

Revelation 20:1-10 | The Millennium

Introduction

Revelation 20:1-6 are some of the most disputed verses in Scripture. Our previous lesson detailed the different millennial views (premillennial, postmillennial, amillennial). The notes below represent *my premillennial* interpretation.

Verse-By-Verse Notes

Verses 1-3

- The angel John sees may likely be the same angel in chapter 9 who held the key to the abyss (bottomless pit). The bottomless pit is most likely a place of temporary incarceration for demons. A case can be made biblically that the very worst of the worst of demon spirits have been imprisoned there since their fall from heaven (see 2 Peter 2:4 & Jude 6)
- Satan is called by four names/titles in verse 2: *dragon*, *ancient serpent*, *devil* (accuser) and *Satan* (adversary).
- In verses 2 and 3, the extent of Satan's binding is *total* and *complete*, meaning that he will have *zero influence* on the world during the millennial kingdom. Also implied in Satan's binding is the entire demonic realm – no evil spirits will have influence during the millennial reign.
- There is no reason to read “the thousand years” as anything other than a *literal thousand years* (contra the other millennial positions which do not interpret it as a literal length of time (1000 years). John mentions the “thousand years” 6 times in 7 verses (20:1-7), clearly suggesting this is a normal 1000 year period of time.
- At the end of the millennial reign of Christ, Satan and the demonic realm will be released to lead one final global rebellion against Christ (more about that in verse 7).

Verses 4-6

- The “thrones” reference is not entirely clear as to who will occupy those thrones. Will it be the 12 Apostles (Matthew 19:28), believers in general (1 Corinthians 6:3; Revelation 2:26), or something else? Certainly is allusive, but at the very *least* it represents the kingly reign of Christ and His people during the millennium (see Revelation 5:10).
- John next sees the souls of martyred believers during the tribulation. They will be raised to life and will reign with Christ. This is the first resurrection. (See MacArthur below)
- John MacArthur: “Tribulation believers, along with the redeemed from both the OT and NT eras, will reign with Christ (1Co 6:2; 2Ti 2:12) during the 1,000 year kingdom. [The first resurrection] includes only the redeemed of the church age (1Th 4:13–18), the OT (Da 12:2), and the Tribulation (v. 4). They will enter the kingdom in resurrection bodies, along with believers who survived the Tribulation.”

- The “rest of the dead” refers to the unbelieving wicked who will be raised in the *second resurrection* – a resurrection unto *judgment* (see John 5:29; Daniel 12:2; Acts 24:15).
- Verse 6 again affirms the reign of the saints with Christ for a thousand years. They will not be touched by the “second death” (eternal death).
- John MacArthur describes the millennium this way: “A final blessing for the participants in the first resurrection is that they will reign with the Lord Jesus Christ for a thousand years, along with believers who survived the Tribulation. Politically and socially, the rule of Christ and His saints will be universal (Ps. 2:6–8; Dan. 2:35), absolute (Ps. 2:9; Isa. 11:4), and righteous (Isa. 11:3–5). Spiritually, their rule will be a time when the believing remnant of Israel is converted (Jer. 30:5–8; Rom. 11:26) and the nation is restored to the land God promised to Abraham (Gen. 13:14–15; 15:18). It will be a time when the Gentile nations also will worship the King (Isa. 11:9; Mic. 4:2; Zech. 14:16). The millennial rule of Christ and the saints will also be marked by the presence of righteousness and peace (Isa. 32:17) and joy (Isa. 12:3–4; 61:3, 7). Physically, it will be a time when the curse is lifted (Isa. 11:7–9; 30:23–24; 35:1–2, 7), when food will be plentiful (Joel 2:21–27), and when there will be physical health and well-being (Isa. 33:24; 35:5–6), leading to long life (Isa. 65:20).”

Verses 7-10

- At the end of the millennial reign of Christ, Satan and his horde will be released for the decisively final battle of good vs. evil.
- Gog and Magog are names given to the final world armies that unite against God. Gog and Magog were the names of OT adversaries of Israel. It is important to note that this is almost certainly *not* the Gog/Magog battle of Ezekiel 38-39. The names are used symbolically to typify the global enemies of God. See Paige Patterson’s explanation below:
 - o “Lamar Cooper, in the New American Commentary volume on Ezekiel, chronicles seven possible interpretations of the battle but finds in the end three major possibilities. The *first* is that Gog and Magog actually refers to the same battle by that name here in Revelation 20. The *second* views the battle as Armageddon at the close of the tribulation period, chronicled at the end of chap. 16. The *third* view is a combination of the first two, indicating that this final conflict of history occurs at two different times with an interim period of 1,000 years. Since it is impossible to identify *exactly* what Gog and Magog represent, one can declare that *they are presented in Ezekiel as the perennial enemy of the people of God*. This being the case, to find the concept of Gog and Magog applied also to this last battle of history, occurring at the end of the millennium, is not surprising.” (*emphasis mine*)
- The enemies of God will surround Jerusalem, the capital city of Christ’s earthly kingdom, and will be destroyed by divine judgment from heaven (fire).

- At the end of the final war, Satan himself is thrown into the lake of fire where he will join the Antichrist and false prophet who are already there.

BIG IDEA: “The insanity of evil stands out here—it cannot truly triumph over good, and thus Satan’s attempts to persuade humans to rebel against God are an exercise in futility. Yes, he brings many down with him, but at the end of the day he will be routed. We are reminded that all sin is ultimately a kind of insanity; it never makes sense. It brings no satisfaction or joy and never succeeds ultimately. Those who trust in the Lord and persevere in faith will have the greatest joys.” – Tom Schreiner