



# An Exposition of Revelation Chapter 20

By Tony Warren

## Preface

The Book of Revelation is one of the most misunderstood books in the Bible. Not so much because the chapters are so difficult to exegete the passages in ways that make sense, but because many theologians are typically inclined to privately interpret them based upon their church dogma or traditions. Many in today's church are caught up in parroting the Biblically unsound doctrines that they have learned from their teachers. Lost in this propensity is the truth that the proper system of interpretation of Revelation will be found in the scriptures themselves, not from outside sources or the fanciful theories, suppositions, traditions, or politics of men. Interpretations belong to God (*Gen. 40:8, 41:16*) and therefore the answers to our eschatological questions must come from God's word, which is the infallible determinant. In this study, we will examine Revelation Chapter 20 in the light of the scriptures to determine what God is signifying by the symbolism and imagery of the book of Revelation. Since He is the one who inspired these symbols to be put there, He is the only one who can unerringly tell us what they mean. He does that by having us rightly proportion the word of truth through careful study (2nd Timothy 2:15).

We must come to understand that everything besides biblical interpretation, is "*private*" interpretation, which is nothing more than a personal opinion. The Holy Bible is not subject to such. While opinions and private explanations may make for exciting reading, interesting explanations, and appealing commentaries, they are not profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness (2nd Timothy 3:16). So as we consider these verses in the framework of a sound, comparative, and reasoned approach of sound biblical hermeneutics, let us resign ourselves to let God be the accepted instructor and sole arbiter of the received text of truths put forth "by Him."

..and may the Lord who is Gracious above all, give us an open mind to the wisdom of discernment of these texts of the truths established in the careful study of His Holy word.

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## Introduction

### A Reign Before or after the Great Tribulation

As a prelude to this verse-by-verse exposition of Revelation chapter 20, a introduction to the thousand-year reign controversy is in order. Depending upon how old you are, you have probably heard that the book of Revelation speaks about everything from unsupportable dispensations, Adolf Hitler, Kyser, Rome, the Pope, computer cards, a future golden age, brandings or marks in the skin, laser scans, the

common market countries of Europe, a nuclear holocaust, one world political rule, or war from Russia to Libya and Iraq. The list of private interpretations and impulsive opinions is endless. Everyone has a dream or a vision about what the symbolism of Revelation means. The reason for this is not so much that the mystery of Revelation is so confusing or unfathomable, rather it is because many are not comparing "*scripture with scripture*" to search out what is really being spoken about. Instead, they are either listening to learned scholars whom they respect, reading popular apocalyptic books, focusing on economics, political nations, or world stability to try and gauge what *appears* to be mirrored in scripture. In other words, they are guessing what seems right in their own eyes. Their conclusions may sound convincing or appear to conform to the scripture narrative, but careful study of the pertinent facts would reveal that it doesn't actually fit what is in the Bible at all. The ideas are generally inconsistent and do not agree with the whole context of scripture because their foundation isn't built solidly upon the word of God. That is why inconsistencies are inevitable. By contrast, when we come to real truth of Scripture, everything conforms perfectly to the word. It's like a gigantic spiritual picture puzzle where every piece falls perfectly in place. That is how God's word is designed. We only get that perfect portrait when all scripture is in agreement with itself. If it does not agree consistently, then the interpretation we have formulated is not God's interpretation, it's our own. God does not contradict Himself in Scripture, so when we have our interpretations come directly from scripture, we can be sure that we are on the right track. Neglecting this number one rule, we are not even on a track at all and have no real exegetical direction. Simply put, there are no supportable remonstrances when God's word is understood precisely the way it is written. And when we compare scripture with scripture, the spiritual with spiritual (*1st Cor. 2:13*) where it all harmonizes and fits cohesively with itself, then we know that we have come to the knowledge of the truth. Likewise, when we hear someone teaching the gospel and we want to find out if what he says is true, the only acceptable way to do that is to test his words by God's word. God calls it "*trying the Spirits*" to see just who is giving a biblical exegesis, and who is teaching their own private interpretations. Or as 2nd Timothy 2:15 puts it, we must:

*"Study to show yourself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, Rightly dividing the word of truth".*

Rightly dividing, or cutting (*proportioning*) the word correctly to get a just dividend is the spiritual portrait that God is putting forth here. Not cutting it unfaithfully to justify what we may already believe, but making a just or "righteous" division. Literally, to divide the scriptures honestly and righteously. Scripture informs us that if we do this, we will have no reason to be ashamed. Because shame is not for those who are faithfully following God's own interpretation of things that are, have been, and that must be. The only proper way to come to real truth is to study scripture with the purpose and mind to actually follow it wherever "*it*" leads. Sadly, many theologians often place themselves in the position of attempting to lead it.

The question we have at hand here is, "*does the one thousand year reign spoken of in Revelation chapter 20, mean that Christ is going to come and reign on this earth after the Tribulation?*" This is a theory that is taught by a great many theologians, but the question is, can it be verified by the scriptures themselves? And the answer is, No. The whole idea is contradictory to God's word when we consider all of the pertinent scriptures that are used to justify it. Nowhere is this doctrine explicitly mentioned in scripture, but some say it is implied. However, in reality, it is based solely on the misunderstanding or private interpretation of a few select verses. God does not say He will rapture the church before any tribulation. In fact, the Lord says just the opposite as He explicitly states that the church will not be taken off the earth until the end of the

world. He says the rapture or saints gathering together in the air (1st Thessalonians 4:17) is at the last day and the last trumpet. These ideas of a pre-tribulation rapture and an earthly reign of Christ are built upon an unsound foundation that will not stand the test of Holy Scripture.

It's important in this introduction of Revelation 20 that this should be made perfectly clear up front exactly what GOD says (*and does not say*) about the return of the Lord. Understanding this, we can better grasp what has been the speculations, assumptions, and suppositions by men, and what are solid biblical facts. Let's begin by taking a quick look at a few of the verses that may have a direct bearing on this issue.

### **Matthew 24:29-31**

- **"Immediately after the tribulation** of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken:
- and then shall appear the sign of the son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.
- And He shall send His angels **with a great sound of a Trumpet**, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven unto the other."

God says "immediately" after the tribulation, the trumpet will sound and it's the gathering together of the Chosen (*elect*). Both context and content illustrate that this is so. In other words, the elect believers are still on this earth after the great tribulation period because they haven't been raptured. Indeed, what would be the point? Likewise it says, be ye also ready for the Lord's return, because for those who aren't (*verse 51*) there is judgment, and weeping and gnashing of teeth. God is talking to the church and He is telling them to be ready for this event. Note, the Disciples ask Jesus when will be the sign of His coming again and the end of the world. It is then that He tells them these things. i.e., "*this is the signs of His coming and the end of the world*". When the fig tree is in leaf, then He is even at the doors! These are the signs.

In Premillennial theology, there seem to be three implicit three comings of Christ. This cannot be denied, for as one was at His birth, one is at the (supposed) pretribulation rapture of the church, and the third is here when He comes to gather the Elect at the judgment of the last day, at the end of the world. The obvious problem is that there is nothing in scripture to justify that there are three comings of Christ!

This idea is not biblically validated. We read of the coming of Christ to confirm (*Daniel 9:27; make strong*) the Covenant at His birth, after which He ascended to heaven to reign over His Kingdom as was prophesied. And then there is the return of Christ to both rapture the church and judge the wicked at the completion of that New Covenant period. This second advent is what Matthew chapter 24 is talking about, not the third. Christ doesn't come for the church before the great tribulation. When He returns on the clouds of glory it is the second and last coming. Likewise, because we read that this trumpet sounds (*Matthew 24:31*) and it is obviously the end of the world (*which even most all Pretribulation theorists agree*) then this has to also be the time of Christ gathering the elect together in the air. Because God says that this rapture occurs at "*The Last Trumpet*" and He is not the author of confusion. To say anything less about the trumpet seems to distort the very scripture record. It's just a matter of humbly receiving what is written. Consider these next two passages:

### **1st Thessalonians 4:16**

- "For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the **Trumpet** of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be **caught up together** with them in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

This notation of being "*caught up together*" in the air is what we call the rapture. The word rapture is derived from a Latin term meaning to be "*caught away*" and is merely used by Christians to avoid repetitive and awkward quoting of the entire verse (*1 Thess. 4:16*) each time we reference this glorious event it describes. So let me be clear that when I use the word rapture, I am simply speaking about nothing more and nothing less than what the scripture itself defines as believers being caught up together with Christ in the air (1st Thess. 4:16).

Comparing scripture with scripture, and this verse with the verses of Matthew 24:29-31, it becomes easy (*despite premil objections*) to see when the rapture takes place. In fact, you'd have to be trying very hard not to see it. The trumpet will sound, and the gathering of the chosen or elect that are left on earth into the heavens commences. Those who have died in the Lord are with Christ, and believers on earth are caught up in the air to be with Christ and His messengers. The unbelievers are left there on earth to watch this event and then are judged. I believe that this is as Matthew 24 declares that one will be taken and the other left. It specifically states that it was at "the trumpet's sound" immediately after the great tribulation period. Not Before! Moreover:

### **1st Corinthians 15:51**

- "Behold I show you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at **The Last Trumpet**: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."

Here we see the rapture spoken of again. And note "carefully" that God declares that it takes place at the sound of the last trumpet. Not the next to the last, but specifically the last! That means that there are no other trumpets after this trumpet. It is the last trumpet and it is the rapture. And so we see (*if we believe God's Word*) that the trumpet sounding in Matthew 24 cannot possibly be "after" this one, because this rapture is at the **Last** trumpet. PreTribulation Rapture theology teaches that the trumpet in Matthew 24 takes place after this last trumpet spoken of 1st Corinthians. They are *effectively* denying God's word by privately interpreting 1st Corinthians to "Not Be" the last Trumpet. The question becomes, why would anyone professing faithfulness to scripture do this? And the only answer I can come up with is that they know that if Matthew chapter 24's trumpet isn't after the rapture trumpet of 1st Corinthians, then their whole theory of the rapture before the tribulation is totally bankrupt, as Matthew 24 declares it is immediately after the tribulation of those days. Yet they go to great lengths trying to rationalize away the last trumpet of 1st Corinthians. One fellow asked me,

"..has God really said this is the last Trumpet?"

Yes, this sounds an awful lot like the question of the serpent in the garden, doesn't it?

"..hath God said ye shall not eat of the tree?"

Yes, He did. He says the end is at the last trumpet as well. If it is true that God's word says this, then the Matthew 24 Trumpet Christ speaks about must also be the last trumpet, because they themselves admit that this verse is in reference to the end of the world/age. That means Matthew, 1st Thessalonians, and 1st Corinthians, are all talking about the same time period. Judgment Day and the Rapture at the very same Last

Trumpet. Curiously enough, when pretribulation theologians are asked to explain this obvious contradiction of scripture, and they do one of four things.

1. They ignore it and trample it underfoot as if it wasn't there, was unimportant, or was worthless!
2. They revile you, speak of church unity, call you divisive, try and change the subject to Christian liberty, or you (*ad hominem attacks*).
3. Claim it's because we don't actually know how to understand the very scriptures we're reading, but will understand it by and by. ..or
4. Say, "...did God REALLY meant the Trumpet in 1st Thessalonians was actually the last Trumpet when He said it?"

The lack of humility in holding on to church traditions rather than receiving what God actually says is astounding. Like as the Scribes and Pharisees who held to their traditions above God's word (*Matthew 15:6*), churches today seldom receive God's word as the authoritative truth when it contradicts their traditional teachings. Nevertheless, God is not mocked, for the last trumpet is the last trumpet. We are to receive the truth (*2nd Thessalonians 2:10*) in love, not despise it or be offended by it. Yet this is what often happens as men love their teachers words more than God's word. Is that a harsh indictment of the church? ..Yes! Because we should not lose sight of the fact that it is the Holy Spirit of God that reveals truth and that He resists the proud. Because of this Spirit within them, they should have a reverential fear of God that they won't allow them to trample His Holy word underfoot. As the more noble Bereans, we should search for the truth in God's word and receive it as authoritative. If need be, we should change our doctrines so that they conform to God's word. Instead, many attempt to change God's word so that it conforms to the doctrines they have been taught. God says that it is the fool who despises the instruction of scripture, and we must all strive to keep that in mind.

### **Proverbs 1:7**

- "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise Wisdom and instruction."

It takes a broken spirit and noble or honest heart to receive the correction (*Acts 17:11*) of the scriptures. And God is the only one who can give us that humility. Clinging to erroneous teaching in the face of Scripture is not the path of the faithful. When we compare Scripture with Scripture, we see that this trumpet and the trumpet of Matthew 24 is the same trumpet and there is no contradictions in God's word. Contradictions only come when we try and force God's word to say something that it doesn't say. Sloppy and/or unrighteous exegesis is not a virtue, and there is no reason to minimize it as insignificant in our walk with God. On the contrary.

