

20231203 Reigning with Christ

Revelation 20:1-15

¹ And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain.

² He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years.

³ He 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.

⁴ I 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.

⁶ Blessed 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.

⁷ When the thousand years are over, Satan will be released from his prison

⁸ and 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.

⁹ They 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.

¹⁰ And 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.

¹¹ Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. The earth and the heavens fled from his presence, and there was no place for them.

¹² And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books.

¹³ The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what they had done.

¹⁴ Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death.

¹⁵ Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire.

Three sub-divisions in chapter 20

1. The millennial kingdom on earth. It's God's earthly kingdom of one thousand years.

2. The last rebellion of humanity against God. At the end of the millennial kingdom, there will be the last revolt of human beings against God.

3. The final judgement. After the millennial kingdom of God, before a new heaven and a new earth, there will be God's final judgement upon those who rejected God's grace and truth.

The millennial kingdom of God

4 different views on the Millennial Kingdom

1. Amillennialistic view

2. Post-millennialistic view

3. Pre-millennialistic view

(1) Historic pre-millennialistic view

(2) Dispensational pre-millennialistic view

No Satan to deceive humanity in the Millennial Kingdom

Revelation 20:2

² He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years.

Satan will be loose for a short time after the Millennial Kingdom

Revelation 20:3

³ He (an angel) threw him (Satan) 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.**

John sees two groups of people

Group one: those who will be seated on thrones: the Church – given authority to judge the world and the angels

Group two: those who are martyred during the Great Tribulation period – these will reign with Christ for a thousand years.

Revelation 20:4

⁴ **I 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.

The First Resurrection

Revelation 20:5-6

⁵ (The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.) This is the first resurrection.

⁶ Blessed 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.

Who are in the First Resurrection

1. Jesus Christ
2. Many holy people (maybe of the Old Testament saints and of those who died in Jesus' time with faith)

Matthew 27:50-53

⁵⁰ And when Jesus had cried out again in a loud voice, he gave up his spirit.

⁵¹ At that moment the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. The earth shook, the rocks split

⁵² and the tombs broke open. The bodies of many holy people who had died were raised to life.

⁵³ They came out of the tombs after Jesus' resurrection and went into the holy city and appeared to many people.

3. The Church

1 Thessalonians 4:15-17

¹⁵ **According 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.

¹⁶ For 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.

¹⁷ After 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.

4. The two witnesses of God during the Great Tribulation period

Revelation 11:11-12

¹¹ But after the three and a half days the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and terror struck those who saw them.

¹² Then they heard a loud voice from heaven saying to them, "Come up here." And they went up to heaven in a cloud, while their enemies looked on.

5. The Great Tribulation saints

Revelation 20:4-6

6. The Old Testament saints

Daniel 12:2

² Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake: some to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt.

Compare to Revelation 20:13

¹³ The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what they had done.

Isaiah 26:19

¹⁹ But your dead will live, LORD; their bodies will rise— let those who dwell in the dust wake up and shout for joy— your dew is like the dew of the morning; the earth will give birth to her dead.