

Rev. 20:1 And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.

Rev. 20:2 And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,

Rev. 20:3 And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.

Now John sees an angel come down from heaven (the abode of God)—another affirmation that heaven is up in relationship to the earth. This angel has the key, the device controlling the entrance and exit, to the bottomless pit. He also carries a great chain. He seizes Satan and binds/restrains him with the chain and throws him into the bottomless pit to stay for a thousand years. He will not be able to accuse, deceive, or tempt mankind during the thousand years that Jesus is on the throne before time as we know it is no more. He is locked up and sealed with a special mark to preserve him until his “last opportunity” to deceive mankind once again.

Note that an angel is *given* the key to the bottomless pit in chapter 9 and the angel in chapter 20 comes out of heaven with the key. The One in control of the key is obviously the One in control of heaven—and the rest of creation—God. He is permitting use of the key in accordance with the fulfillment of His purposes.

After allowing man to experience the wonder of a thousand years of righteous judgment and peaceful existence, Satan will be given one more opportunity of short duration to deceive men and prove the true allegiance of the hearts of men.

The wording in verse two is almost identical to the wording found in chapter 12, verse 9: *And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.*

Rev. 20:4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and *I saw* the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received *his* mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.

These verses mark the establishment of the government that will characterize the Lord’s kingdom. Jesus will appoint rulers to assist Him from those who had proven their faith and died as martyrs during the tribulation period. They had been beheaded during the tribulation because of their witness of Jesus and the Word of God; they had not worshipped the beast or his image or received his mark in their foreheads or hands. These saints are going to live and reign with Christ a thousand years.

We also know that the 12 apostles will rule the 12 tribes of Israel, so these saints must rule outside the kingdom of Israel.

***Matthew 19:28** And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*

Rev. 20:5 But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.

Rev. 20:6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

Now John tells us that the rest of the dead will not live again until the thousand years are completed; the resurrection of the tribulation saints completes the first resurrection. This implies to me that everyone who accepts Jesus as Lord and Savior during the millennial kingdom will experience the same transformation to immortality that the raptured saints experienced prior to the tribulation.

Verse six goes on to tell us that those who have part in the first resurrection will not be affected by the second death—spiritual death, separation from God forever. Those who are part of the first resurrection will be priests of God and of Christ AND shall reign with Him for the thousand years.

There appears to be a distinction made between those on the thrones in verse 4 and those who will be priests of God and Christ and will reign. This seems to be a description of a “royal priesthood” as referenced in Peter’s letter.

***1 Peter 2:9** But ye are a chosen generation, a **royal priesthood**, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light.*

This is the position of those in the church as referenced in **Rev. 1:6**: *And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.*

We also have to remember that Israel was promised a position as priests.

***Isaiah 61:6** But ye shall be named the Priests of the LORD: men shall call you the Ministers of our God: ye shall eat the riches of the Gentiles, and in their glory shall ye boast yourselves.*

We can’t all be on thrones, but we will all be in positions of service and leadership in the millennial kingdom it would appear. It would seem to me that a “royal priesthood” would be in positions of spiritual leadership as opposed to governmental leadership.

Revelation doesn’t tell us about the millennium; we have to go to other scripture for that. **Some** of the verses that describe this time are:

Isaiah 2:2-4 *And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.*

Isaiah 11:6-9 *The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.*

Isaiah 65:19-25 *And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying. There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed. And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the LORD, and their offspring with them. And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the LORD.*

Ezekiel 34:22-31 *Therefore will I save my flock, and they shall no more be a prey; and I will judge between cattle and cattle. And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd. And I the LORD will be their God, and my servant David a prince among them; I the LORD have spoken it. And I will make with them a covenant of peace, and will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land: and they shall dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods. And I will make them and the places round about my hill a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down in his season; there shall be showers of blessing. And the tree of the field shall yield her fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase, and they shall be safe in their land, and shall know that I am the LORD, when I have broken the bands of their yoke, and delivered them out of the hand of those that served themselves of them. And they shall no more be a prey to the heathen, neither shall the beast of the land devour them; but they shall dwell safely, and none shall make them afraid. And I will raise up for them a plant of renown, and they shall be no more consumed with hunger in the land, neither bear the shame of the heathen any more. Thus shall they know that I the LORD their God am with them, and that they, even the house of Israel, are my people,*

saith the Lord GOD. And ye my flock, the flock of my pasture, are men, and I am your God, saith the Lord GOD.

Mic. 4:1-7 But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more. But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the LORD of hosts hath spoken it. For all people will walk every one in the name of his god, and we will walk in the name of the LORD our God for ever and ever. In that day, saith the LORD, will I assemble her that halteth, and I will gather her that is driven out, and her that I have afflicted; And I will make her that halted a remnant, and her that was cast far off a strong nation: and the LORD shall reign over them in mount Zion from henceforth, even for ever.

Zechariah 14:8-11 And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea: in summer and in winter shall it be. And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one. All the land shall be turned as a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem: and it shall be lifted up, and inhabited in her place, from Benjamin's gate unto the place of the first gate, unto the corner gate, and from the tower of Hananeel unto the king's winepresses. And men shall dwell in it, and there shall be no more utter destruction; but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited.

Zechariah 14:16 And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. And it shall be, that whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain. And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that have no rain; there shall be the plague, wherewith the LORD will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles. This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.

Matthew 19:27 Then answered Peter and said unto him, Behold, we have forsaken all, and followed thee; what shall we have therefore? And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life. But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first.

