

## The Thousand Year Reign of the Saints

The following is taken from “Unlocking the Revelation”

**Rev 20:1** Then I saw an angel coming down from Heaven, holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain.

Seems fitting that Michael would be the one to bind Satan. He had the ability to defeat Satan (12:7) but held back because God wasn't finished with him (*yet*). Whoever this angel was, he was on an authoritative mission from God. (*Jude 9*) This “key” was given to the angel by Christ (*Even this part of the creation is under Divine control. - 1:18*): Rev 1:17-18. The “pit” here is the underworld, abode or stronghold of Satan (9:1; 11:7; 17:8). Here the “chain” is used as a restraint; it represents the word of God, the Gospel (12:11; 14:6).

**Rev 20:2** And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a **thousand years**, (*emp. added*)

Satan here is limited (*as in Job 1 & 2*) not destroyed (*v. 10*). He is like the mob boss who still runs his business from his prison cell but doesn't have his own hands in the day to day operations, or like the junk yard dog on a leash that you don't want to get close to. He's controlled as though handcuffed by the word of God via the Gospel during the (*figurative*) 1,000-year (*literal*) reign given to the church: Lk 13:11-16; Mat 12:28-29.

This defines **who** the serpent was in Eden, a.k.a. “the devil and Satan”: Gen 3:1, 14-15.

The thousand years here is in contrast to the period of martyrdom- (*42 months [broken 7] or 1,260 days- 11:2*) the 1,000 years represents the age between Pentecost and the return of Christ. 2 Pet 3:8 shows that God is not constrained by time (*even though He works within it for man's sake*), 1,000 years being God's time according to completing His will.

**Rev 20:3** and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he might not deceive the nations any longer, **until the thousand years were ended**. After that he must be released for a little while. (*emp. added*)

Even though Satan is cast down (12:9) and makes war with the church (12:17) he is in the meantime kept at bay, hindered by the word of God from deceiving and accusing the faithful. The Gospel age ends when the “*last person to accept the Son of God shall have done so*”- Coffman. Satan is now kept under house arrest (*...but still “prowls around like a roaring lion”- 1 Pet 5:8*).

Satan's binding **limits** him in hurting the righteous and deceiving whole nations as he did Rome in her persecution of the church. The availability of the truth shall not fail (*Isa 55:11*). Satan's loosing will be but “for a little while” (*Gk.3398- mik-ros' small /5550- khron' -os [from which we get chronology] space of time. See verse 7*). Once Satan is loosed from his chains, the sequence of events that will follow will be microscopic in *space of time*. Verses 4-6 are concerning things that are (*past to us but*) **present** to John.

**Rev 20:4** Then I saw thrones and seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was committed. Also, I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, and those who 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 for a thousand years.** (*emp. added*)

"The thrones are occupied by the living, reigning saints, who have either suffered martyrdom or refused to worship the beast"- Michael Wilcock. (1:6; 6:9-11; 1 Cor 6:2-3; 1 Pet 2:9) This spiritual realm is "in the Paradise of God" (2:7) where Paul was "caught up into" (2 Cor 12:3). Chapter 21 further explains this place where saints, living and physically dead, reign in co-habitation; they in Paradise and us on earth (Dan 7:22; Mat 5:3-11; Heb 12:22-24): Rev 5:10; 1:9; Mat 19:28

The following three verses are synonymous. They include the living saint as part of "the church militant" (*See notes on verse 9*): Eph 2:6; Col 1:13; Act 2:47.

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To be seated on these thrones gives these saints authority (2:26-27) via stewardship (Mat 5:5) of the Gospel through the Great Commission (Mat 28:18-20). Judgment is given in their favor: Dan 7:27/Mat 5:5. To be "beheaded" indicated they were martyred, along with others who were not necessarily martyrs. The reason for their martyrdom was "for the testimony (*Gk.3141-evidence*) of Jesus" (*N.T.*), and "the word of God" (*O.T.*). Thus those "seated" here represent the faithful who were called out (*ecclesia*) of all time in the spirit realm, spiritual Israel, the church (Rom 2:28; Rev 21).