### **Proverbs 16:5**

- "Every one that is proud in heart is an abomination to the LORD: though hand join in hand, he shall not be unpunished."

In humility we confess that after the tribulation period, the Lord's second advent occurs where the church is raptured, not before. And then the judgment. All scripture agrees that it is on the last day, and at the last trumpet. Over and over again God makes it clear that the last trumpet is in fact the time of the end of the world. The only way we can believe in a pretribulation rapture is to ignore all of the pertinent scriptures.

### **Revelation 10:7**

- "But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as He hath declared to His servants the prophets."

When the Seventh angel sounds the trumpet (*Rev. 11:15*) it's the end of the world and the mystery of God is finished. This again obviously is at the last trumpet. The exact same last trumpet of God that 1st Corinthians 15:51 says is the rapture of believers. For then shall we see Him face to face and know even as we are known (*1st Cor. 13:12*). i.e., the mystery of God shall be finished, just as it states. Rapture and the end of the world are synonymous events. This is the only way scripture agrees consistently down the line. More than that, God likewise says the end of the world is at the last day and the rapture of the church is at the last day. Again, scriptural redundancy, which is in total agreement with this truth throughout the word.

#### **John 6:40**

- "And this is the will of Him that sent Me, that every one which seeth the son and believeth on Him may have everlasting life: and I will **raise him up at the last day!**"

#### **John 6:54**

- "Whoso eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath eternal life; and I will **raise him up at the last day!**"

#### **John 7:37**

- "He that rejecteth Me, and receiveth not My words hath one that judgeth him; the Word that I have spoken, **the same shall judge him in The Last Day!**"

Again, what's to debate? God clearly says that the judgment is at the last day, and the raising up of believers is at the last day. Just as with the last revelation of the last trumpet. These events of are all at the same last day, and there is no mention of another return of Christ or a pretribulation rapture. Again, there is total consistency throughout scripture.

By contrast, did God say after the tribulation I'll reign "on the earth" 1000 years, or did man say that and then privately interpret other scriptures to "mean" this, though they don't say it? Revelation 20 speaks of souls of the dead which reign in heaven, not on earth. Did God say before the tribulation I'll take My Church out of the world, or did man say that? Did God say my Son has no kingdom yet and there must be a future 1000 year reign on earth, or did man say that in direct contradiction of God? ..Man said these things! God said nothing about coming before the tribulation. That is not in scripture. What is in scripture is that Christ "*already*" has a kingdom, and is already reigning, and has already brought peace on earth, and that in the world the Church will have tribulation as normaltive, and near the end, Great (*greater or increased*) Tribulation, and that immediately after this period of Great tribulation, the trumpet will sound and the angels will gather the chosen, and all the tribes of the earth will mourn!" This is what God says! And with good reason the people of the earth mourn, because it's not only the gathering of the Chosen in the air (rapture) but it's also Judgment day. Therefore do they mourn.

Another one of the tactics that is often taken by Theologians in an attempt to give some biblical legitimacy to their theories, is to attribute the word *Elect* in the New Testament (*and particularly in Matthew 24*) to mean the literal Jewish people only. This arbitrary

and self serving defining of the term will "not stand" when compared with scripture. It's the very same word [*eklektos*] translated Chosen throughout New Testament scripture, and it's used to describe All Believers. It describes any Child of God, not those of literal Jewish heritage only. Jesus is speaking to the body of believers. They are the only Chosen in the New Covenant! As an example, in 1st Peter chapter 2 where it speaks of the Church as living stones in the house of God and a Chosen generation, that word Chosen [*eklektos*] is the exact same word elect. Elect means the picked or the chosen of God. All believers are the Elect of God as that chapter clearly demonstrates. So once again we see that these conclusions that the word Elect in those verses were speaking of Jewish people only, starts out with an erroneous "assumption" and then attempts to use it to interpret the passage in a way that will eliminate gentile believers (*supposedly supporting their, Church Gone Theory*). But when your assumptions are built upon fallacy, your conclusions are bound to be incorrect. Assumption is the mother of all errors!

It is very clear both contextually and textually that there is no room for a 1000 year reign of Christ "on earth" after the tribulation. Not according to scripture. For the second coming of Christ signals the judgment and the rapture, not a new reign of Christ on earth. Christ currently reigns in heaven with the souls of the martyrs who have died, and we are also spiritually reigning with Christ currently (*Col. 1:13, Rom. 5:17*) as kings and Priests unto our God. Though many choose to ignore these biblical truths, we cannot lean unto our own understandings and traditions. The Word of God is definitive, trustworthy, and explicitly (not implicitly) teaching the Kingdom of Christ is now. Everywhere you look in scripture the reign of Christ now, is evident.

The parable of the tares in Matthew chapter 13 gives us another sound illustration of this biblical principle. Jesus gives us this parable, and that there should not be any question about it's interpretation, He Himself interprets it for us! We don't even have to search the scriptures to see what the symbolism means, for Jesus explains the parable clearly for us so no one can use their own private interpretations.

He says the wheat (Believers) and the tares (Unbelievers) will remain in the field (World) "Together" until the harvest (End of the World). This is Christ talking! It's not a matter of my interpretation, or of your interpretation, it's clearly Christ's interpretation. How can we ignore Christ's interpretation simply because of our Church teachings? In fact, in the very parable itself it was asked if the tares should be plucked out so they couldn't choke God's wheat, and God says, NO! The tares and the Wheat must ***stay together*** until the end of the world, Then the tares will be gathered to be burned, and the wheat gathered into God's barn. Again, That's not my private interpretation, that's the unadulterated Word of God.

But Pretribulation Theorists flatly contradict Christ in this, saying, "*NO! The Wheat will be taken out of the field first because God doesn't want His Wheat being beaten up in the horrible time when these tares rise up in the tribulation period to persecute and kill them*". That plain and simply is a contradiction of GOD. It's confusion! If we say that the Church has already been taken out of the world before the tribulation, then who are these tares persecuting for the name of Christ (matt. 24:9) if not Christians? Is the Body of Christ divided? God Forbid! And what's the purpose in taking out believers if there will still be both Jew and Gentile believers here on earth still? Pretribulation theorists say God doesn't want believers to go through this wrath, as they're not "appointed to it", and yet there are believers here going through this wrath and persecuted and killed for Christ's sake. It makes absolutely no sense whatsoever! Some Theologians attempt to explain this saying, "because these will be Jewish believers who will evangelize the gentiles". But, that was the whole purpose of the Church. This theory makes the Church's work non effectual by their doctrine. And how does this change the fact that

they claim the believers were previously raptured because believers are not appointed to this wrath?

The real truth of course is that Jewish and Gentile believers are all one Holy People, one body of Christ, one Church of God. Not two! Both in "one" Olive tree, not two! There was one Old Testament with Israel, and there is one New Testament with Israel. One name whereby men may Be saved, one acceptable time when He took away the sins of Israel. It's not a future event, it's a past event. ..according to scripture! So it gets back to that age old question again. The question is not one of interpretation, the question is who are we going to believe. God, or our teachers? God says the believers and unbelievers will remain together in the world until the end of the world. Man says no, that's wrong, the believers will be taken out before the end of the world. And he teaches that without a single scripture that Actually says that. Yes, they will produce a few verses, but "none" of them will "Actually" say that the Church will be taken out of the world before the tribulation. They will "privately interpret" them to mean that, but not one actually says that.

..How can I say that?

Because it's a *fact*, and not one person has ever been able to say it's not, nor produce a single scripture which says these things! There is no scripture that says the Church will be taken out before the tribulation. There are many scriptures (as I've given the one of the wheat and the tares) which tell us that we will all (both believers and unbelievers), be here until the end of the world/age and God won't pluck one up because the other is choking it. So we have a choice. Believe God, or man. I've just given you a few verses, there are many, many more which show the very same thing. The Rapture, and the Judgment, is at the end of the world, at the last day, not before the tribulation.

The 1000 year reign that Revelation chapter 20 talks about says, the souls "of" the martyrs (those who died), it doesn't say souls (which could mean people), or people here reigning with Christ "on earth" in the literal middle eastern city of Jerusalem. It says souls "of" the martyred dead, while the rest of the dead lived not again. Not one word about living people reigning "upon earth" with Christ.

..He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

Study scripture carefully leaning upon it's Words alone (*Sola Scriptura*) and the Holy spirit will guide you into truth. Accept the words of men and of Church traditions and you set yourself up for a great fall by building upon unsound foundation. Souls of those who are beheaded for Christ's sake do not rise up out of the earth to reign literally in Jerusalem. The Saints upon their death immediately go to Heaven to Reign with Christ! The teaching that this chapter says souls are literally reigning on earth in Jerusalem, is untenable. But it's repeated so often that those who do not carefully compare Theologians words with the scriptures, have actually told me that this was explicitly written there. i.e., they heard it so much that they really think that this verse actually says that. In Reality John says (*the Word of God says*) that he saw souls "of" the martyred, reigning! He saw the souls of those killed (Beheaded). Not Souls (which could be people), and not Martyrs, but the "Souls, of the martyrs!" And since when does souls of the dead Martyrs reign on the earth? Why would a soul apart from his body, be reigning in a literal city in the middle east? These souls reign in the Jerusalem from above, not in an earthly nation, Holy City, or Holy Temple. A Spiritual Holy Nation, the Jerusalem from above (Gal. 4:26).

But isn't it typical that Pretribulation Theorists are the ones insisting we have to take this verse absolutely literally for what it says. But when it says the Souls of the martyrs

who die for Christ's sake, go to reign with Christ, they now curiously don't see that as literal souls of dead people. They amazingly see this as literal earthly people reigning with Christ on earth. Here they curiously don't want to take it literally as souls of the dead, as it literally states. And so they RE-interpret (privately interpret) this to mean literal people reigning on earth with Christ. He who hath eyes to see, let him see that this is obviously not what the verse "literally" says.

So much for the alleged literal interpretation of it. So let us take a careful verse by verse look at what Revelation chapter 20 really says. And discern what it really means by a careful biblical reasoned comparison of scripture with scripture, symbolism with symbolism, Word with Word. Let us in humble submission let God's Word interpret God's Word. It is the only way to really understand what the book of revelation means..

## **A Verse-by-Verse Exposition Of REVELATION CHAPTER 20**

### ***VERSE ONE***

- "And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand."

Revelation Chapter 20 is introduced by the phrase, "And (or Then) I saw an angel come down from heaven..". This is not indicating that John is now having a vision of events that happen after the events in Chapter 19. It is just the introduction of a new vision that John was seeing. This is obviously a different vision from chapter 19, and there is nothing in scripture which would have anyone believe the events in the Chapters of revelation go along chronologically. In fact, the scriptures preclude it!

The word angel here is the Greek word [*aggelos*] meaning messenger, and is the "exact" same word translated messenger throughout New Testament scripture. This Messenger who came down from heaven with the key and great Chain to bind Satan is God's anointed Messenger Jesus. He is Messenger of the Covenant of God who comes down from heaven with the power to bind Satan and by His death give that Covenant strength (Philippians 2:6-8). It's the fulfillment of Prophecy of the messenger of God who redeems from the hand of the strong one, Satan. This Messenger of the Covenant is the deliverer out of zion that was prophesied to come and defeat Satan and free his captivity, to make strong the New Covenant with Israel (see Jeremiah 31). Christ is the Prophesied foundation of the Temple rebuilding (building again), and the freeing of Israel. But in order to do that, that great deceiver Satan had to **first** be bound because he held the captivity of the nations or gentiles, with the strong hand of death hanging over them. This Messenger who came down from Heaven with the power to bind Satan and loose the peoples of the world, is Christ.

### **Malachi 3:1**

- "...and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to His TEMPLE, even the *Messenger of the Covenant*, whom ye delight in: behold He shall come, saith the Lord of hosts."

This is the anointed Christ, the Word made flesh. This Messenger ([*malak*], the exact same Old testament word translated Angel) is He who came down from heaven to give the Covenant strength. He came with the Key and great Chain to bind Satan in a bottomless pit (Abyss) that he can no longer deceive the gentiles by holding them in bondage. Revelation 20 is the fulfillment of that Prophecy.

Isaiah the Prophet spoke of a time when the Gentiles (nations) would come into the kingdom of God (Isaiah 9:1; 42:6; 49:2,22) when the Messiah come to free the captivity, and this was fulfilled in Christ's first advent. Therefore, the basis upon which the gospel can now go unto all the nations of the world is that Satan's deceiving hold upon the Gentiles (same word as translated nations) has now been bound as all power is given to Christ to evangelize the world.

