

Revelation 20:1-6

"Satan Gets Swept Up, Shut Up And Sealed Off"

The scene in Rev Ch 20 opens up w/a "new Sheriff" in town. Jesus has come again & has commenced to clean up this place we call planet earth. He had the A.C. & the false prophet immediately apprehended & they didn't pass "go", they didn't collect \$200, they were thrown instantly (alive) into the lake of fire.

Directly on the heels of which the Lord prepared a feast for the birds of the air, & the flesh of all the remaining rebels on the planet was what was on the menu. Vs 21 of Ch 19 tells us that after the A.C. & the false prophet were cast alive into the lake of fire that the rest were killed w/the sword which proceeded from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse, & all the birds were filled w/their flesh. Jesus just spoke the word & put an end to mankind's arrogant rebellion.

Having said all of that He's not finished yet, there's still one final order of service to be taken care of before He can proceed to establish His millennial kingdom. I mean, it's great that the A.C. is no longer in play, it's wonderful that the false prophet has been done in, however there's still one more who needs to be dealt with. The "mastermind" behind the ungodly scheme of things that has been unfolding from the first day of man's fall which has been culminating throughout the book of Revelation, notice.

Vs 1-3

Don't you love the definitive action that takes place regarding the devil? After all of the pain, all the chaos & destruction that he has caused directly & been responsible for personally, I gotta say it does my heart good to see him dealt w/in such a "matter of fact" kind of way...

But here's the icing on the cake. Did you take note of who bound him & cast him into the bottomless pit? Of course you didn't, do you know why? We're not told. All we're told is that an "angel coming down from heaven" laid hold of him, bound him, threw him in the pit, shut it, & sealed it so that he would remain incarcerated for 1,000 yrs.

Jesus doesn't deal w/him directly, we're not even told that it's Michael, or Gabriel, or some other high-ranking angel that received the privilege of doing this deed. It's merely (if you'll allow me that term) an unnamed angel that doesn't even receive any formal recognition. You guys, this is a dramatic declaration of the fact that Satan *is not* God's equal opposite! That as God is to good, so Satan is to evil. No!

Sometimes we get the impression that there's a real struggle going on between God & the devil. Oh, we trust that God will win out eventually but as for the situation currently man it's a pound for pound fist fight till the end. **But we need to realize that, that impression isn't received from the pages of scripture. God is infinite, all powerful, eternal, the Creator of all things. Satan is a finite, limited in power, created being, a fallen angel to be exact.**

Now, God allows him to be on the scene currently, but not because He can't do away w/him at the blink of an eye. But rather because his presence will indirectly serve God's purpose on this earth. When that plan is finished, Satan will be as well.

The day is coming when all of mankind will see Satan for exactly who he is. We read in the book of Isaiah regarding that day, **"Those who see you will gaze at you, And consider you, saying: 'Is this the man who made the earth tremble, Who shook kingdoms, Who made the world as a wilderness And destroyed its cities, Who did not open the house of his prisoners?'"**¹ It's like everyone will feel duped for buying into his lies; "oh how we were deceived!" (Kind of a thing).

Now, we've seen this bottomless pit before (the abyss). Last time it was opened was back in Ch 9 by an angel who'd fallen from heaven. He'd been given the key & he opened the pit & released a horde of demonic entities like a swarm of locusts upon the earth in order to torment mankind for 5 months. In those days the torment will be so horrific that the bible declares that men will seek death & not find it, they will desire to die but death will flee from them.

You know, there's a lot we don't understand about laws that govern the spiritual world. What kind of crime causes a demonic entity to be incarcerated & for what period of time? But we know that it happens. **The book of Jude, Vs 6 tells us that there are currently angels who have been incarcerated being reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day. In Rev 9 we see certain angels released from the abyss, others who'd been bound at the "great river" Euphrates who are released to kill 1/3 of mankind.** Nor do we know what kind of torments accompany the abyss but we know that it's so bad that when Jesus was rebuking "legion" (Luke 8), commanding the demons to come out of the man, they begged Jesus not to send them into the abyss but rather allow them to inhabit a herd of swine nearby.

¹ The New King James Version. 1982 (Is 14:16-17). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

But at this point, this unnamed angel, holding a chain in one hand (what kind of chains can bind an angels? I don't know but God has them) seizes Satan w/his other hand, binds him for 1,000 yrs, shoves him into the bottomless pit, shuts it & seals it so that there's no escape...