Some of the observations from the above scriptures are:

- The Lord will be King over the earth.

- Obedient Israel will be regathered to the land God promised Abraham and will be respected and prosperous.
- Creation will be at peace (wolf with lamb, calf with lion, etc.)
- The earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord.
- The wilderness and desert will bloom; the earth will be fruitful.
- There will be no war on earth.

Most of the verses about the millennium center on the blessings of restored Israel, but there is certainly enough stated to know that it will be a time of peace and righteous judgment among all the nations such as has never been experienced on planet earth before.

Rev. 20:7 **And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison,**

After the thousand years, Satan will be let out of his prison. The Greek for *loosed* is from the word that means to “break forth, burst, tear.” He is eager for one more parting shot. I believe it will be a time of proving for all those that have professed allegiance to the Lord similar to that referenced by Moses in Deuteronomy.

Deuteronomy 13:1–3** If there arise among you a prophet, or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, And the sign or the wonder come to pass, whereof he spake unto thee, saying, Let us go after other gods, which thou hast not known, and let us serve them; Thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet, or that dreamer of dreams: **for the LORD your God proveth you, to know whether ye love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul.

Frankly, I believe the purpose for some of things that the Lord allows in our lives is for that very purpose—to prove us. Those times of “proving” tell the Lord nothing; He can see right into our hearts.

***1 Samuel 16:7** “...for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart.”*

Those times of proving serve to reveal to us the true condition of our hearts before God and give us the opportunity to respond according to that revelation.

Rev. 20:8 **And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.**

This verse is the most unbelievable verse to me in all of scripture. I mean, I know it is true, but I just can’t believe that mankind will once again be that stupid—especially after experiencing the rule of Jesus Christ over a peaceful, prosperous worldwide kingdom. The fact that Satan is able to gather together an army that is innumerable (“as the sand of the sea”) just boggles the mind.

I have no clue as to identifying Gog and Magog, except that it appears to be the same spiritual entity from the same area who led the invasion described in Ezekiel 38-39. I do not believe this is the same as the battle of Gog and Magog in Ezekiel 38-39 because of the things that are ascribed to the aftermath of that battle (e.g., using the weapons as fuel for 7 years, burying the dead, etc.

Rev. 20:9 And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.

It would seem that the focus of Satan and his armies will be the city of Jerusalem in particular. I'm not sure what is meant by the "camp of the saints." I would assume that all those who Satan was not able to recruit would compose the camp of the saints. Does this mean that there are several attack points? It really doesn't matter because Satan and his armies are destroyed by fire from God out of heaven.

Rev. 20:10 And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

Next John sees the deceiver, Satan, cast into the lake of fire and brimstone to join the beast and false prophet (who have already been there 1000 years) and where he will be tormented day and night forever. I can read it and understand it, but I'm just not sure I can really comprehend it.

Rev. 20:11 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

This must be an amazing sight to John; heaven and earth are not in the picture. He sees Jesus sitting on God's great white throne of judgment positioned in a dimension outside the confines of our universe. We know it is God in the person of His Son Jesus because He has delegated all judgment to the Son.

John 5:22-23 "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: That all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father. He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him."

Rev. 20:12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is *the book of life*: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

We learned in verse six that the dead referred to here were those who could not participate in the first resurrection. That indicated to me that their judgment was already certain, but each one is going to have his/her time of reckoning before God.

“The books were opened” – It would seem that it required many books to record the deeds/ works of the dead. Twice John records that these people are judged according to their works, and scripture reveals that will result in eternal condemnation.

John 6:28–29 Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered and said unto them, **This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent.**

John 3:17–18 For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: **but he that believeth not is condemned already**, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

2 Thessalonians 1:7–9 ... the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished **with everlasting destruction** from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power....

I just noticed that even though they are “standing” before God, they are “dead”- their destiny is sure.

“according to their works” – Small comfort though it be to those eternally damned, there does seem to be an indication that there are different levels of eternal punishment just as there will be different levels of reward for the believers.

Matthew 11:21–24 “Woe unto thee, Chorazin! woe unto thee, Bethsaida! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I say unto you, It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you. And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell: for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. But I say unto you, That it shall be more tolerable for the land of Sodom in the day of judgment, than for thee.”

Though the reference is to the cities, it is obvious that the message is intended for the people of those cities.

The other book used is the book of life. (See topical study re “Book of Life.”)

Rev. 20:13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

No one who has rejected God’s gracious gift of salvation escapes judgment. ALL those who have died through the ages who have rejected God’s truth will be present. It is important to remember that God is not willing that any should perish. His desire is for every human being to accept His provision through His

Son Jesus Christ and choose eternal life by placing their faith in Him. That is the whole reason He has waited as long as He has to send Jesus back to set up His kingdom.

2 Peter 3:9 *“The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, **not wishing for any to perish** but for all to come to repentance.”*

Again we are told that each man will be judged according to his works.

Rev. 20:14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

Death and hell/hades are thrown into the lake of fire. I think this is a statement of the fact that no one will ever experience death from this time on. There will be no need for a holding place for dead spirits. The end of this judgment and the elimination of death and hades mark the end of the second death—spiritual death, eternal separation from God.

Rev. 20:15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

This chapter closes with all those whose names were not found written in the Book of Life being cast into the lake of fire. Point is made that this lake of fire had not been intended for man; it had been created for the devil and his angels, those who first brought sin into God’s creation.

Matthew 25:41 *Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.*

By choosing to follow Satan as their Lord, men essentially chose to share his eternal destiny.