### **Matthew 28:18-19**

- "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.
- Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:"

Because of this Messenger [*aggelos*] from heaven Satan cannot thwart the building of the lord's Temple with the chosen of the nations, because he has been bound from doing so. That power of binding is in the symbolism of the key, the chain, and the Messenger from Heaven.

Satan cannot be bound with a literal Chain of iron, or locked in a pit with a literal brass Key. Satan is a spirit being which cannot be bound by literal earthly devices. The words here of keys and chains have spiritual significance. The Lord uses these symbols to illustrate a spiritual (but very literal) picture for us. Once we understand this, half the battle of understanding His Word is won. The Key here symbolizes that the Messenger has the right and authority to bind and loose. This messenger come down from Heaven holds the right and authority and means (key) to bind Satan. The signification being, "*He who holds the key, holds the ability and authority to restrain Satan*". That would also include ability and authority to loose Satan from that restraint. The Chain symbolizes the power (force or energy required to do the holding) to bind. It is a "Great" Chain because Satan is a spiritual and strong adversary (*more on this later*), upon whom only a great or special binding from God will restrain. The bottomless pit is symbolism for a boundless void (or Abyss) of nothingness. Satan (a spirit being) is held in idleness, that his ability to deceive the gentiles whom God is now also drawing by the pouring out of the Holy Spirit, is stopped. i.e., He cannot prevent this while God's church is being built.

#### **Symbolism:**

**Keys** = Right, Authority, Ability

**Chain** = Power, Means to Restrain

**Bottomless Pit** = Boundless Void, an Abyss without form

This first verse is opening the vision with a word picture of the time that the Messenger from God came, as prophesied, to restrain Satan, and loose the gentiles from his deceiving grip. This took place at Christ's first advent. It is an opening image of the promised Messenger [*aggelos*] of the Covenant coming down from Heaven with the authority, means, and power to bind Satan, and free the nations. This Messenger was prophesied to come to His temple and bring Peace to Israel by freeing the captivity and reconciling them to God. The mystery is revealed that the gentiles or nations were included in this promise.

And when we think about this honestly, what other Messenger comes down from Heaven with the seal (security) of the Living God, and the Keys to Bind and loose Satan, and has the power to take hold of him, and cast him in a void where he cannot deceive the nations for a period? Only the Lord qualifies for such an impossible task! No one else has that kind of Power to overcome or conquer the strong one, Satan. The Only messenger who came down from heaven to bind Satan is Christ! And when we carefully study scripture we see that this was precisely as was prophesied. It was for this reason that The Messenger of the New Covenant was prophesied to come. To ransom the prisoners from the hand of the strong one and set Jacob free. He fulfilled that prophesy. We get a little better understanding about this in the next verse.

## VERSE TWO

- "and He laid hold on the Dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil and Satan, and bound him a thousand years".

Because of preconceived ideas, this is the verse where some Theologians become somewhat confused. Many make the assertion that this hasn't occurred as yet. They hypothesize that this will take place sometime during Christ's second coming. And ironically, in the midst of all the symbolic language here, they take exception to this thousand years being understood any other way but a literal length of time. Nevertheless, when we practice sound biblical hermeneutics, it becomes clear from the scriptures that Satan was bound by the victory of Christ on the cross. He had to be bound so that Christ could build His Church by releasing those whom Satan held captive. These are those held in bondage which Christ came to set free. Satan is the great deceiver of the world and he held the people in bondage to him so that they were his slaves. This messenger came from heaven to ransom those prisoners, and free that captivity. You can get a much better understanding of this principle by looking "carefully" at Matthew chapter 12, where the Pharisees are claiming that Jesus (*the Messenger of the Covenant*) is casting out devils by the power of Satan. And Jesus asks them, "*how can Satan fight himself? A Kingdom divided against itself cannot stand*". Christ says that if He casts out Devils by the Spirit of God, then the **Kingdom of God** has come unto them! Of course, we know He did cast them out by the Spirit of God. Therefore, it is likewise unquestionably true that the Kingdom of God had come unto them. And that is a very telling and unmistakable truth not subject to private interpretation, and which shouldn't be taken lightly, nor trampled upon. The Kingdom of God "Had" Come to Israel in Christ! And Christ doesn't stop there, He goes on to make sure we all know exactly what He is talking about, by then giving us this most revealing parable:

### Matthew 12:29

- "How can one enter into a strong man's house and spoil his goods, except he first **Bind** the strong man and then he will spoil his house."

When we study this parable honestly, by the Grace of God we must assuredly come to the truth of it. The Lord Jesus Christ came to spoil, or Plunder (*Take by conquest the possessions from*) Satan's house. And those possessions were you, I, and every other person who was unregenerate. We were those held strongly in captivity in this house of bondage. But in order to take Satan's goods, first, Christ had to "bind him." Look again carefully at the parable itself, and ask yourself *honestly* these questions:

- #1. Who is the Strong man?
- #2. What is his house?
- #3. Who is it that comes to bind him?
- #4. What are the possessions in the strong man's house that he wants to Spoil (take by conquest)?
- #5. What "MUST" be done first, before that can happen?

When you have answered those questions nobly, it's an absolute! There can be no other rational conclusion but that #1, Satan is the strong man. #2, His house is the adversarial principality. #3, Christ is the one who came to bind him and take the possessions or prisoners in his principality, #4, the Church were those possessions being held captive or in bondage by Satan, and #5, Christ is he who had to **First**, bind Satan!

If indeed Christ had cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then obviously it was the power of God manifest in Him, and thus unambiguously demonstrated that He was the prophesied Messiah, the Son of David who was to come and establish that Kingdom. The same Son of David of whom the

multitude spoke in the first instance. It was indeed for this reason the Pharisees had accused Christ of having a devil. Consider wisely and in context.

### **Matthew 12:22-24**

- "Then was brought unto him one possessed with a devil, blind, and dumb: and he healed him, insomuch that the blind and dumb both spake and saw.
- And all the people were amazed, and said, ***Is not this the Son of David?***
- But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils."

But indeed Christ had cast out devils by the Spirit of God and that meant that the Messiah, the Son of David had been manifest, and His Kingdom had come unto them. It is in this "context" that Christ speaks about how He must first bind Satan. When Christ cast Satan out of individuals, He was '*signifying*' by this that the Kingdom of God had come (Matthew 12:28). For the kingdom of God is placed within men (Luke 17:21) by Christ coming to dwell where Satan once was, it's not an earthly kingdom. And the Spoiling of Satan's Kingdom or principality is the principle of this parable. His goods, (The Spoil) are all of the disciples, and all of us who were unsaved (*in captivity to Satan*) and deceived of Satan, who are now set free in Christ. This parable is a clear picture that God gives us to illustrate Christ is the Messenger of the Covenant that came down from heaven to establish the Kingdom of God by plundering the house of Satan, and setting free those who sat in the darkness thereof. And God tells us, first Christ had to bind the strong man, and only then could He spoil his house. This is not incidental or insignificant language. Scripture must be defined by scripture, not by Theologians. When we do that, it is clear the binding of satan took place at the cross.

Again in Mark chapter 3. The Lord Jesus has the blasphemous accusation brought against Him that He was working through Satan. Christ asks them, "how can He battle against the Kingdom of Satan, if He is of the Kingdom of Satan? A House divided against itself cannot stand! And He declares:

### **Mark 3:26**

- "And if Satan rise up against himself, and be divided, he cannot stand, but hath an end. No man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except He **FIRST** ***Bind*** the strong man; and then He will spoil his House."

These are God's parables and God puts parables in His Word not to be "ignored", but to be considered and discerned. Some people close their eyes and ears to the truth because of their Church tradition, but this is unrighteousness of the highest order. God says, "hear His parable!" Christ is the one who has come to conquer this strong man's (Satan's) kingdom, and God says, in order for Him to spoil Satan's house, Satan first had to be bound. I didn't say that, A theologian didn't say that, my Church didn't say that, God said it! We merely bear faithful witness or testimony to what God said. Satan had to be bound in order for Christ to spoil (*take by conquest*) the captivity. He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

Indeed, as our Lord says, "if He cast out Satan by the power of God, then the Kingdom of God had come upon them." Not 2000 years later, but with Christ! The Kingdom had come, and the captivity was being set free, and there was Peace being made with God by those whom Christ delivered. This isn't speculation, it's clearly delineated in the pages of Scripture. Without realizing it, doctrines like Premillennialism are in effect saying, "*wrong God, The Kingdom of God has not come yet, for Christ has not bound Satan yet, the captivity has not been freed, and Christ has not yet brought Peace to the earth, nor established righteousness*". But according to these scriptures Christ has bound Satan, and He has taken a spoil from his house, and He has established His Kingdom in "His" righteousness.

### **Luke 11:20-23**

- "But if I with the finger of God cast out devils, no doubt the Kingdom of God is come upon you.
- When a **strong** man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace:
- But when a **stronger** than he shall come upon him, and overcome him, He TAKETH from him all his armor wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils."

Satan is the Strong man in this parable. Stronger than all of us so that he held us firmly in captivity to serve him in his kingdom or Palace. And you can be sure, he keeps his palace! No one can set themselves free from his strong grip. But when one stronger than him (*Christ*) comes and overcomes him, He takes away Satan's armor, making him defenseless so that he is unable to stop Christ's onslaught. Thus Christ conquers and divides Satan's spoil. He is unable to defend himself and prevent the Church from being built on those spoiled from the world. This is what these parables are teaching. Likewise, the Messenger of Revelation chapter 20 had come with a **Great** chain to symbolize this is to hold this "strong" adversarial spirit. And as these scriptures clearly show, before this Strong one's house could be spoiled, he "**First**" had to be bound by Christ.

While Satan is bound, the Holy Temple is being built and the true gospel is going forth to the nations that the called of these nations are Saved. Satan is without defense (*as per parable*) being restrained from being able to (*with his deceiving these nations*) prevent people from receiving truth and becoming truly Saved. In other words, while he is bound, the Lord's Church will be built with the spoils of Satan's house. Iniquity is held down until all who are to be sealed are sealed (*Saved*). And when the 1000 years are over and the kingdom prepared to be delivered up to God, Satan will then be allowed loose from his binding (*by he who has the key*) to once again go forth deceiving the world. This will bring Great Tribulation to the camp of the Saints (*Saints are believers*) as the Churches will then be overrun and the people therein brought into captivity to Satan. There will be a great falling away or divorcing (apostasy) from God in the Church at this time. It will become so wicked, that if God didn't shorten those days and return in final judgment, there would be no flesh left on earth to be Saved. I.e., it would be a world where not one man on earth was left who had Salvation! But that will never happen, as scripture says God will shorten the days (for the sake of the Chosen). Those who will endure in this time of Great Tribulation (*the faithful, those who keep God's word over man's*) will be Saved. They shall be changed instantly, without death, into their new spiritual bodies.

The point being made is, the Church is Saved by being freed from the house of Satan by the work of Christ at the cross to bind Satan. I don't know why anyone would consider it strange to hear that Satan was bound at the cross. The New Testament bears abundant testimony to the fact that Satan is a defeated foe. Colossians 2:15 says that Jesus Spoiled principalities and Powers and made a show of them openly triumphing over them in it. Keep in mind what Jesus said in Mark, that He first had to bind the strong man before He can spoil his house. Ephesians 4:8 tells us very plainly Christ led captivity captive and gave gifts to men. The captivity is the power of Satan to hold us in his Prison, and the gift Christ gave is Salvation! But, He first had to lead the captivity "Captive," Then He could give the gifts to men. You see, these verses are glossed over (*or worse*) by so many people. The question is, does it really mean that Satan had to be bound in order for Christ to spoil his house, when it says it? What was the captivity that Christ had to lead captive in order to give gifts to men? No need for vague speculation, the scriptures are clear about it.

Scripture indicates that being unsaved is as being in a prison or in captivity, with Satan as your Captor. No way you can get out because you are in bondage to sin. You serve sin. But Christ came to set this captivity free. He came to loose the prisoners, to spoil Satan's house. Remember Jesus said, If "I" shall make you free, you shall be free indeed? Israel didn't know what He was talking about! They retorted, "*they were never in bondage and were born free (-John 8:33)*". But Jesus was talking about a different captivity, a different house of Bondage. A captivity far greater than any political one and a prison house far more damnable than any earthly prison. He was talking about

Israel being in captivity to Satan. And Jesus said, If I will make you free, ye shall be free indeed. But like so many today, they were thinking in worldly terms, or in earthly or carnal terms, and Jesus was speaking in the language of the Spiritual. They thought He was going to set up an earthly Kingdom, but Jesus came to set up a "far" superior Kingdom than a worldly one. They wanted Him to set Jacob free from captivity to the Romans, but He came to redeem Jacob in a way that would set them free forever, and would rule them in a kingdom which has no end. They thought apart from the Romans, they were already free, but Jesus knew that they were captives in the House of Satan. He came down from Heaven to bind Satan and loose the captivity and give gifts to men. Doing that, this freedom would be greater than any worldly or (so called) literal freedom that they could imagine. When we learn the parable of the binding of the strong man, we see (*By the Grace of God*) exactly when, and more importantly why Satan was bound. This is also illustrated in the Prophecy of the messenger of the Covenant redeeming Israel, as fulfilled in Christ:

### Jeremiah 31:11

- "For the Lord hath redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hand of him that was **Stronger** than He.."

