

The Millennial Reign of Christ upon Earth

Study 20. Revelation 20:1-6

By James T. Bartsch, WordExplain.com

A. IMPRISONMENT. An Angel's 1000-year-long binding of Satan in the Abyss to prevent his program of international deception. 20:1-3

1. John saw an angel descending. From what place was he descending? 20:1a

2. He held two things
 - a. The key to what place? _____¹
 - b. And what else? _____
3. What reptile did he lay hold of? 20:2a _____
4. This reptile is also known as
 - a. The _____ of old
 - b. Who is the _____
 - c. And _____
5. What did the angel do with the chain? 20:2b _____
_____ for how long? _____²

¹ 20:1, 3 - abyss: Having disposed of the human armies at war with the returning Messiah (Rev. 19:11-21), God turns His attention to the supernatural opposition, Satan himself. An angel is given the power and authority to chain Satan in the abyss (Grk. *abussos*), which is evidently a deep place, the location of which is unknown. Certain fallen angels are temporarily imprisoned in the abyss (Luke 8:31; Revelation 9:1-2, 11), and some will later be released to perform a role on earth. The evil spirit inhabiting the Antichrist emerges from the abyss (Rev. 17:8). The final destination for Satan and his angels is the Lake of Fire and Brimstone (Matthew 25:41; Rev. 20:10).

² 20:2 - a thousand years: Most commentators do not take this number literally. They think it refers to a lengthy period of time. Many, for example, believe that we are presently reigning with Christ as He rules earth from heaven above. But the reign of Christ must take place upon the earth. He is, after all, the King of Israel. And the land of Israel is not up in heaven. It is much more plausible to take the thousand years as future and literal. Christ will return to this earth and He will reign from Jerusalem as the King of Israel and King of the earth for one thousand years. I do not know of a number in the book of Revelation that is not to be taken literally. 7 angels means 7 angels, not 6 or 8. 7 churches are 7 churches, not 20. 144,000 = 144,000. 1000 = 1000. How many times does John use the number "thousand" in Rev. 20:1-7? Supposing, for the sake of the argument, that John actually meant a thousand to mean a literal

6. Where did he throw him? 20:3a _____
7. Why did he throw him in there? 20:3b _____

8. What would happen to Satan after that time period? 20:3c _____

B. RESURRECTION AND REIGN. The judgment and resurrection of Tribulation saints to be priests who reign with Christ 20:4-6

1. What did John see next? 20:4a _____
2. What authority was given to those sitting on the thrones? ³ 20:4b

3. What did John see next? 20:4b The _____ ⁴ of those who had been
_____. Four reasons are given for their fate. They had
been killed ... (20:4c)
 - a. Because of their _____ of Jesus
 - b. Because of the _____ of _____
 - c. Because they had not worshiped the _____ or his _____
 - d. And because they had not received the _____ on their _____ -
_____ and on their _____. ⁵
4. Even though these “souls” had been beheaded during the Tribulation, two remarkable things suddenly happened to them! What are they? 20:4d

thousand. How would he have stated it differently? We had better take John and the Bible at face value here.

³ 20:4 - they sat on them: John did not identify those sitting as judges upon the thrones. However, Jesus predicted that the twelve disciples would one day sit on thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel (Matthew 19:28; Luke 22:29-30).

⁴ 20:4 - souls: The Greek word is *psuchē* (5590), from which we derive our English word psyche. In this context *psuchē* refers to the immaterial part of man. Even though these “souls” did not have physical bodies, John could see them.

⁵ 20:4 - beast, image, mark: See Revelation 13 to review the oppressive and deadly rule of the beast – the world ruler – the false Messiah.

- a. They _____
- b. They _____ with Christ. ⁶ How long? _____
5. Blessings foretold upon those who participate in the first resurrection. 20:5-6
- a. Who was resurrected *after* the one-thousand year reign of Christ? 20:5a
_____. This second resurrection will be described in 20:12-15.
- b. John distinguishes between two different resurrections. Those who had been beheaded and then resurrected to reign with Christ for a thousand years had taken part in the _____ resurrection. ⁷ 20:5b
- c. How is someone who participates in the first resurrection described? 20:6a
- 1) _____
- 2) _____

⁶ 20:4 - they reigned with Christ: These Tribulation saints, who had sacrificed their lives to remain true to the King, Jesus, will be rewarded by the King in reigning with Him on earth for a thousand years. In my view, OT saints like Moses, David, Elijah, and even John the Baptist will also be resurrected at this time (Dan. 12:2). But this text in Revelation does not tell us so.

⁷ 20:5 - first resurrection: Those believers in Christ who have been killed during the Tribulation are raised from the dead to assist Christ in His 1000 year reign. As believers, they are participants in the First Resurrection. There are two categories of resurrection, one for the righteous and another for the wicked (Daniel 12:2; John 5:28-29). All believers of all dispensations (ages) are partakers of the first resurrection, a resurrection to "everlasting life" (Dan. 12:2a). All unbelievers of all ages participate in the second resurrection, the resurrection to "disgrace and everlasting contempt" (Dan. 12:2b). The "first resurrection" (Rev. 20:5) refers to a resurrection to life. The second death has no power over those who participate in the first resurrection (20:6). There is a subsequent resurrection to eternal death and damnation (20:11-15).

The **first resurrection**, a resurrection to life, takes place in stages: (1) Christ Himself inaugurated the first resurrection. He is "the first fruits of those who are asleep" (1 Corinthians 15:20). (2) The dead in Christ (those who have died during the Church age) will be resurrected at the Rapture, when Christ comes to take His bride, the Church, back up to heaven (John 14:1-3; 1 Corinthians 15:50-53; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18). (3) There is another resurrection at the end of the Tribulation, preparatory to the Millennial Kingdom. Saints who have died during the Tribulation will be resurrected (Rev. 20:4), as will Old Testament saints (Daniel 12:2), for example, David (Jeremiah 30:9; Ezekiel 34:23-24; 37:24-25; Hosea 3:5), and Job (19:25-27). All these take part in the first resurrection.

The implied **second resurrection** appears to consist of but one general resurrection for the wicked dead of all ages (Rev. 20:11-15). It will occur after the destruction by fire of the existing universe (2 Peter 3:7-12; Rev. 20:11), and is detailed in Rev. 20:11-15. I urge the reader to place his faith in Jesus so that he might partake of the first resurrection. All who do so are blessed, because over them, the Second Death has no power (Rev. 20:6; cf. 20:11-15)!

- d. What are the blessings stated about he who participates in the first resurrection? 20:6b
- 1) The _____ has no power over them. 20:6c
 - 2) They will be _____ of God and Christ. 20:6d
 - 3) They will _____ with Christ for a _____ years! 20:6e
- C. What are Some OT Passages that Speak of Christ's 1000-Year Reign?
1. What do we learn from Isaiah 2:1-4?
 2. What do we learn from Isaiah 9:6-7?
 3. What do we learn from Isaiah 11?
 4. What do we learn from Isaiah 60?
 5. Read Luke 4:14-20. Why did Jesus quit where he did? To answer this question, you need to read the whole chapter of Isaiah 61.

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