hell.]

3) The Records Will Be Reviewed (**Rev. 20:11-15**)

¹¹ Then I saw a **great white throne** and Him who sat on it [This is the final judgment of all unbelievers. "Great" signifies majesty and authority, and "white" symbolizes purity, holiness, and justice. Jesus is the Judge (John 5:22)], **from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them.** [This indicates the destruction of the current creation (2 Peter 3:10-12), preparing for the new heaven and new earth (Revelation 21:1).]

¹² And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God [All of the unsaved will stand before God. "small and great" represent famous or forgotten.], and **books** were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to **their works**, by the things which were written in the books. [The "books" contain the record of every thought, word, and deed of each individual. The Book of Life, however, holds the names of those who have been redeemed by Jesus Christ.]

¹³ The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. ["Death" represents the physical body, and "Hades" represents the temporary place of the souls of the unsaved. These defendants are judged by their works because they rejected the grace of God (which is why their names are not in the Book of Life. No one's works are good enough to save them.)]

¹⁴ Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. ["Death and Hades" are personified and cast into the lake of fire, signifying the end of physical death and the temporary holding place for the unsaved. "Second death" is eternal separation from God in the lake of fire, the final and permanent state of all who reject Christ.]

¹⁵ And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

Applications for Today:

- 1) **Even in a perfect environment, an unsaved heart can still reject God.** This is a reminder that even godly parents, who raise their children to follow God, may see them choose rebellion and a different path. Similarly, during Christ's reign, some will rebel, even with Jesus ruling and Satan imprisoned. Each person must make their own choice to follow God.
- 2) **Live faithfully today, knowing that God will reward your commitment to Him.** The binding of Satan and the righteous reign of Christ for 1,000 years highlight God's ultimate authority over evil. Stay faithful to Jesus.
- 3) **Prepare for eternity and make sure your name is written in the Book of Life.** God will judge you either by your works (which cannot save you) or by your acceptance of His salvation offered by what Jesus did on the cross. You decide in this life where you will spend eternity – heaven or hell. Say, "Jesus be my Lord and Savior" today – DON'T DELAY.