Jacob (*Israel*) was redeemed at the cross, and He who redeemed him was the Messenger from Heaven, Christ. Jacob was held in bondage by one who was stronger (remember the parable) and this of course was Satan. He was stronger than Israel and held them in bondage. The Redemption was made on the cross (*it's not a future event*) that Israel would be set free from the hand of Satan. And this is what the "great" chain to hold him signifies. Jeremiah 31 tells us all about this New Testament with the House of Israel that this Messenger confirmed or strengthened. Compare this diligently with the commentary on it in Hebrews chapters 8 and 9 (*read it all carefully*) and you will see that this is Christ, the messenger of the New Covenant or Testament with Israel. And the Israel in view is the New Testament Church! According to it's fulfillment spoken of in Hebrews, Christ accomplished this by the cross. So while doctrines like Premillennialism are waiting for a New Covenant with Israel as a future event, scripture clearly tells us that the New testament Congregation has already come, and was made strong in Christ's blood (Hebrews 9:15-17). It's His death which bound Satan and made the new Covenant with Israel, strong!

Look at 2nd Thessalonians chapter 2, which speaks of the time when iniquity will be un-restrained or loosed after having been restrained. Particularly take note of verses 6,7,8, and 9:

### 2nd Thessalonians 2:6-9

- "And now ye know what **withholdeth** that he might be revealed in his time.
- For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only He who now **restraineth** will **restrain**, until he be taken out of the way.
- And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the Spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming:
- Even him whose coming is after the working of **Satan** with all power and signs and lying wonders.."

This Chapter of 2nd Thessalonians is dealing with the falling away (apostasia) or literally divorcing or separation of the Church from God, which precedes the Lord's second advent. And verse 6 tells us that there is something withholding or holding down this "Evil" power of Satan, but that there is a "*specific time*" appointed when this evil will be set loose and revealed. This sin (lawlessness or iniquity) of Satan was in the world even at the time of the writing of 2nd Thessalonians, and yet God reveals here 'unambiguously' that it was being restrained to be revealed at a later (His) time. This iniquity or transgression that is being held down is obviously the power of Satan to do great

lawlessness in the Holy Temple and thus deceive the nations thereby. While it is being restrained the man of lawlessness cannot sit in God's Temple. The Church will continue to grow. This was iniquity of Satan **bound** at the cross so the Temple (Church) could be built. That's why these verses illustrate that it is being held down or restrained and declares a time it will be loosed. Naturally when it is let go, (unbound, unrestrained, released, whatever you want to call it), then this iniquity will abound (see Matt. 24:12) and there will be deceivings of false prophets, lying signs and wonders and miracles and great tribulation for true believers.

## 2nd Thessalonians 2:9

- "even him whose coming is is after the **working of Satan**, with all power, signs, and lying wonders."

When that iniquity that was held down is loosed, then false prophets, lying teachers and the lawless man, will come to deceive the nations with all Power and lying Signs and Wonders. It is no mere coincidence that this mirrors Revelation chapter 20 where when Satan is loosed from being bound, he goes forth to "deceive" the nations of the 4 quarters of the world. In other words, it will be a universal deception of the peoples of the world by the loosing of this spirit of Satan. The iniquity of Satan (*which was restrained*) spoken of in Revelation 20, will be loosed to go forth deceiving the world with false gospels, and 2nd Thessalonians mirrors that message of Satan's deception in great power. This isn't God playing word games, it's talking about the same time, and the same loosing of Satan. The context of 2nd Thessalonians 2 is of Christ's second coming and our gathering together to meet Him, but **First** it declares, these things had to happen. Apostasy, lawless man in the temple of God as if he was God, and the iniquity that was restrained be loosed. It all points to the same conclusion. Namely, after Christ build's his Holy Temple, then Satan will be loosed to deceive. The question would now arise, Why? 2nd Thessalonians 2:10 answers this. It is because they received not the love of truth, that they might have Salvation, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. The same reason God has always brought judgment upon His congregation! It shouldn't come as any surprise to faithful students of the Bible.

There are those who are commonly called 'Carnal Christians' (which is really no Christian at all) in most every Church, and they tend to want the wide road, the smooth road, the worldly way. They are usually kept in check by the faithfulness of the majority, but as many in the Church depart from the faith, it is spoken of as their being seduced and deceived by false prophets and teachers. And verse 7 of 2nd Thessalonians 2 explains that something was holding this iniquity restrained that it couldn't take place then. It says "*he that now letteth, will let, until he be taken out of the way.*" In the KJV this word "letteth" is an old English word which means restrain. The word translated there is the Greek word [*katecho*] or literally Hold Down, and is derived from it's root Greek [*'kata*] meaning down and [*'echo*] meaning to hold. So once again we see the principle that something is holding Satan's iniquity down until a certain set time (*spoken of here as, till one be taken out of the midst*). This iniquity of Satan that will be revealed later, was restrained until Christ be taken out of the midst of the Churches. Because the Lord is the only one who could restrain it. The Lord is the only one in the midst of the Church or temple who restrains iniquity. When iniquity is loosed (Matthew 24:12, the great tribulation period) iniquity will again abound, and the Love of God shall grow cold. This is the apostasy, or divorcing (separation) from God which 2nd thessalonians speaks of.

There are two things that we see conclusively in this verse of Thessalonians:

1. The mystery of this iniquity was already at work then when this was written to the Thessalonians! i.e., The spirit of Satan was "still" active in the world.
2. but though this iniquity was still active in the world then, it was declared by God to be being HELD DOWN, (restrained or bound) until a certain time when He that held it down should be taken out of the way (midst).

It is clear that He that Holds the evil spirit of iniquity down can only be God Himself. Again, as in Revelation chapter 20, no one else has that kind of power to restrain that spirit, Satan! Who is it that has the keys to the bottomless pit and has bound Satan there, sealed, reserved for this time? It can only be God Himself! And only the Lord can remove this restraint of iniquity of Satan. And when the Temple which He came to build is come to the full with the gentiles that are now coming in, God will do just that. For their testimony is finished and God will remove His hand of restraint of Satan as Judgment on the unfaithful. And so all Israel shall be saved! When we read 2nd Thessalonians 2:10,11, and 12, we see the reasons. Those who think that the Lord will not remove his hand of restraint of Satan to bring Judgment on those who refuse to receive truth of scripture are not reading, nor considering all of these scriptures carefully.

To make a long story short, the binding of Satan to withhold or restrain this horrible iniquity of deceiving was instituted by the Cross of Christ, and it will last until the time near the end of the world, when Christ is taken out of the midst of the Churches (*where two or three are gathered together in His name, there is He in the midst -Matt 18:20*). Satan is then loosed as Judgment upon this unfaithful Church, as the Lord says that "*judgment must begin at the House of the God.*" This judgment doesn't last long because Satan's end is that he will be destroyed with the manifestation or brightness of the Lord's second coming. So this Binding of Satan, and his Iniquity being held down is all intimately tied together. You can't have this iniquity loosed without Satan being loosed, and vice versa. They both are of the same restraining that took place at the Cross when Christ wounded his head. Just as the scriptures said, in order for Christ to spoil Satan's house, He first had to Bind him. He did! And his house has been continually spoiled every since. And it will continue to be spoiled until all that are to be sealed, are sealed. Then the dragon Satan will be unsealed, and loosed, and the end follow soon thereafter.

"And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,"

This verse is in reference to the breaking of Satan's stronghold upon the nations by the work of Christ on the cross. As we saw in Matthew chapter 12 "binding" is in reference to spoiling satan's house and a SIGN that the Kingdom of God had come. This is a symbolic picture of the defeat of Satan and how that defeat effects the nations. i.e., the ministry and work of the gospel can now go forth to the nations and satan is "defenseless" to stop the spreading of that gospel. We are more than conquerors (overcomers) through Christ Jesus! The symbolism is a spiritual picture of a reality!

### **Symbolism**

**Dragon** = Serpent with appearance of greatness, Satan

**1000 Years** = fullness of the building of the Church (reign)

**Serpent** = The subtle or clever deceiver, Satan

### **VERSE THREE**

- "And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled, and after that he must be loosed a little season".

The part of this verse which gives people the most problems is the understanding of the thousand years. We read that the messenger from heaven bound Satan for 1000 years, and some people tend to think, "*since it's been more than 1000 years since Christ went to the cross, that can't be the right conclusion*". They say that because they are thinking of this chapter as a strictly literal interpretation even though it is "quite obviously" replete with symbolism. Revelation chapter 20 is not speaking of literal objects or times, it is speaking in symbolic terms of very literal happenings and time. There is a difference! It is using symbolic words which man will recognize as representations of what is

happening. i.e., the chain is not a literal chain, it represents or signifies restraint, the key is not a literal key, it represents or signifies authority and ability, etc. All we have to do is look at the rest of the chapter to clearly see this. This Messenger didn't come down from heaven with a literal key. This Messenger didn't come with a literal great Chain. Satan cannot be bound with a literal Chain nor locked up with a literal lock. Satan is a spirit being. He must be restrained spiritually by God Himself. Rather than literal, this Language is representative Spiritual language to illustrate binding, and securing, and the the key illustrates He has the power and authority to keep bound, or to unlock and set loose.

So if we are not talking about strictly literal things here, what would make anyone think that the 1000 years must be a literal number of years anymore than the chain to hold Satan that 1000 years was a literal chain? The answer is Nothing! Nothing except Church tradition or teachings. It's not literal years! We understand this number 1000 to be symbolic to show us that Satan is being restrained so that he cannot bring this great iniquity and deceive the nations "*for the fullness of God's time*." Likewise, the bottomless pit or Abyss signifies a void place of nothing, as fathomless as can be imagined, to hold a spirit. So why would we pick the 1000 years out of all these symbolic terms and say it must be taken literally or else we are in gross error? It makes no sense! The main reason that some Theologians take this tact is that they have been taught the Jewish tradition that when Christ comes, He's going to free the earthly captivity, bring earthly peace, and reign literally on this earth. Believing this, they seek to discredit any view that Christ won't reign on the earth in literal (the middle east) jerusalem.

Nevertheless, this view is contrary to all other clear passages in scripture. When Christ returns, it will be to gather His people in the heavens to meet Him in the air (*commonly called the Rapture*), raise the unsaved to stand for Judgment, and to cast Satan in the lake of fire. All scripture consistently indicates this takes place at "The Last Day" and at "The Last Trumpet". There is no 1000 year reign on earth at the second advent of Christ. Believers reign with Christ "now" having been translated from the Satan's power of darkness, into this kingdom of Christ. Either that is true, or it is a lie. There is no in between.

The Greek word for thousand is [*chilioi*] which is in the plural and can mean an uncertain length of time or number. And that is the way that it is used here. To illustrate an unspecified length of time. And of course, it "MUST" be, for God is not interested in notifying the world of the precise actual length of time which Satan is bound (since we know the start of his binding was at the cross). It is to be a mystery to the unfaithful that he is even loosed. They will be eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage because they are unaware that satan is loosed. The Spiritual number 1000 years signifies until "the fulness of time."

When we study scripture we will find that God often uses certain number relationships to signify things. For example the number 3 for the purpose or will of God, as in the 3 times Christ prayed, the 3 times the sheet was let down and God said kill and eat, the 3 times Paul sought the Lord that the thorn in the flesh would be removed from him, the 3 times God came seeking fruit on the fig tree, or the 3 days till the Temple was raised up, etc., etc. Likewise, the number 12 representing the congregation, as in the 12 stars, the 12 tribes of Israel, the 12 Apostles, the 12 gates of the city, etc., or the number 7 and it's multiples, 70, 700, 7000 as the "Totality" of whatever is in view. And in this same way the number 10, 100, 1000 is likewise used in a spiritual sense to *signifies* the fullness of whatever is being spoken about. As an example, as you might say to your wife, "*I'll love you for a thousand years*". You're not literally putting a number on the time, rather, you're expressing the "fulness" of your Love for her. The 1000 is a symbolic length of time to indicate you'll love her from now till the fullness of time. Whatever that time may literally be, whether it be 10 years, 30 years 63 years, whatever it may be is symbolized by the use of the term a thousand years. And God uses this number in that way in scripture. We can see in the Psalms where the Lord God uses it to signify the fullness of hills:

- "For **Every** beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a **Thousand** hills.
- I know **All** the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field are mine."

