The Book of Revelation

Zanesville, OH | Wednesday/Sunday Bible Study

**Chapter 20**

* **20:1-6– Satan Bound and The Millennium**
  + **Verse 1**– An angel appears from heaven having a key and a strong chain (cf. 10:1; 18:1). The key is said to be to the abyss recalling 9:1-3. The chain is simply a metaphor for the purpose it will be serving. The angel comes with the authority of God.
  + The idea of this key is probably tied to 1:18 where Christ is said to have the key of Death and Hades. It is probably best, therefore, to view this key as a symbol of God’s authority over all things including demonic powers (9:1-3), death and what is to follow.
  + **Verse 2**– The angel comes with a task. He binds the dragon who is given several descriptions (cf. Gen. 3:1-7, 14-15). This “binding” likely refers to the lessening/future destruction of Satan’s power as seen in a number of NT passages (cf. Matt. 12:29; Mark 3:27; Luke 10:17-19; John 12:31-33; Col. 2:15; Heb. 2:14).
  + This fits well with Rev. 12:7-10. The power of Satan is likely the power of death and since Christ has died and risen to be victorious He has taken away Satan’s power (cf. Heb. 2:14). This binding does not cause all of Satan’s activities to cease (cf. 1 Pet. 5:8) but it does indicate that Christ is sovereign over him.
  + The thousand-year period of time refers to a period of time inaugurated at the resurrection of Jesus going all the way to His second coming. It is an undetermined but full period of time (cf. Psa. 50:10; 2 Pet. 3:8).
  + **Verse 3**– Satan is bound by the angel and thrown into the abyss where he is shut in and sealed (cf. Matt. 27:66). This is done so as to prevent him from deceiving the nations. After this time he will be released for a short time.
  + **Verses 4-6**– John now sees a scene in which the faithful saints (cf. 6:9-11; 13:14-15) share in the reign with their Lord and Savior. Although they have physically died, they come to life with Christ and are comforted with Him. This is called the first resurrection (cf. Ezek. 37:1-14).
  + The “rest of the dead” probably refers to the unrighteous who have died but will not experience the first resurrection. They will wait until the “second resurrection” takes place.
  + Those who have a part in the first resurrection are “supremely blessed” because the second death has no power over them. Christ has defeated this power by binding Satan through His death and resurrection. They will share in His rule and glory and be priests to Him (cf. 1 Pet. 2:9; Rev. 1:6; 2:26; 5:10).
* **20:7-10– Satan Defeated**
  + **Verses 7-10**– When the millennium concludes, Satan will be released to gather new allies but they will be destroyed and he along with them. Satan continuously tries to make “war” against God only to lose time and time again. He can’t win and he will never win.
  + Gog and Magog refers to the enemies of God throughout human history who stand against His holy will and His people. Gog and Magog is taken from Ezek. 38-39 where it refers to the enemies of God and His people from the north, east, west and south.
  + Fire consumes them before they can cause harm and immediately thereafter Satan is cast into the lake of fire (cf. Dan. 7:9-11) where his compatriots are also (cf. 19:20). This is the lake of fire which is prepared for him and his angels (cf. Matt. 25:41, 46; Mk. 9:43-48).
* **20:11-15– The Great White Throne Judgment**
  + **Verses 11-15**– The scene in these verses is drawn heavily from Dan. 7:9-11. God sits as the rightful King on His great and glorious throne (cf. 4:2-11). The very presence of God causes all creation to flee from before Him. He is too awesome to comprehend in all His glory.
  + All are called to come before the throne to answer to God for what they have done (cf. 2 Cor. 5:10). No one is exempted from this. They are judged by the content of the “books” and the book of life. “Books” probably simply refers to God’s omniscience and the book of life is particularly related to the faithful (cf. 3:5; 13:8; 17:8).
  + V. 13 reiterates the fact that every single soul will stand before God (cf. Phil. 2:9-11). Death and Hades are thrown into the lake of fire along with all those whose names were not in the book of life. God will punish all His enemies eternally (cf. 1 Cor. 15:26).