Any "mark" indicates ownership. These are owned by God alone (3:12). To have such a mark on their "foreheads" meant that even our thoughts are either controlled by God or by Satan. To have a mark on their hands meant that ever their labors showed association (1 Cor 15:58).

Those on the thrones are presently reigning with Christ in both realms (*church victorious/ church militant*). The "meek" did "inherit the earth" (Mat 5:5) and became responsible for it as custodians of the Great Commission (Mat 28:19-20). The 1,000-year reign began at Pentecost, after Christ made "propitiation for the sins of the people" (*O.T./N.T.-Heb 2:17*) and will end at the judgment when He comes to claim His bride (*who is explained further in chapter 21*). With the release of Satan (*v. 7*) the nations again will resume their persecution against the church and it wouldn't be long before Christ returns. This is also the period of rest from **global** persecution until the release of Satan who is to gather all the nations in a final, yet futile assault against the "camp of the saints" (*v. 9*). These reigning saints are said to have come to life which better explains "the first resurrection" (*V. 5*).

Joh 5:24 Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever hears My word and believes Him Who sent Me has eternal life. He does not come into judgment but has **passed from death to life.** (*emp. added*)

**Rev 20:5** The rest of the dead did not come to life until **the thousand years** were ended. This is the first resurrection. (*emp. added*)

The "rest of the dead" here represent "those who have done evil": Jn 5:28-29. The conversion of sinners by the Gospel (*N.T.- Rom 6:4; Mat 28:19*), along with the saints "under the altar" (*O.T.- 6:9-11*), is what constitutes the "first resurrection". Those in sin who do not pass from death into life are the unrepentant under the O.T. (*Heb 10:28*) along with those who do not "put on Jesus Christ" but make "provision for the flesh" (*Rom 13:14*) in the N.T., equaling all who have died or will die in sin throughout all ages; they are "the rest of the dead". (*The first resurrection is "spiritual", the second will be spiritual/physical.*) Following their physical deaths, they will

only be raised up in judgment after the 1,000-year reign to be judged (*John 5:29*). Until then they exist in a state of separation from God (*2 Th 1:9*).

Rom 6:4 we were **buried therefore with Him** by baptism into death, in order that, **just as Christ was raised** from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life (*v. 4*) ... 7 For **one who has died has been set free from sin.** (*emp. added*)

To die physically or spiritually, the ability/desire to sin will be lost (*1 Jn 3:9*). But judgment will still come to those who “sin in the flesh” (*Rom 8:3*).

**Rev 20:6** Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will **reign with Him for a thousand years.** (*emp. added*)

Presently, faithful Christians already enjoy the hope of eternal life...possessing the promise of it (*2 Cor 1:22; 5:5; Eph 1:14; Mat 22:32; Rev 14:13*). The faithful saint “who shares (*Gk.2192, 3313- to hold an allotment*) in the first resurrection” (*having obeyed the righteous ordinance of baptism [Mat 3:15; Rom 6:3] into the body of Christ, the church, which consists of both spiritual realms- Paradise and on earth*) has a future home waiting in Heaven after the general resurrection when Christ comes to “present the church to Himself” (*Eph 5:27*). Having begun at Pentecost, the “souls under the altar” (*6:9*) have been released (*post 70 AD- “rest a little longer”- 6:11*) in order to “reign with Him”. Christ paid the down payment with His blood (*Mat 26:28*) which was “sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise” (*Eph 1:13*).

Concerning “the second death”, death being a form of ‘separation’ (*2 Thes 1:8-9*):

Rom 6:3 Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? 4 We were buried therefore with Him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was **raised from the dead** by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. (*Faithful Christians are dead to the world, separated from it. Our first resurrection pertaining to that death was when we rose to “walk in newness of life”.*) 5 For **if** (*indicating choice*) we have been united with Him in a death like His, **we shall certainly be** (*Int.- “we shall be”/ Gk.2071- “what would follow”*) **united with Him in a resurrection like His.** 6 We know that our old self was **crucified with Him** in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. (*emp. added*)

As “priests” Christians are presently reigning (*along with those reigning in Paradise- v. 4*). (*1 Pet 2:5, 9; Rev 1:6*)

Concerning verses 7 to the end of the chapter are things **yet to occur.**

**Rev 20:7** And when **the thousand years are ended**, Satan will be released from his prison (*emp. added*)

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"Very near the end, faith will practically vanish from the earth."- Coffman.