Is that to illustrate a literal number of hills hold his cattle? Does that mean that the cattle upon 1001 hills, or the cattle upon 1002 hills are not His? No, and so quite obviously the number thousand here is not a number to be understood literally. It's a number that God used here to illustrate the fullness. When we read the verse carefully we see "every" beast of the forest is His. Consider what God is doing here. All the cattle are his! God is using the term 1000 to show us this. But we have to have our eyes open to see it. Nothing is in the Bible by accident. The 1000 cattle indicates the fullness of cattle are His. All of them are the Lord's. Not just those on 1000 hills. Likewise, Isaiah chapter 7 speaks about the first advent of the Lord (verse 14), and continues:

### Isaiah 7:23

- "And it shall come to pass in **THAT DAY**, that every place shall be, where there were a thousand vines at a thousand silverlings, it shall even be for briers and thorns. With arrows and with bows shall men come hither; because **All** the land shall become briers and thorns."

Are we to suppose that this is a literal number. Were there literally 1000 vines and literally 1000 silver coins, not 1001 or 999? When we look at the verse carefully we see that it is indicating that where there was the fullness of vines, there will be briers and thorns. The 1000 is not to alert us to a literal number of vines, or the literal number of 1000 silverlings (*pieces of silver money*), No, it is to illustrate where the fullness of vines once were, and where the fullness of money was, it is Changed to briers & thorns or worthlessness. In other words, it's become bankrupt! God is talking about a "full" destruction. That's what the 1000 illustrates. The fullness of what was there, is made briers and thorns. and that is made clear by God as it then says "because **All** the land shall become briers and thorns." You see, that's what the number 1000 illustrated. the Fullness. Again when we look at a verse such as Psalms 105, we read,

### Psalms 105:8

- "He hath remembered His covenant *Forever*, the word which He commanded to a **Thousand** generations. Which covenant He made with Abraham, and His oath unto Isaac;"

The LORD hath remembered His Covenant, how long? Forever! And the Word which He commanded to 1000 generations. Is This Literal? Is His Word only commanded to literally 1000 generations and not 1001 or 1002? Is His Word not commanded to the generations after 1000? Of course it is. God would not suddenly break His covenant in the 1001st generation of those who remain faithful to Him. One thousand has to be understood figuratively here, not literally. Again, look at the context of the verse. His Covenant is remembered forever. And His Word commanded to 1000 generations! Context tells us that this 1000 generations is "the Fullness or completeness" of all generations. That's how long it is remembered. Always! And it is remembered by the messenger of the Covenant Christ, send down from heaven. The number 1000 has been put there by God to show us a certain consistency in His use of this number symbolically.

### Deuteronomy 7:9

- "know therefore that the Lord Thy God, He is God, the faithful God, which keepeth the Covenant and mercy with them that love Him and keep His commandments **to a thousand generations**".

In light of this scripture, how can anyone say a thousand is always understood literally? Do we keep His commandments to a thousand generations, or do we keep them always in Christ? The 1000 is Symbolic of the Fullness. In Revelations chapter 20 where the context is symbolic language, the

1000 years that Satan is bound is symbolic language also. It indicates the fullness of time. In other words, from the time that he is bound by Christ at the cross, to the time that he is loosed, is the fullness of time which God prescribes. Till the time when the fulness of the nations or gentiles be come in, and the Church be fulfilled. Whatever literal amount of time it may actually be is not for us to know. But when the fulness be come in, so all Israel shall be saved as it is written, by the Deliverer, Christ.

This Messenger has put God's seal on Satan that he cannot be loosed till God looses him. God is in control and Satan will be held in restraint until the fulfilling of time that God has set that the nations be not deceived. Remember in 2nd Thessalonians 2 we read that what was being restrained was the iniquity revealed in Satan, and that it would be revealed in it's time. God has set that time. How long O Lord? It is not given to us to know the date of Christ's return, but Satan is bound the time that it takes to build the Holy Temple, Christ being the chief corner stone.

### **Symbolism**

**1000 Years** = fullness of time

**Seal** = God's Security

**Bottomless Pit** = a expanse, an abyss of captivity

This verse 3 of Revelation chapter 20 is illustrating that when The Messenger came from Heaven, He bound Satan, and cast him into a fathomless void to bind spirits that he would not be allowed to deceive the nations as he was doing at the first advent of Christ. Now is come salvation and strength, because the accuser of the nations has been cast down, and we are free from the death that hung over us as a result of his having us in bondage. God has sealed him, or literally "secured" him that he cannot be loosed upon the Church until all those who are to be sealed of the nations have been sealed (secured) in their foreheads. The Purpose is clearly that God keep him bound till the appointed time after the testimony of the saints is finished and all Israel is saved. When the Lord sets His seal upon something, you can be sure that it won't get out until "the time" the Lord alone releases him. So like everything else here, this seal is "symbolic" of something being "secured of God". No one secured or sealed of God can loose themselves. And my friends, that includes us, the believers. We are eternally secure (sealed) by God. And since it wasn't by our own good that we were secured, it cannot be by our own good we are held secured. Grace!

The question is often asked, "*but why is Satan loosed a little season in the future?*" It's because this loosing is a prelude to the second advent of Christ and rapture of His Church. At this set time God judges the unfaithful Church by the release of Satan. Satan marshals his army near the time of the Lord's return and comes against the Church (The camp of the saints). The Saints are overcome by Satan and his false prophets, and the Word trampled under foot, and the "true" gospel is silenced in the Holy Temple. There is a famine of hearing the Word of God, for the lawless man (man who won't obey the laws of God) is seated there refusing to accept God's authority (the scriptures) and thus ruling himself, "as if" he was his own god. The faithful who brought the truth are a torment to these people, so that at this time of falling, the unrighteous rejoice because they control the churches and their voice there is the rule. The true Witness (two witnesses) of the truth is silenced. But their rejoicing only lasts a short while, a little season, because Our Lord will come. That's what happens after the 1000 years after Satan is loosed.

Since this word thousand is at the root of most of the controversy concerning understanding this chapter, perhaps we should delve a little deeper. When we go over this word thousand [*chilioi*] carefully comparing scripture with scripture, we find that every place this particular Greek word [*chilioi*] is used, it is speaking in symbolic rather than literal terms. Some might consider that simply a coincidence, but to those who study scripture carefully it is just one more example of the cohesiveness and consistency of God's Word. Let's take a look at the places this word is found. The first place we find the word is:

**2nd Peter 3:8**

- "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the lord as a *thousand* years, and a thousand years as one day."

The word Thousand there is [*chilioi*]. And God is telling us that this word thousand as we might understand it, is not necessarily as God see's it. e.g., we may see it as a literal a thousand years, but God may see it as one day. It's what we've been saying about scripture all along. "GOD" will give the definition of words in His Book, not Theologians. The scripture is it's own dictionary and it's own interpreter, and understanding cannot be by any private interpretation. We are to define things by God's terms, not man's. Some may sit arrogantly and declare that a thousand years must mean a thousand literal years or else God is a liar, but God has something to say about that! He will define terms, not us! It's "His" book. He wrote it! If He wants to make one thousand years to symbolize one day, then it's His sovereign right to do so. If He wants to make one day equal to 1000 years, that's His right also. And who are we to argue with Him? And it's no coincidence that He uses this word [*chilioi*] to illustrate that principle. God is omniscient, and if wants to use 1000 years to symbolize a different length of time than man sees it, He will "signify" that somewhere in scripture. The point being, He doesn't define things as we do, and His ways are not our ways, they're above our ways. Therefore, we must define terms by His Word, and not by Webster's Dictionary, nor by the constants of Oxford Math, or the collective conclusions of men. God is saying here, we look at a thousand years in our terms, but God will define a thousand years as He see's fit. His time is not our time. He will define terms, and when He does, we had better listen.

The second and third place that this word [*chilioi*] is used is in Revelation 11:3 and Revelation 12:6 where it speaks of the 1260 days. The word thousand in both chapters is [*chilioi*]. It is "obviously" symbolic of the New Testament period when the Church has a testimony which started at the the cross, and goes to the time the testimony is complete. Mirroring the time which satan is bound, and the Church has a testimony! God says this woman (The Israel of God) of Revelation chapter 12 fled into the Wilderness (*see the revelation 12 study*) after the birth of Christ (the Man child), and was fed there for 1260 days. That's part of the Wilderness sojourn of New Testament Israel, the Covenant bride. Obviously not literally one thousand two hundred and sixty days. Revelation chapter 12 is likewise full of symbolism and it's clear to serious bible students that the 1260 found there is not a literal length of days. Same thing in Revelation chapter 11 of the two candlesticks (*again, The Israel of God*) are given Power (*Acts 1:8*) and prophesy in mourning for 1260 days. The 1260 days is the time from the cross when the power to Prophecy is given, to the time their testimony is finished (*verse 7*) when they are overcome by the beast. It is not literally 1260 days, but a symbolic number. So once again we see in the consistency of God's Word that the word thousand [*chilioi*] is illustrating a symbolical length of time. Even those who say the woman is the literal nation Israel will confess that the thousand two hundred and sixty (1260) days are not literal. So you see, the Word thousand there, is used to signify a symbolic length of time. Half a week in the prophesy of the weeks of years of daniel 9 (*but that's another study*). Revelation is a book filled with great symbolisms. You simply cannot take everything there literally, only what is defined by context, content, and other pertinent scriptures as literal. To try and do so for self serving reasons, is tortuous of scripture.

The fourth/Last place (*besides Revelation chapter 20*) this word is found, is in Revelation 14:19 where we read of the Messenger with the sharp Sickle:

- "And the angel thrust in His sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great wine press of the wrath of God. And the wine press was trodden without the City, and blood came out of the wine press even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a **thousand** and six hundred furlongs."

Again, an obviously symbolical number. The horse, the wine press, the bridles, and the space, are all symbolical terms. Why would anyone believe the number then must be literal? It makes no sense! This is God giving a Spiritual or symbolical picture of God's judgment. The Space of [*chilioi*] and and six hundred furlongs is obviously symbolical, illustrating the fullness of this terrible Judgment.

And so we see in every case where this word has been found, God in His omniscience has seen fit to use it symbolically. Coincidence? ..Hardly! God knows what He is doing, even when we do not. It's not what I think, or what my teacher thinks, it's What God Says that counts.

When we look at Revelations Chapter 20 where it says Satan is bound for 1000 years, the question should be, when will this take place? Not when our teachers told us it will take place, but what does the scripture have to say about the time of Satan's binding? And the answer is found clearly in God's Word. It has already taken place. Maybe not according to preacher Bob, but according to the Word of God it has. Jesus bound Satan at the cross so that He could free his captives and Build His Church. All Israel (*The Lord's People*) were held captive by Satan, and in order for Christ to free the captives He first had to "Bind" Him.

### Matthew 12:20

- "Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except He first BIND the STRONG MAN? and THEN He will spoil his house."

Anyone who has the wisdom to understand this parable "knows" that the Strong man is Satan, Christ is the one who we read had to bind him before he could spoil his Goods, and the believers are the Goods Satan held which Christ came to spoil (*take by conquest*). He who hath eyes to see let him see. Here is Wisdom! To deny this, is to deny the Word of God, and frankly, "why" would any Christian do that? ..tradition is what makes man do that.

### Isaiah 49:24

- "Shall the prey be taken from the **Mighty**, or the lawful *captive* Delivered? But thus saith the Lord, even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be DELIVERED: For I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children."

Prophecy fulfilled at the cross with Jesus taking the captives from the strong or mighty. But as He said, How could this be done except He first bind this strong man (Satan), then He could plunder his house and free his captivity.

Unfortunately some Theologians seem to want to pick and choose what is literal and what is symbolic in scripture. But that is unsound hermeneutics, for we must let God's Word itself determine this, not our teachers. We know, by scripture that the beast and it's 10 horns and 10 crowns on the 10 horns are symbolical. We couldn't arbitrarily say, "*well, because God is consistent these 10 horns and 10 crowns are literally 10 horns and 10 crowns*". No Way! We have to look at scripture, compare scripture with scripture, doing as 2nd Timothy 2:15 instructs us. Study to show ourselves approved a workman that needeth not to be ashamed "rightly" discerning the word of truth. That is how we know the 10 horns are symbolical, and that is how we know the 7 days of creation is literal, and that is how we know that the 1000 years of Revelation 20 is symbolical. By being a workman to study and rightly understand as God illuminates the subject by the light of His Word.

