

sermon study summary

Revelation Part 24 – The Millennium

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Revelation 20 makes six references to the millennium, a 1000-year period when righteousness abounds under the Kingship of Jesus Christ. The key events described in this chapter are:

Part 1. Satan is bound. In chapter 19, John saw Jesus defeat his enemies and saw the beast and the false prophet thrown into the lake of fire. The greatest enemy, the dragon or Satan Himself, is dealt with in chapter 20 (v.1-3). An angel comes down from heaven with a key and a long chain, binds Satan and throws him into the Abyss to await final sentencing. The Abyss is then locked and sealed for a thousand years.

Part 2. God's people reign with Christ. In v.4 John saw seated on thrones people who had been given authority to judge. Who are they? Daniel 7:18-27 says "the kingdom will be given to the saints," referring to the OT saints. In Matthew 19:28 Jesus says "you who have followed Me" are going to reign one day. In addition, Rev 20:4 says those who embraced Christ by faith during the tribulation period will also reign with Christ for a thousand years.

The first resurrection (v.5-6) is the resurrection of believers. The second resurrection, of unbelievers, will occur after the millennium.

PART 3. Satan is released and ultimately defeated. When the 1000 years are over (v.7), Satan will be released from the Abyss. He will deceive the nations and lead them in a final rebellion against God (battle of Gog and Magog). Then fire will come down from heaven and devour them, and Satan will be thrown into the lake of fire (v.10).

PART 4. Great White Throne Judgment (v.11). Unbelievers will be brought before God to be judged and sent to hell.

Sincere Bible-believing Christians disagree on WHEN these four events occur.

PREMILLENNIALISM interprets Revelation literally and in the sequence described in chapters 19 and 20. All believers who have died are physically resurrected at the time of the rapture as described in 1 Thess 4:13-18 BEFORE the millennium. Then Jesus comes back in power and glory (ch.19), and Satan is bound in the Abyss (ch.20) unable to deceive and influence men. The tribulations saints also are resurrected. Believers who survive the tribulation will enter into Christ's earthly kingdom with mortal bodies, marry and have children.

After the 1000 yr period those who rejected Christ will be raised in the second resurrection and brought before the Great White Throne. Those whose names are not written in the book of life are thrown into the lake of fire or hell, after which comes the new heaven and new earth.

AMILLENNIALISM, meaning no millennium, teaches that the millennium is now—between the first and second comings of Christ. It interprets the 1000 years not as a physical earthly reign or literal 1000 years, but as a symbolic description of the present church age in which Christ rules in the hearts of His people until He returns. Amillennialists believe Satan was defeated and bound through the cross of Christ. They also believe, however, that Satan is not totally out of the picture; he is still able to deceive and oppress believers and will do so in a progressively greater way as we approach Christ's second coming. They believe we will live and reign with Christ on the NEW earth as described in Revelation 21 and 22.

POSTMILLENNIALISM teaches that before Jesus returns there will be a long period (millennium) when the gospel of Jesus Christ will have such an impact that Satan, in effect, is bound. Satan's influence will diminish and a significant portion of our world will become followers of Christ. THEN Christ will return.

Let us seek unity among Christians on the essential truths (deity of God the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit, Jesus' resurrection, and salvation through Christ), not on the disputable matters like the different views on the Millennium. Let us pursue the mission God has given us today, which is to introduce people to Jesus and disciple them to become fully devoted followers of Christ.

sermon study guide

IN – PURSUE RELATIONSHIP

1. If you could design a perfect world for 1,000 years, what would it look like?
2. What's the value of hoping for peace and harmony on Earth?

UP – PURSUE GOD

Read *Revelation 20:1-10* and *1 Thessalonians 4:13-18*.

3. What does Revelation 20 say about what happens to Satan during the 1,000 years? Describe the "first resurrection." Who will reign with Christ (Daniel 7:18-27; Matthew 19:28; Revelation 20:4-6)?
4. What happens at the end of the millennium? What is the purpose of Revelation 20's prophecy?

OUT – PURSUE MISSION

5. How do the Bible's essential teachings below and the Revelation 20 prophecy impact how we live and share our faith today?
 - a. The deity of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, and that He reigns
 - b. The resurrection of Jesus Christ, the atonement, the way of salvation, and justification by God's grace alone through faith alone and in Christ alone
 - c. Jesus is coming again
6. How can we promote unity and keep our focus on essential truths despite differences?

For Personal Reflection / Prayer:

How does the promise of Christ's return and reign impact how you live today?

THE WORD (NIV)

Revelation 20:1-10

And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain. ²He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. ³He threw him into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him, to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended. After that, he must be set free for a short time.

⁴I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony about Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years. ⁵(The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.) This is the first resurrection. ⁶Blessed and holy are those who share in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years.

⁷When the thousand years are over, Satan will be released from his prison ⁸and will go out to deceive the nations in the four corners of the earth—Gog and Magog—and to gather them for battle. In number they are like the sand on the seashore. ⁹They marched across the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of God's people, the city he loves. But fire came down from heaven and devoured them. ¹⁰And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

¹³Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope. ¹⁴For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. ¹⁵According to the Lord's word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. ¹⁶For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. ¹⁷After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. ¹⁸Therefore encourage one another with these words.