Luk 18:8 ... Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on earth?"

Consider Israel- when she fully rejected God, as a kingdom (*spiritual- Eze 39:29*) she lost her existence/recognition (*Heb 8:13*). She only continued, as a remnant, through the New Jerusalem the church (*having been “grafted back into their own olive tree” [Rom 11:24], “the church in the wilderness” [Act 7:38]*) since physical Israel was rejected (*Rom 11:17-18*). This “thousand-years”, as a reign, includes those faithful (*Jew/Gentile*) to God of all ages (*Rom 11:26*) (*Rom 2:14, 28-29*)

Very shortly after Satan’s release and with the end of the thousand-year reign (*v. 9*) will come the general judgment of all people who have existed since the beginning of time.

**Rev 20:8** and will come out to deceive the nations that are at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle; their number is like the sand of the sea.

With the release of Satan (*and his deceptive practices- 2 Cor 2:11*) the nations, as did Rome, once again resume a global persecution of the church and it won’t be long before Christ returns.

"...when men turn away from the word of God, that old nemesis will again seize the whole world".  
Burt Coffman

“Gog”-

G1136 Γῶγ Gōg *gogue* Of Hebrew origin [[H1463](#)]; *Gog*, a symbolic name for **some future Antichrist**: - Gog. (*emp. added*)

H1463 גֹּג gōg Of uncertain derivation; *Gog*, the name of an Israelite, also of **some northern nation**: - Gog. (*emp. added*)

“Magog”-

G3098 Μαγῶγ Magōg *mag-ogue'*

Of Hebrew origin [[H4031](#)]; *Magog*, a foreign nation, that is, (figuratively) an **Antichristian party**: - Magog. (*emp. added*)

H4031 מָגוּג mâgôg *maw-gogue'* From [H1463](#); *Magog*, a son of Japheth; also a **barbarous northern region**: - Magog. (*emp. added*)

1Jn 2:18 Children, **it is the last hour**, and as you have heard that antichrist is coming, so now **many antichrists** (*Gk.500*) have come. Therefore we know that **it is the last hour**. (*emp. added*)

G500 ἀντίχριστος antichristos *an-tee'-khris-tos* From [G473](#) and [G5547](#); an **opponent of the Messiah**: - antichrist. (*emp. added*)

Thus, Gog and Magog consist of the nations that reject Christianity.

**Rev 20:9** And they marched up over the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp (*Gk.3925*) of the saints and the beloved city, but fire came down from heaven and consumed them,

The church is surrounded (*3:12; 21:2, 10*). The “camp”- *Gk.3925- battle array, encampment or barracks*: -army (*12:6, 14*) here is known as “the church militant”. The church serves as a fortress amidst the onslaught until Christ returns.

G1577 ἐκκλησία *ekklēsia ek-klay-see'-ah* From a compound of G1537 and a derivative of G2564; a **calling out**, that is, (concretely) a popular *meeting*, especially a **religious congregation** (Jewish *synagogue*, or **Christian community of members on earth** or saints in heaven or both): - **assembly, church**. (*emp. added*)

The Satanic institutions (*religious/secular/political*) like the beast and the false prophet (*19:20*) will suffer God's wrath. They are to be reserved in torments (*Luke 16:23*) until the judgment (*v. 12*). Seemingly instantaneous after Satan's release will come his judgment (*see notes v. 3*): 1 Cor 15:52.

**Rev 20:10** and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

The “beast and the false prophet” are further explained in 19:20.