I am well aware that the 1000 years being symbolical goes contrary to the thinking of a lot of people brought up in the premillennialist traditions, and therefore it is "very hard" for many to turn away from those teachings, but we should be interested in truth, not man's tradition. Belief based on scripture is one thing, but indoctrination based on our teachers theories is another. If someone shows me (*by Scripture*) where I hold a wrong interpretation, I'd like to think that I will check those verses and gladly change my doctrine, giving thanks to the Lord for his giving me the eyes to see. Never will I blindly hold onto doctrine simply because it is what I have been taught. For one simple reason. I understand that The Holy Spirit is the teacher and I am simply the vessel. I must obey God rather than men. Be true to God rather than be true to my ideas, or my teacher's ideas. Faithfulness,

is to God, not theologians. Whosoever is our authority, that is who we serve. Likewise, I would hope that all Christians take that very same philosophy in their study of scripture.

## VERSE FOUR

- "And I saw thrones, and they set upon them, and judgment was given unto them. And I saw the souls of them which were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither has received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands, and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years".

In verse 4 John tells us that he saw the souls of the martyrs who did not worship the beast, nor receive his mark. First of all, notice that John does "not" say he saw the martyrs, nor does he say that he saw their bodies, or the persons, or he saw souls (*which could be illustrating people*). He is very specific! He saw the souls "**of**" those that were beheaded for the witness of God. The souls of them, nothing more! Again, this is the Spiritual picture that the Lord is giving us. First the Messenger of the Covenant comes from heaven and binds Satan that the New Covenant Church can be built, and then John sees the souls of those martyred raised up to reign with Christ on thrones. In other words, they are made kings and Priests unto God after Christ binds Satan. If you look at verse 5 you'll see that this (*the souls of these martyrs up on thrones*) is called **The First Resurrection**. It's now a simple matter of Biblical deduction to discover exactly when and what was "The First Resurrection?"

Again, fitting perfectly into place we see that it was at the cross! These Souls were raised up to reign with Christ because of the work at the cross and Christ's resurrection thereafter. Christ is the "First" Resurrection. Those who have part in the first resurrection are all the True Believers who have part in Christ's First Resurrection. They are the First Resurrection (*the second being at Christ's return*). Those who have died in Christ have gone to be with the Lord, having been raised with Christ to reign. That's the First Resurrection these martyrs have part in, which precludes the second death.

The very fact a first resurrection is spoken about, indicates that there is a second. And the second resurrection is at Christ's return. This is at the time of the Rapture when when the rest of the dead will be raised to stand for Judgment. And then there will be the second death, of which those who have part in the First Resurrection (*raised with Christ*) have no need to worry about. Likewise, the very fact that a second death is spoken about, implies that there is a first death.

## Romans 5:12-14

- "Wherefore, as ***by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men,*** for that all have sinned:
- (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law.
- Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come."

The first death is our death in Adam. For in him we are all dead in trespass and sin. As God told Adam, "*but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.*" And in Adam, we all die, which means that we are all dead in trespass and sin. This is that first death.

## 1st Corinthians 15:21-22

- "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead.
- For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ ***shall all be made alive.***"

Did Adam die when he ate of the tree? Yes, but not physically, he died spiritually. Therefore the first resurrection from the dead is not physical, but spiritual. It is in Christ, the firstfruit. And we shall 'realize' that eternal life resurrection at his coming.

Do not be confused by this First and Second Resurrection, and the First and Second Death. This is the way the Lord writes things that His sheep 'alone' will receive it. Just as in the parables He told. If we look at these verses carefully and objectively, we can see that the thousand years are not literal. These souls are those of the martyrs in heaven. It says these are those beheaded because of the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and are those who didn't receive the mark of the beast in their foreheads (sign of bondage to satan).

And we read the rest of the dead lived not again for 1000 years (verse 5). This also illustrates that this is not speaking about a future first resurrection, for there is one future resurrection of the just and the unjust. And it is not (nor can it be) the first. If this were indeed a literal number of years, then even all of the "rest of those who died" would have all had to die on the same year. Else they could not have died and not lived again for that literal thousand years. Did everybody (*the rest of the dead*) all die the same year? ..see how convoluted this gets? Likewise in the 1000 years the believers who died lived and reigned with Christ, is it the same thousand years satan is bound? If so, how can the souls of the dead be reigning with Christ in heaven when Christ is (supposedly) reigning with men here on earth in literal jerusalem in the middle east? Moreover, if the rest of the dead for a thousand years refers to the same thousand literal years Satan is bound, then when Satan is loosed after the thousand years, these "rest of the dead" must also live again, and we have a world with dead people walking around, because scripture emphatically says they lived again after the thousand years? Does Satan have an army of "literal" dead people helping him deceive the nations and coming against the camp of the Saints? For the rest of these dead live after this thousand years, and Satan is loosed after a thousand years. On and on this inconsistency and torture of scripture is endless in the premillennialist doctrine. If we just bother to look at it carefully we understand that it simply cannot be literally a thousand years.

But here is the truth of the matter. We should understand that everything in this Revelations chapter 20 is going along in a logical chronological progression. Christ, The Messenger of the Covenant, Comes down from heaven with this Key (*Christ is the one with the Keys to Hell and death -Rev. 1:18*) and great chain and lays hold on Satan and bounds him 1000 year (*the fullness time for the Lords purpose*) so that He can free Satan's prisoners and populate Christ's Kingdom with the spoil. He shuts Satan up in this spiritual prison symbolized by the fathomless abyss where he can't deceive the world and prevent the Lord's plan to build His Temple by spoiling satan's house! God sets a seal on him (*indicating that He assures this*). This is God's "signification" of security that no one can loose Satan but God who bound him. He will not be not loosed until the fullness of time is accomplished (spiritually, 1000 years). So after Satan is bound, John sees the souls of the martyrs then living and reigning on thrones. This is consistent with scripture of the binding of Satan, and the work of Christ on the cross which allows these souls to have been raised up from the dead to "live" and reign with Christ! They are kings and Priests unto their God having had part in Christ's Resurrection. These are those who are not servants of Satan (*received his mark of servitude*), but they are/were martyred because of their witness and for the Word of God they brought. And they all live and reign (spiritually) 1000 years with Christ. And it is by the work of this messenger of the Covenant that they can be translated into the Kingdom and live and reign with Christ.

### **Ephesians 2:56-57**

- "Even when we were Dead in sins, hath ***made us alive*** together with Christ, by Grace ye are Saved,
- and hath ***Raised us up*** together, and made us to ***sit in Heavenly places*** in Christ Jesus".

What raising up or resurrection from the dead is this? If it's not the "first" then all scripture is untrustworthy and nothing to be believed! Because God says Christ is the First born from the dead, that in all things he might have preeminence. Is that true or not? These souls reigning with Christ reign because they were in Christ when He went to the cross and they were raised up with Him (*The First Resurrection*) to be seated in heavenly places having the Judgment of God with Power, because God dwelleth within them. Anyone who tries to tell you that the first resurrection hasn't happened yet, either doesn't know the scriptures very well, or is deliberately ignoring them.

If you recall when Mary's brother Lazarus died, Jesus came to her and she said, I know he will be raised at "The Last Day". Well, the last day is the day of the Rapture, but it's the second resurrection, not the first! But Jesus made it perfectly clear to her of another Resurrection. The First! Consider wisely..

### **John 11:25**

- "Jesus said unto her, ***I Am The Resurrection*** and the Life. He that believeth in Me, **though he were dead, yet shall he live,**
- and whosoever that liveth and believeth in Me shall never die. Believeth thou this?"

Perhaps we should ask the Theologians of the Premillennialist Churches today if Jesus indeed was the Resurrection, because it doesn't appear that they believe this is true. Jesus was telling her, the first Resurrection unto Life is in Me, it's right here! I Am the Resurrection! He that liveth and believeth in Me shall never die! In other words, neither Lazarus nor you have to die physically and wait until the end of the world (*The resurrection at the Last Day as Martha says*) to be Resurrected. In fact, if you do wait till that time to be resurrected, you won't see life! The First resurrection is right here and now and without it, you are subject to the second death! But if you have part in this First Resurrection (*in Christ*) the second death hath no power over you. And that is exactly what Revelation 20 said about the First Resurrection.

He that liveth and believeth is Resurrected in Christ so that he'll never die (physical death yes, the second death, No). And he that is dead (as these martyred souls John saw), don't really die, because they had part in that 1st Resurrection in Christ. i.e., as Christ said, the true Believer will never die! That scenario is only possible if they have part in the First Resurrection, which is in Christ. When a believer is martyred, his soul leaves the body, and he goes to live and reign with Christ forever (Symbolized by the number 1000 years). Because He had part in the First Resurrection. And that of course is what John was talking about in Revelation 20. Souls of the Martyrs, not people reigning on earth. John, seeing those souls in heaven, sees the First Resurrection.

### **Symbolism**

**Thrones** = Reigning

**Beheaded** = Martyrdom for Christ

**Beast** = The Kingdom of Satan (as a Ravenous beast to devour)

**Mark of the Beast** = Signifies coming into Servitude to Satan's Kingdom

**Forehead** = The Mind

**Hand** = The Will

Because this messenger came and bound satan, these souls of believers can go to live and Reign with Christ, "because" He has made them the First Resurrection, that they would never truly die.  
..Which brings us perfectly to the next verse,

### **VERSE FIVE**

- "But the rest of the dead, lived not again until the 1000 years were finished. This is the First Resurrection".

Some Premillennial Theologians use this verse as support for the idea that there are at least two physical resurrections with a literal earthly millennial reign in between. However, scripture clearly teaches "one" future resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked. exhibit A:

### **John 5:28-29**

- "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice,
- 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."

This is the second Resurrection (not the first in Christ) and this is what is described in Revelation 20:12. The First resurrection is in Christ. This verse of Revelation is conclusive proof that this is speaking about the souls of those martyred who were Saved, and who died physically as it's contrasted against the souls of "the rest of the dead" (the unsaved, who died physically). As believers in Christ those martyred, in their souls go immediately to live and reign with Christ after they die. They are living and reigning with Christ every since He went to the cross to make that possible. We live and reign with Christ in heaven in our souls, even though our bodies decayed, yet we live. That's exactly what the verse is talking about. Believers who die, yet their souls living and reigning with Christ, while unbelievers (the rest of the dead) who die, don't live again until the second resurrection.

### **Ecclesiastes 12:7**

- "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it".

### **2nd Corinthians 5:8**

- "We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord".

When believers leave this body to dust, our spirits go to be with the Lord. But the rest of the dead, they lived not until after this present millennial reign. These unsaved weren't raised up from death to new life in the first Resurrection in Christ, therefore they cannot go to live and reign with Christ after death. That is the contrast here. In other words, they had no part in the First Resurrection with Christ! And so when they died, they don't live until raised at "The last day" to stand for judgment. That will be the Second Resurrection. Again, spoken of as, "after the thousand years" (indicating once again that it is not to be taken as literally a thousand, because the rest of the dead die at all different times). Lets take a look at what it says here, and what is meant by it.

### **1st Resurrection:**

Every single believer who has been raised up in Christ to new life, hath part in this 1st resurrection. Remember the scriptures talk of Christ as the "FIRST BORN FROM THE DEAD." If that's not the 1st Resurrection from the dead, the new birth in Christ, then nothing is. He is the Resurrection as He told Martha, and all those raised WITH HIM hath part in that first Resurrection. They are the Church of the firstborn. On these, the second death hath no power. Of course not, for they never die again! ..He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

## 2nd Resurrection:

The second coming, at the last trumpet, at the last day, when we that are alive will be raised up to meet Jesus in the air, and Judgment day when the rest of the dead (unsaved who have died) are all are raised up to stand for Judgment.

## 1st Death:

The death in Adam which all of mankind has suffered and which if they are not resurrected in Christ from that death, they shall suffer the judgement in the second resurrection.

## 2nd Death:

The Judgment that is meted out By GOD upon the unrighteous. HELL! There shall be weeping and grinding of teeth! This is the death that the wages of sin brings forth. It's punishment. The 1st Resurrection (Those raised in Christ) have no need to worry about this, as the power of the Cross of Christ (1st Resurrection) has taken away the sting of death.

We see these thousand years are different for each group, and cannot logically or rationally be the same thousand years if that means literally a thousand. Simply put, verse five tells us that the rest of the dead, those who weren't Saved by having part in Christ's Resurrection (The First) remained dead, and they didn't live again until after the thousand years. That's not speculation, that's what the scriptures clearly say. And after the fullness of God's purpose, which is a different length of time for each of the dead, then they will be raised to stand for Judgment. Those who make the claim that the first Resurrection is not in Christ are contradicting God's Word. God tells us point blank that Christ is the First Resurrection. And he who hath an ear, let him hear and receive it.

## Acts 26:23

- "That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the **First Resurrection** from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles".

