

15 – THE MILLENNIUM, THE JUDGMENT & ETERNITY (REVELATION 20:1-22:21)

Review:

A. The key verse (1:19)

- The key to understanding the book is found in Revelation 1:19

B. A basic outline

1. What You Have Seen (Chapter 1)
2. What is Now (Chapters 2-3)
3. What will take place later (Chapters 4-22)

C. A Basic Mindset

1. Don't be dogmatic about your interpretations.
2. Biblical prophecy only gives us a partial picture.

I. The Millennial Reign and the Great White Throne (Revelation 20:1-15)

A. The Millennial Reign of Christ (20:1-10)

Biblical Note: The Millennium

The Millennium refers to the millennial kingdom of Jesus Christ. This is the title given to the 1000-year reign of Jesus Christ on the earth. Six times in Revelation 20:2-7, the millennial kingdom is specifically said to be 1000 years in length. When Christ returns to the earth, He will establish Himself as king in Jerusalem, sitting on the throne of David (Luke 1:32–33). The unconditional covenants demand a literal, physical return of Christ to establish the kingdom. The Abrahamic Covenant promised Israel a land, a posterity and ruler, and a spiritual blessing (Genesis 12:1–3). The Palestinian Covenant promised Israel a restoration to the land and occupation of the land (Deuteronomy 30:1–10). The Davidic Covenant promised Israel a king from David's line who would rule forever—giving the nation rest from all their enemies (2 Samuel 7:10–13). It will be a time of peace (Micah 4:2–4; Isaiah 32:17–18), joy (Isaiah 61:7, 10), and comfort (Isaiah 40:1–2). The Bible also tells us that only believers will enter the millennial kingdom. Because of this, it will be a time of obedience (Jeremiah 31:33), holiness (Isaiah 35:8), truth (Isaiah 65:16), and the knowledge of God (Isaiah 11:9, Habakkuk 2:14). Christ will rule as king (Isaiah 9:3–7; 11:1–10). Nobles and governors will also rule (Isaiah 32:1; Matthew 19:28), and Jerusalem will be the political center of the world (Zechariah 8:3). The fulfillment of many of God's covenants and promises rests on a literal, physical, future kingdom. There is no solid basis for denying the literal interpretation of the millennial kingdom and its duration being 1000 years.

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1. The binding of Satan (20:1-3)
 - a. The great angel (20:1)
 - John sees a great angel with a key to the abyss and a large chain.
 - b. Satan is bound (20:2a)
 - The great angel takes Satan and binds him with the chain.
 - c. The duration and place of binding (20:2b-3a)
 - Satan is bound for a thousand years and cast into the abyss.
 - d. The purpose of the binding (20:3b)
 - Satan is bound so that he cannot deceive the nations.
2. The resurrection and reward of the martyrs (20:4-6)
 - a. The resurrection of the martyrs (20:4)
 - John sees the resurrection of the righteous dead as they reign with Christ.
 - b. The time of the resurrection of the wicked (20:5)
 - The wicked are not raised during this thousand year reign.
 - c. The blessing of the first resurrection (20:6)
 - Those who take part in this resurrection will be truly blessed.

Biblical Note: The First Resurrection

Revelation 20:4-6 mentions a “first resurrection” and identifies those involved as “blessed and holy.” It is the raising of all believers. It corresponds with Jesus’ teaching of the “resurrection of the just” (Luke 14:14) and the “resurrection of life” (John 5:29). The first resurrection takes place in various stages. Jesus Christ Himself (the “first fruits,” 1 Corinthians 15:20), paved the way for the resurrection of all who believe in Him. There was a resurrection of the Jerusalem saints (Matthew 27:52-53) which should be included in our consideration of the first resurrection. Still to come are the resurrection of “the dead in Christ” at the Lord’s return (1 Thessalonians 4:16) and the resurrection of the martyrs at the end of the Tribulation (Revelation 20:4). The event which begins the first resurrection is the millennial kingdom.

3. The final doom of Satan (20:7-10)
 - a. The release of Satan (20:7-8)

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- Satan is released to deceive the nations against Christ.

b. The final battle (20:9)

- The nations gather against the Saints and are destroyed instantly.

Biblical Note: Gog and Magog

Magog was a grandson of Noah (Genesis 10:2). The descendants of Magog settled to the far north of Israel, likely in Europe and northern Asia (Ezekiel 38:2). Magog seems to be used to refer to "northern barbarians" in general, but likely also has a connection to Magog the person. The people of Magog are described as skilled warriors (Ezekiel 38:15; 39:3-9). Gog and Magog are referred to in Ezekiel 38-39 and in Revelation 20:7-8. While these two instances carry the same names, they do not refer to the same people and events. In Ezekiel's prophecy, Gog will be the leader of a great army that attacks the land of Israel. Gog is described as "of the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal" (Ezekiel 38:2-3). Ezekiel's battle of Gog and Magog occurs in the tribulation period, more specifically in the first 3 1/2 years. The strongest evidence for this view is that the attack will come when Israel is at peace (Ezekiel 38:8, 11). The description from Ezekiel is that of a nation that has security and has laid down its defenses. Possibly the battle will occur just before the midpoint of the seven-year period. According to Ezekiel, Gog will be defeated by God Himself on the mountains of Israel. The slaughter will be so great it will take seven months to bury all of the dead (Ezekiel 39:11-12). Gog and Magog are mentioned again in Revelation 20:7-8. The duplicated use of the names Gog and Magog in Revelation 20:8-9 is to show that these people demonstrate the same rebellion against God and antagonism toward God as those in Ezekiel 38-39. The book of Revelation uses Ezekiel's prophecy about Magog to portray a final end-times attack on the nation of Israel (Revelation 20:8-9). The result of this battle is that all are destroyed, and Satan will find his final place in the lake of fire (Revelation 20:10). Therefore in the Book of Revelation, Gog and Magog refer to all the ungodly nations of the earth who oppose the people of God.

c. The judgment of Satan (20:10)

- Satan is cast into the Lake of Fire for eternity.