To “be tormented day and night forever and ever” (*Dan 7:11*) thus defeats the “doctrine of annihilation”. Speaking in ‘past tense’ recognizes this prophesy as being so imminent as if it had already happened (*‘prophetic perfect’*). (*Mat 25:41; Lk 13:27-29*)

G1067 γέεννα *geenna gheh'-en-nah* Of Hebrew origin ([H1516] and [H2011]); *valley of* (the son of) *Hinnom; gehenna* (or *Ge-Hinnom*), a valley of Jerusalem, used (figuratively) as a name for the place (or state) of **everlasting punishment**: - hell. (*emp. added*)

G5020 ταρταρόω *tartaroō tar-tar-o'-o* From Τάρταρος *Tartarōs* (the deepest *abyss* of Hades); to **incarcerate in eternal torment**: - cast down to hell. (*emp. added*)

**Rev 20:11** Then I saw a great white throne and Him Who was seated on it. From His presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them.

The “great white throne” (*4:2ff*) is described here in its purity and magnitude. The Occupant/Judge (*3:21*) showing once again that Jesus **is** Deity! (*Read: Jn 5:27; 12:48; Rom 2:16; 14:10; 2 Cor 5:10*) Immediately before the judgment the **physical** creation is completely dissolved (*2 Pet 3:10*). The “works” of the saved are “the righteous deeds of the saints” (*19:8*) done “in the Lord” (*1 Cor 15:58*) that will “follow them” (*14:14*). Of the lost they are “deeds of ungodliness” (*Jud 15*) committed “in vain” (*Mat 15:9; Mk 7:7*).

**Rev 20:12** And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done.

This is the general judgment in which all people from every status/walk of life are to attend. Only those written in “the book of life” will “not come into condemnation; but [will pass] from death into life” (*Jn 5:24*).

In the context of this passage, after speaking of “the book of life” with the names of the faithful in it, this writer believes these “books” contain the names and deeds of the unrighteous “according to what they had done”.

Mat 7:13 "...and **those who enter** by it are **many**. (*emp. added*)

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The “book of life” (*3:5; 13:8; 17:8; 20:15; 21:27; Ex 32:30*) is the book that contains the names of the righteous since the death of Abel and onward.

Mat 7:14 ... and **those who find it** are **few**. (*emp. added*)

**Rev 20:13** And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done.

In this context the “sea” is not physical here. The physical sea is to be destroyed along with the earth (*v. 11*). This sea is “before the throne” (*7:15*). It is upon which the righteous dead stand, whose names are in “the book of life”. It is also where Paul longed to go (*Php 1:23*). Notice how they are separated from the Hadean realm (*thus no longer separated from God in Heaven*) before (*1 Thes 4:16-17*) it is “thrown into the lake of fire” (*next verse*).

Rev 7:15 "Therefore they are **before** (*Gk.1799*) the throne of God and serve Him day and night in His temple; and He Who sits on the throne will **shelter them with His presence**. (*emp. added*)

G1799 ἐνώπιον ἐνώπιον *en-o'-pee-on*

Neuter of a compound of G1722 and a derivation of G3700; *in the face* of (literally or figuratively): - before, **in the presence (sight) of**, to. (*emp. added*)

“Death and Hades”; (*6:8*) The rider of the “pale horse” took lives and Hades collected them. Here they deliver them to be judged, unlike those from the sea “before the throne” (*4:6-Paradise*), these according to their ungodly deeds (*Jud 15*).

**Rev 20:14** Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death (*v. 6*), the lake of fire.

“lake”- Gk.3041- (through the idea of nearness to shore); a *pond* (large or small). It refers to the body of fire that will separate these souls from the shore (*Lk 16:26*). Once God accomplishes His divine purpose, these two elements of separation are cast into the only place where any of His creation will be apart from Him throughout eternity; Hell! (*2:11/ 21:8*) Read Rom 5:13-17.

1Co 15:26 The last enemy to be destroyed is death.

**Rev 20:15** And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

Only those judged righteous (*who have a part in the first resurrection*) will escape the torments of Hell.

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*November 20, 2020*  
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