So then, who are we going to believe, God or man? His interpretation, or our own? These are the same exact Greek words used in Revelation chapter twenty (First Resurrection). So there should be no debate but that Christ's raising from the dead is the 'First Resurrection,' according to God's Word. This is not an interpretation, or my spin on it, it's a direct unadulterated "Quote." That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the 'First Resurrection' from the dead. And we, raised up in him have part in that First Resurrection. We are the Church of the Firstborn from the dead.

## Colossians 1:18

- "And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence".

## Hebrews 12:23

- "To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect"

These are the souls of believers, the First Resurrection, upon which the second death has no power, they live, while the unsaved dead do not. It all fits when the thousand years is not forced to mean something God never intended it to mean. It will never fit when it's forced to mean literally a thousand years. The ones raised up in Christ lived and reigned with him through the thousand years as the Church is being built, but the "rest" of the dead (Unsaved dead) didn't live Again until after

the thousand years, when Christ returns to rapture his Church and raise these dead to stand for Judgment.

Remember what the "souls" of those under the altar cried in Revelation 6:10, and Remember God's reply to them? His reply was that they should rest for a season, for there were more people to be martyred. You see, these are the "souls" reigning a thousand years in heaven, not "men" reigning on earth with Christ in a earthly city jerusalem as some Theologians surmise. Christians who have died (physically) and gone to heaven, yet living and Reigning with Christ in their souls existence! God will not Judge till the fullness of His martyrs have come in. He will not loose the judgment of Satan till His set time. Not until His Church is come to the full. This is the marvelous truth of God's Word. And the sad contradiction to those who try and make these souls of 1000 years speak of a literal 1000 year reign of Christ on this sin cursed earth with men.

| <b>Death and Resurrection</b><br>The Biblical Concepts |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
|--------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>FIRST</b>                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <b>SECOND</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Resurrection</b>                                    | <p>The First Resurrection in Christ, wherein those who have part in it shall never die.</p> <p><b>Acts 26:23</b><br/> "That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the <b>First Resurrection</b> from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles".</p> | <p>The General Resurrection at the end of the world.</p> <p><b>John 5:28</b><br/> "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice,<br/> 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."</p> |
| <b>FIRST</b>                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | <b>SECOND</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| <b>Death</b>                                           | <p>The first death in Adam, culminating in the putting off of the tabernacle of the flesh when the body dies.</p> <p><b>2st Corinthians 15:21</b><br/> "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead."</p>                                              | <p>The second Death, the judgment for the wicked.</p> <p><b>Revelation 20:13-14</b><br/> "And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.<br/> And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death."</p>  |

### **Symbolism**

**Rest of the Dead** = the unsaved who have died

**First Resurrection** = Christ, and all raised up with Him!

### **VERSE SIX**

- "Blessed and Holy is he that hath part in the First Resurrection, on 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".

Proof once again that this first resurrection refers to Christ's, because it is **Only** those who are raised in Christ's Resurrection, on whom the second death has no Power. That was the whole purpose of the death and resurrection of Christ. No other Resurrection Qualifies!

### Romans 8:2

- "For the law of the Spirit of **Life in Jesus Christ** hath made me Free from the law of sin and *death*"

We are free from the law of death that hangs over man because of being raised up in life with Christ. No other Resurrection qualifies. Revelation chapter twenty, verse six tells us that these that hath part in the 1st Resurrection are Blessed (true Believers) Holy (true Believers), and on such the second Death hath no part (true Believers). It can only be this way because they have part in the First Resurrection with Christ. They've already been raised up so that if they live and believe they shall never die, and if they die, yet shall they live. They are Priests of God (true Believers - Revelation 1:6) and Live and reign with Him for the fullness of time, symbolized by 1000 years. All pointing to our resurrection in Christ, not a future event.

Another clear indication that this thousand years cannot be understood literally is that it says these live and reign with Christ 1000 years. The fact is, these Martyrs, whoever people may claim they are, are true believers, and as Such will live and reign with Christ Forever not literally only 1000 years! And so again it doesn't make any sense in a literal 1000 years. Are these souls living and reigning with Christ 1000 years, and then Christ declares, time to loose Satan, and they can't live and reign with Him anymore because your "literal" 1000 years to reign is now up? The answer of course is, "that's silly!" But if This 1000 years is literal, that is exactly how you would have to understand it. These souls literally lived and reigned with Christ 1000 years. Not 2000, not 5000, not forever, but 1000 years. Literal just does not add up. It won't stand the test of accuracy, it won't stand the test of context, it won't stand the test of content, it won't stand the test of faithfulness, and most important, it won't stand the test of Biblical consistency. It is blatantly contradictory with other scripture if we understand it as literal. It is no more a literal number than when God says He owns the sheep on 1000 hills means they are the only ones who are His. He owns them all. And this 1000 years is symbolic of that fulness. It's the time of the fulfilling of God's purpose for the Church.

It says they are Priests of God. Again, it's us. Having been raised up in Christ, we are all now Priests of God, through Christ.

### Revelation 1:5-6

- "And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the *first begotten of the dead*, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,
- And hath **made us kings and priests unto God** and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen".

He has given us rule as Kings and made us Priests unto God. Not will in the future, but has done this by shedding His blood, and that is what this verse is saying. We are those this calls Blessed, we are those made Holy by being washed from our sins in His blood. Born again from above, raised up from death unto life in His First Resurrection.

### VERSE SEVEN

- "And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison".

When God's purpose for binding Satan is over (*after the Church is complete and it's testimony finished -Rev. 11*) then God will loose him out of his spiritual prison and iniquity will again abound. This verse tells us that it's God's purpose that near the end of time, God has predetermined that Satan be unsecured from his prison and will deceive the gentiles again. The Apostasy which was prevalent at Christ's first coming, will be prevalent at His second coming. the fall of the congregation at Christ's first advent, is mirrored in His second advent! This is the judgment of God, as plagues poured out on man. And Satan being loosed, we read:

## VERSE EIGHT

- "And shall go out to deceive the nations that are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, the number of whom is as the sand of the sea".

As stated, Satan will once again go forth to deceive the nations from the four quarters of the earth. And note, though Some people would like you to believe that Gog and Magog here represent Russia, or some other nation, this is an untenable position once it is carefully compared with the Bible. And you have to go no further than this verse itself. It tells us clearly who Gog and Magog here represent. It says they are "*The nations which are in the four quarters of the earth*". It doesn't say Russia, or Libya, or any other nation. The Biblical definition is that, it is The nations or gentiles from the four quarters of the earth. In other words, all the peoples of the world. The number four is used in scripture to symbolize universality. All the gentiles coming against Israel. When Satan is loosed, he will go forth deceiving the gentiles of the world, to gather them together to battle the Saints, the same as he was doing when Christ came and bound him, so that He could build up Israel. {*HE that hath ears to hear, let him hear*}. These people of the world who Satan will deceive, are *typified*, or Signified by the Gog and Magog of biblical history because of what we read of them in the Old Testament. You might want to read Ezekiel Chapter 39. Gog and Magog came up to take the kingdom of Israel, and the Lord made an end of them there, leaving them for buzzard meat. And the Lord says that it was because of the iniquity of Israel that the Lord hid His face and that they went into captivity. ..And so it is the same picture for these in Revelation Chapter 20 who come up to fight the Faithful Church (the camp of the Saints), the Israel of God. It is because of the iniquity and unfaithfulness of the Church Israel that these will come up and trample under foot the house of God. Deceived of satan, these false prophets, like the false prophets of Old Testament Israel, will leave the congregation desolate, but for the remnant chosen by Grace. But in the end it will be the same as it was for Gog and Magog. They will be destroyed of God's judgment from heaven.

We should take note of a few important things about this verse, and also verse 3. It Tells us something clearly. Namely, (verse 3) Satan "was" going forth deceiving the nations or gentiles before Christ came and bound him so he could not do it for this time period. That is a little tidbit that the Premillennialist theorists would rather not consider. The fact that not only will Satan be loosed, but that he was "already loose" doing the same thing (*deceiving the gentiles*) **before** He was bound, throws their theories into confusion. Because it was for this reason that he was bound in the first place. Note "carefully" the language that he is bound "*that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled*". Clear language that he was deceiving the nations greatly before being bound, and he was bound that this deceiving stop for this 1000 years. But that is the thing that is unaccountable in their theory, because their theory is false! That Satan was bound so that the fullness of Gentiles (nations) be come in, is an integral part of the Gospel message. There is no other reason for him to be bound. i.e., so he could not hurt the New Covenant Church until it is completed, only then is he then "again" loosed, which is the prophesy of the end time.

And you may note once again other inconsistencies of the premillennialist doctrines. They reject Satan as having been bound at the cross because they say, "*if so, Satan wouldn't be doing such evil now in the world*". And yet they cannot explain how before he is bound, what prevents him from doing such great evil in the world? He would have had to been bound before, "ELSE" He was

loosed! Once again, it makes no sense. For if God was preventing Satan from bringing about this great tribulation period or time of evil all this time from the cross until now, then Satan was bound or restrained before they claim he was bound or restrained in their theory.

These Theologians simple cannot cohesively argue this contradiction of how Satan being loose before he was bound, and yet he was bound from bringing the great tribulation for 2000 years (since the cross). His being loose before He was bound doesn't fit into their eschatological Theories. For when he was loose (before he was bound) why wasn't there this great righteous period they speak of? Again, it's totally inconsistent and warped! The fact is, consistency of scripture demands that Satan be loose deceiving the nations twice. Once before he was bound, and then after he is loosed. Where is the other time of trouble and tribulation for the Church when Satan was loose? The Only answer is, before the Cross, when the Kingdom of God suffered violence (matt. 11:12), and before Jerusalem was comforted as her warfare was accomplished and iniquity pardoned. And according to scripture it was the cross of Christ which brought an end to that! The congregation travailed and pained to be delivered (rev 12) before Christ went to the cross. This was Satan's hour, and he was destroyed (brought down to idleness -Heb 2) by the death of Christ, and salvation gone out to the nations or gentiles. That's not speculation, that's clearly written in the scriptures.

If we insist on claiming the binding is future, then they **must** show two separate tribulation periods where Satan is going forth deceiving the nations, and a period of his having been bound in between. That would be some "trick" as God doesn't talk about any time of trouble, except before the Cross, and the great tribulation near the end of the world. ..which of course tends to support the binding of Satan which takes place at the Cross, which they reject! This is why the time before Christ, so consistently mirrors the time near the return of the Lord. It's God breathed!

If Satan had been loose all this time (2000 years have passed), and had not been bound, this deceiving that takes place near the end of the world (*when Satan is Loosed*) would have already taken place. The only alternative is to believe that Satan has been restraining "himself" ever since the cross? ..which is ridiculous! God is restraining him, God hath bound him that the great tribulation period couldn't occur until He loosed the seals. But don't listen to me, search the scriptures to see if this is a true statement. Examine the question. Look at what God says about this time of Great tribulation.

### **Matthew 24:22**

- "and except those days should be shortened, there should NO FLESH BE SAVED; but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened."

Do we really understand that this means that Satan has so greatly deceived the nations that if these days weren't shortened, there would not be any true Christians left on earth to be raised up in the air (1Thi<sup>2</sup> 4:17) when the Lord returned. Because all flesh on earth would have been deceived. This is "why" Satan had to be bound so tht this scenario would not happen until the Lord had built His New Covenant church. If Satan was not bound at the cross, this would have taken and all the nations (Revelation<sup>2</sup> 20:3) would have been deceived. It is only the binding of Satan by Christ that kept this from happening until the gentiles were brought in. Satan could not deceive the nations until near the end when the fulness of gentiles had come into the New Covenant with Israel. Only then, when the testimony of God's witnesses is near finished (Rev. 11:7) is he released to deceive again. And the reason he is loosed (which gets lost in the shuffle) is that the reason for his binding (Mt<sup>2</sup> 12:29 to Spoil his house) to bring Gentiles in has been completed. When all of God's servants have been sealed in their foreheads, all Israel has been Saved! Thus in this present millennial reign of Christ while Satan is bound, Christians should rejoice that this old Serpent called the Devil and Satann has had his power bound so that he is restrained that many of the gentile nations of the world would not be deceived, and can be called and chosen to believe in Christ.

Then will Satan marshal his army of deceivers and false prophets in a worldwide assault on the camp of the Saints (encampment of the Sanctified) and trample the Holy City of God under foot. And this tribulation is greater than any that has even been in the world before, or will be again "because" of God's removal of His hand of restraint! And the deceiving of Satan is so great, that except those days shall be shortened, there would be no true believer left in the flesh to be Saved in the Rapture. There would be no flesh on earth to Save when Christ returned. But Mercifully, (For the Elect's sake) God will shorten those days. The victory will be our Lord's, not Satan's. There "will be" a Rapture, and there will be those changed in an instant, in the twinkling of an eye. All will be fulfilled as it is Written.