B. The Judgment of the Great White Throne (20:11-15)

1. The resurrection and judgment of the wicked dead (20:11-13)

a. The Great White Throne (20:11)

- John sees a Great White Throne and the terrifying One who sat on it.

Biblical Note: The Great White Throne

The Great White Throne is the final judgment prior to the lost being cast into the lake of fire. This judgment will take place after the millennium and after Satan, the beast, and the false prophet are thrown into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:7-10). The books that are opened (Revelation 20:12) contain records of everyone's deeds, whether they are good or

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evil, because God knows everything that has ever been said, done, or even thought, and He will reward or punish each one accordingly (Psalm 28:4; 62:12; Romans 2:6; Revelation 2:23; 18:6; 22:12). Also at this time, another book is opened, called the “book of life” (Revelation 20:12). It is this book that determines whether a person will inherit eternal life with God or receive everlasting punishment in the lake of fire.

b. The judgment of the dead (20:12-13)

- The books and the book of Life are opened.
- All of the wicked dead are judged according to their works.

2. The Lake of Fire (20:14-15)

a. The destruction of Death and Hades (20:14)

- All forces of evil cease to exist in the presence of God.

b. The destruction of the wicked (20:15)

- All who are not found in the book of Life are cast into the Lake of Fire.

II. The New Heaven and New Earth (Revelation 21:1-22:5)

A. The New Heaven and New Earth Created (21:1)

1. The new heaven and earth (21:1a)

- John sees a new heaven and a new earth.

2. The old heaven and earth (21:1b)

- The old heaven and old earth had passed away.

B. The New Jerusalem Described (21:2-8)

1. John’s vision of the city (21:2)

- John sees the emergence of the city as a bride for Christ.

2. The loud voice from heaven (21:3-4)

a. The presence of God (21:3)

- The voice announces that God Himself will dwell with the saints.

b. No more sorrow and pain (21:4)

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- There will no longer be any pain or sorrow.

3. The One who sat on the Throne (21:5-8)

a. The proclamation (21:5)

- He proclaims that He will make all things new.

b. The promise (21:6-7)

- He proclaims the promise of Salvation to those who overcome.

c. The judgment (21:8)

- The wicked will experience eternal judgment.

C. The New Jerusalem as the Bride (21:9-11)

1. The angel shows John the Bride (21:9)

- An angel shows John the city as a Bride.

2. The bride described (21:10-11)

- The city is spectacular as it descends from God.

D. The New Jerusalem as the City (21:12-27)

1. The description of the city (21:12-21)

- John sees a great spectacular city.

2. No temple (21:22)

- The new city has no temple because God dwells in their midst.

3. The light of the city (21:23)

- There is no need for light because the presence of God illuminates the city.

Scripture Isaiah 60:19-20

¹⁹ “The sun shall no longer be your light by day,
Nor for brightness shall the moon give light to you;
But the LORD will be to you an everlasting light,
And your God your glory.

²⁰ Your sun shall no longer go down,
Nor shall your moon withdraw itself;
For the LORD will be your everlasting light,

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And the days of your mourning shall be ended.

4. The glory of the nations (21:24-26)

- The glory and tribute of the nations is brought to the city.

5. The inhabitants (21:27)

- The saved will inhabit the city.

E. The River of the Water of Life (22:1-2a)

- John sees the river of life proceed from the throne of the Lamb.

F. The Tree of Life (22:2b)

- John sees the Tree of Life which brings healing.

G. The Throne of God (22:3-4)

- John sees the throne of God.

- The inhabitants will see the face of God.

H. The Saints' Reign with God (22:5)

- The saints will rule with God forever and ever.

III. The Final Word (Revelation 22:6-21)

A. The Certainty of the Return of Christ (22:6-7)

1. The surety of the prophecy (22:6a)

- The angel proclaims that all that John has seen is true.

2. The purpose of the prophecy (22:6b)

- The prophecy was given to show that which will take place shortly.

3. The promise (22:7)

- Christ promises to return quickly.

- A blessing is bestowed on those who hold to the prophecy.

B. The Worship by John (22:8-9)

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1. John worships the angel (22:8)
 - John responds to the words by worshipping the angel.
 2. The rebuke of the angel (22:9)
 - The angel rebukes John and tells him to worship God only.
- C. The Command to Proclaim the Prophecy of the Book (22:10-11)
1. The prophecy is not to be sealed (22:10)
 - This prophecy is not to be hidden.
 2. The response to the prophecy (22:11)
 - Those who do not heed the prophecy will continue in their wickedness.
 - Those who heed the prophecy will continue to do right.
- D. The Coming Judgment and Reward (22:12)
 - Christ is returning to give everyone their just reward.
- E. The Eternal Christ (22:13)
 - Christ proclaims Himself as Eternal God.
- F. The Coming Blessing and Judgment (22:14-15)
1. The blessing (22:14)
 - Those who persevere will inherit eternal life.
 2. The judgment (22:15)
 - The wicked will have no part in eternal life.
- G. The Invitation of the Spirit and the Bride (22:16-17)
1. Jesus identifies Himself (22:16)
 - Jesus identifies Himself as to one who sent His angels to proclaim the prophecy.
 2. The call to salvation (22:17)
 - The call is given to those who are searching to come.

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H. The Final Warning (22:18-19)

- The one who reject the book by altering it will be judged severely.

I. The Prayer and Promise (22:20-21)

- Jesus promises to come quickly.