### **Symbolism**

**4 Quarters of the earth** = Universality

**Gog and Magog** = Satan, prince of this world, and His

**Battle** = Men at war with God's word

The point of verse 8 is that Satan marshals the gentiles to warfare against spiritual Israel, the encampment of the Saints, and as Gog and magog came upon Israel, so these led by their prince Satan come against the Israel of God.

### **VERSE NINE**

- "And they went up on the breadth of the earth and compassed the camp of the Saints about, and the beloved city, and fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them".

This army as a plague goes up and surrounds the Saints. Again, the saints are the Believers. The word saint is the Greek word [*hagios*] which simply means Holy or sacred. It's those Sanctified! For example, in Revelation 20:6 where we read, "Blessed and **Holy** is he that hath part in the 1st resurrection", that word Holy there is the exact same word as translated Saints. So you see, the Blessed, the Holy, of the 1st Resurrection, are the believers. The camp of the Saints is where believers assemble. i.e., the Church! That is their encampment where this warfare takes place! It's the Beloved City. Not a literal City, but a Spiritual City Holy in Christ, which represents the Kingdom of God. When we read of the coming of Christ, God illustrates that:

#### **Isaiah 9:6**

- "For unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the Increase of His government and Peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of DAVID, and upon His Kingdom..."

This is Christ who rules upon the Throne of David. And David means "Beloved." Christ is ruler of the beloved City for He is the one that dwells in the midst of the city to make it beloved. Christ said, where two or three are gathered together in My name, there am I in the midst of them (*Matt. 18:20*). The camp of the Saints is beloved or Holy only because the saints are in Christ. As when God spoke to John the Baptist, saying, "*This is my Beloved Son.*" Christ is the Beloved City, and we (The Church) are the Body of Christ. That Word beloved applies to the saints or believers. Don't take my word, search the scriptures. In the exact same 2nd Thessalonians that talks about that loosing of the Iniquity that was bound or being restrained, God contrasts the "truly Saved" against those who are deceived saying:

#### **2nd Thessalonians 2:13**

- "But we are bound to give thanks always to God for YOU, brethren **Beloved** of the LORD, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through *sanctification* of the Spirit and belief of the truth!"

These are the Saints. This is the beloved city in Christ. These are the Chosen few, the Children (elect) of God. This is the encampment that Satan and his army come against when he is loosed. This is the Holy City!

### **Matthew 5:14**

- "Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid".

We are that Holy City there that Jesus talked about. Contrary to some Theologians hopes, it is not an earthly city in the middle east. It is the camp of the saints proclaiming the Gospel message from the highest hill. We are not ashamed of the truth of scripture.

In typology, in the Old Testament before the cross, earthly Jerusalem was spoken of as the Holy City, the literal Temple as the Holy Temple, the literal lamb as the Sacrifice lamb. But After the cross, all those things concerning ceremonial laws, and literal Buildings or Holy of Holies, Holy Cities, Animal sacrifices, going to earthly Jerusalem 3 times a year, etc., were all done away with. That is why it is incomprehensible how so many are still enamored by these former "types" in the middle east. They were shadows of Christ and his Kingdom. He came to fulfill those shadows, being the true. The Only Temple that is in view today is Christ. The Church being the representation of Christ is also spoken of as the Holy Temple. And True Christians having Christ dwell within them also are a Holy Temple. There are no other Holy Temples, after the cross. The only Holy place is the Place of the Lord. The Only Holy City is the City of the Saints, the Church. The Lord has something more important in view than a Temple building of literal Bricks and mortar or an earthly kingdom. What has that got to do with the gospel? The Lord has something more Important in view than a literal city somewhere that people "think" is somehow Holy. The Ceremonial law is over, the law of Christ is here. Circumcision is Over, Baptism is here. Slaughtering Lambs is over, the Lamb of GOD is here. Trips to a Holy City three times a year is over, the only Holy City we journey to is Christ. Anyone who doesn't understand this should learn the Parable of the Fig Tree, or study the parable of the vineyard and the householder. The Camp of the saints, is the Church. It's where the saints (Holy People) camp. When Satan is Loosed in verse 7, he will go forth to muster his army to assault the church (Great tribulation and persecution), but in the end, Fire from God will devour his Army. In other words, they shall suffer the judgment of God.

### **Symbolism**

**Beloved City** = The Church

**Fire From God** = God's Judgment

### **VERSE TEN**

- "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".

We are moving along rather quickly through the remaining verses, because I don't think that these last verses are really much in dispute by mainstream Christians. This verse is telling us that when Christ comes in Judgment, Satan (that serpent who had deceived the people of the world), was cast into the lake of fire (which is a synonym for Hell), the second death. This is where the beast and the false prophet have also been cast, and their judgment is to be tormented day and night forever.

Footnote: In regards to Hell, it never ceases to amaze me how some Christians can take clear scripture indicating severe "judgment" of God, and pretend that the words don't really exist, or that we need to wrest them to make it appear softer (*or what they call the act of a loving God*) and more Un-Judgmental. Man in his arrogance attempts to judge God's judgments and decide what is right for God to do and not do. i.e., judging by what is right in his own eyes.

## VERSE ELEVEN

- "And I saw a Great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them".

This is illustrating the end of the world and Great White throne Judgment where all must stand and give account of themselves for judgment. The throne is the seat of the King, and the color white symbolizes God's righteousness. It signifies that He Judgeth righteously. Heaven and earth fleeing away I believe signify the end of the world, as we see in other chapters. This sin cursed earth will be destroyed, and a New Heaven and a New earth wherein dwelleth righteousness is brought to pass.

## VERSE TWELVE

- "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; and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works".

All the world must stand before GOD to receive just deserts, and answer for their sins. They are judged out of one or the other book. The Unsaved are judged out of the book which has their deeds in it according to all that they have done in their lives. And since all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, they will all be subject to the wrath of God. But God indicates that there will be "degrees" of punishment, according to their knowledge of Him and his commandments (Luke 12:48).

The Saved (those written in the other book, the Book of Life) have already been judged for their sins. Their Sins were on Christ when He went to the cross, being made sin for them (2nd Cor. 5:21), and dying with those sins, when he rose, he rose without them. The Judgment had been satisfied (Isaiah 53:11). These who stand before God with their names righteously in the book, stand pure and clean and righteous, and without sin. When they are judged according to their works, there is only good works, because their works are in Christ. They will glorify God and so shall they be forever with the Lord!

## VERSE THIRTEEN

- "And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them, and they were judged every man according to their works".

There is none that will escape the wrath of God, nor the Righteous judgments of God. No matter how they have died, or how many pieces their bodies have been ground into, or burned to a few flakes, they will all be resurrected to stand before God and give account. And they will all be judged according to their works. Being at the bottom of the sea and being eaten by a hundred fish won't

prevent it. Killing oneself in suicide won't prevent it, being in the chains of darkness of hell won't prevent it, for everyone must stand before God and be judged. Not one shall escape.

## VERSE FOURTEEN

- "And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second Death".

Death is swallowed up in victory. There is no more death. Death is burned up in the lake of Fire, and likewise hell is burned in the lake of fire. Hell here is the estate of the wicked apart from God. For example when Jesus called the wicked "children of hell" (Matthew 23:15). It didn't mean they were actually in a place called Hell, but that their estate was of Hell. i.e., spiritually speaking they were of Hell, just as spiritually speaking, we are of heaven! But at this time, there is no more estate of Hell for man to be of, for it is cast into the literal Hell, the second death with all who were of it's estate! The estate being made the reality or essence of what hades or the hell where the dead were, merely signified.

## VERSE FIFTEEN

- "And whosoever was not found written in the book of Life, was cast into the lake of fire".

In other words, if your sins were not judged by Christ's Work, whereby your name is in the book of life, you will be judged by your works out of the book of your deeds. And every idle word you shall give account of, so that there is not one who is not under God's wrath. Anyone not washed clean in the blood of Christ will suffer the penalty for sin, and be cast into the Lake of Fire, which is the second death.

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## Overview

In Revelation Chapter 20 we see the Lord, the [*aggelos*] meaning messenger comes down from heaven to do that what He was prophesied to do. This is the Messenger of the Covenant come down to earth to bind Satan so that the Lord's temple could be built. God intends for us to understand this millennium following Christ's first advent is a spiritual length of time, not literal years. Amazing how no one questions the 70 weeks of daniel 9 as not literal lengths of time, but so many because of Church tradition irrationally balk at this thousand years as not a literal length.

This Chapter all goes along in a logical progression. This is evident from the repeated use of the Greek word [*kai*] (and) which is illustrative of a Chronological narrative. This is the entire New Testament Period! Clearly, the stated order of this chapter is;

1. The Messenger Christ coming down from heaven (20:1)
2. His triumphant binding of Satan, and putting of the Seal of God on Him that he is not be able to deceive the gentiles, as the mystery that the gentiles will be a part of Israel also is made manifest as Christ sends the Church to them in the ends of the world. For a time, the fulness of the gentiles will be able to come into Israel. The prophecy of Genesis 3:15 that Christ would bruise Satan's head was fulfilled in Christ's first coming. This was done at the cross. "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil" -1st John 3:8. And after this, his deadly head wound was healed, meaning Satan had to be loosed for a short period. (Rev 13:3, 20:3)

3. After the binding of Satan, John saw the Kingdom of God, he saw thrones upon which the souls of the believers who have died were and yet they lived and reigned with Christ in His kingdom. This is called the "First Resurrection". And they live and reign with him in His Kingdom for this time which is the fullness (20:4-5).
4. But the rest of the dead (Those who have died **but** were not raised up in the First Resurrection), these didn't live again in the Kingdom as the believers do. They live not again until after the time of the millennial reign of Christ, when they are raised to stand for judgment (20:5).
5. This time of the Kingdom of God is spoken of as 1,000 years, both for those who died and are reigning with Christ, and those who died and don't reign with Him. For it signifies the fullness of time (20:5).
6. Those who have died and are counted worthy to reign with Christ in His kingdom are called the Blessed and holy (20:6). Though they are dead, they live and reign with Christ during this fullness of time.
7. After the reign of the Church on earth is completed (the Church having come to the full), Satan is loosed of God (who hath put the seal on him) as a final judgment upon those who dwell on the earth. (20:7)
8. Satan shall then gather together the gentiles brought into bondage to satan, for warfare against Christ's kingdom. (20:8)
9. And he brings a sword up against the camp of the saints (saints are Christians) in warfare against them (20:9). But there Satan and his minions shall see their destruction in the judgment of God, as of fire from heaven.
10. Satan is then cast into the lake of Fire, and shall be tormented for ever (20:10).
11. Then is the White Throne Judgment, where all must stand and receive the wages of their transgressions (20:11). There is the second resurrection, where the dead (those who didn't have part in the First Resurrection) stand before God on His throne. The Books are opened, and all are judged out of what is in those books according to their works (20:12).
12. And whosoever was not found written in the book of Life, was cast into the lake of fire (which is the second death -20:14-15). This is the Final judgment

The entire chapter 20 of Revelation reads as one continuous Chronological narrative, and is distinctly what is today called Amillennialism. When looking at it carefully, you will see that the chapter represents the entire New Covenant or Testament Church period. It was for this reason that the Messenger of the Covenant came and bound satan that the gentiles might also be saved. It's a symbolic picture of what takes place from the first advent of Christ to His second advent. It's a thumb print of the whole New Covenant/Testament period. This biblically follows, as Christ indeed is the Messenger of the Covenant that was Prophesied should come from God and redeem Israel from the hand of the strong one. But we read, first He had to bind him! For Israel is made up of Jews and gentiles, all in one body, the body of Christ!

This chapter presents a period of time, designated as a thousand years (hence, millennium), during which Satan is restrained that the nations aren't deceived by Him. This then is a reference to the breaking of Satan's strong hold upon the gentile nations by the cross of Christ, to fulfil prophesy of this mystery.

### **Matthew 21:43**

- "Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof."

To the Jew first, and then to the Gentiles. And when the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, so all Israel shall be saved. There is no more. At the start of this period is a "resurrection" from death to life of the faithful, and translation into Christ's Kingdom. Following this millennial gathering into the Kingdom, Satan is released and for a short time there is a final rebellion on earth, and then there

is the second resurrection from the dead and the final destruction of Satan and his own. This is the synopsis of this most glorious chapter of Revelation.

May The Lord give us all the wisdom and understanding to discern the truth in the Study of His Holy word. And may we all go to scripture with an open mind to understand what it says in light of itself, and not in the light of Theologians' theories. For in the final analysis, God is the interpreter of His Word. And that word is of no private interpretation.

Peace,

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