Ok, few things here. In Vs 2 (so that there's no confusion I suppose) John makes clear whom it is whose being bound & brought down. It's the dragon that we've been seeing manipulate mankind behind these scenes throughout the duration of the Great Tribulation. **That serpent of old (that is, the one who came to Eve in the garden in the form of a serpent), who is the "Devil" which means "accuser" (Rev 12 tells us that Satan accuses the people of God, before the throne of God day & night) & Satan which means "adversary".** He is your enemy; he came to steal, to kill & to destroy. He wants to rip you off & destroy your life. That's why Peter said, ***"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour."*** 1 Peter 5:8

This angel casts him into the "Bottomless pit". This is not "hell" or the place that Jesus referred to as "Gehenna". **Understand that there is no one in what the bible calls "hell" today. When the bible speaks of hell, it's referencing this lake of fire that will be inhabited 1st by the A.C. & the false prophet, then by Satan himself & ultimately by all who've rejected J.C. But currently no one inhabits this place.** The bible speaks of this abyss, it speaks of a place of torment for the unrighteous dead in the heart of the earth, but as for the lake of fire, the only men who will inhabit *it* will be the A.C. & the false prophet until after the Great White Throne judgment (which we will see [God willing] next week).

So the purpose of this "binding" isn't really punitive (though it certainly includes an element of punishment) but primarily the point here is to remove Satan from the planet so that he can no longer influence (or deceive) the nations (mankind) throughout the 1,000 yrs that Jesus will be ruling & reigning upon the earth.

It's interesting that Satan tried to have Jesus sealed in a tomb but was unsuccessful in keeping Him down. However he presents no difficulty whatsoever to God, God can have Satan shut *up* & sealed *in* w/out a problem...

2 more things that I want to draw your attention to in Vs 3. #1 We find Satan's *main* agenda. Yes, he came to steal, to kill & to destroy, but what is the primary means through which he seeks to accomplish his agenda? "Deceit". "So that he should *deceive the nations* no more."

Btw I suppose I should point out that we believe that what we're reading of here is a literal transaction. We'll talk more about it in a moment but suffice to say for now that even as the happenings of Armageddon are literal, the taking of the beast & the false prophet are literal, the slaying of the kings & of their armies are literal & Satan is literal, even so we believe he will be literally bound & shut away in the bottomless pit for a literal thousand years.

Btw, the 1,000 yr period referred to here is something else people like to spiritualize, but I'm not sure how many times God can say, "1,000 yrs" before we take Him to mean "1,000 yrs", it's mentioned 6 time in these 1st 7 Vs.

But back to our primary point at hand, Satan is a deceiver. He is a liar, in John 8:44 Jesus called him the "father" of lies. The lie originated in him. Now, if we know that he is a deceiver/liar we should also know that the most powerful defense & weapon to be used against him is the *truth* of God's Word...

One commentator writes, "The truth is ever against him; therefore falsehood is his particular recourse and instrument. But naked falsehood is only repulsive. What we know to be a lie cannot command our respect . . . Untruth can only gain credence and acceptance by being so disguised as to appear to be the truth. Falsehood can have no power over us until we are led to believe and conclude that it is the truth. And this deluding of men, getting them to accept and follow lies and false hopes, under the persuasion that they are accepting and following the truth, is the great work and business of Satan in every age." (Seiss)

Couple of ways that he's grown very effective in deceiving people is in the nature of sin & in the nature of God. He wants you to believe that sin is harmless, that not only is it fun (which no one would deny), but you deserve it. It's true sin is fun, however the problem lies in the price tag attached to it. It's like jumping off a cliff, the free-fall is a blast, it's how it ends that'll kill you. The bible tells us, *Ro 6:23 "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."* The truth is that sin destroys your life, it separates you from God, Isaiah reminds us, *"Behold, the LORD's hand is not shortened, That it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, That it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear."* *Is 59:1-2* Every time I officiate at a funeral service I'm reminded of the fact that sin is the great separator. Satan wants you to believe it's nothing but a good time. The truth is it destroys your life on every level.

Satan wants you to believe that God is cruel, that He's the giant killjoy in the sky; He's the reason for all the pain & every difficulty in your life. However the truth is that God is the source of comfort & healing, that He has loved you w/an everlasting love. **That He has thoughts of peace & not of evil toward you, to give you a future & a hope. The truth is that God has so loved you that He gave His only begotten Son for you that by believing on Him you would never perish, but have everlasting life... & The bible declares, "He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?"**² God isn't trying to ruin your life, Christ came so that you might have life, & have it more abundantly.

The nature of sin & the nature of God; Satan wants to deceive you concerning these things. I might say that as far as mankind in general is concerned he's doing a pretty good job...

Which brings me to the final point I want to consider/develop out of Vs 3. The day is coming when his influence will be abolished for 1,000 yrs. This is the time period that we refer to as the "millennial reign of Christ". We here at CCJ are what's referred to as "pre-millennialist". That Christ will return, Satan will be bound for 1,000 yrs & during that time Jesus will rule the earth w/a rod of iron & we shall reign on the earth w/him as kings & priests unto our God (Rev 5:10).

Now an "amillennialist" doesn't believe in a literal thousand year reign of Christ upon the earth. But will say it's a spiritual reign & that Satan was "bound" at finished work of the cross. Although we agree that Jesus won the decisive victory over Satan at the cross, we also realize that Satan has yet to be "sentenced" & still to this day (as Peter said clearly) roams the earth as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. **Every now & then we say that if Satan is bound today, then his chain must be awfully long because if you can't see & sense his influence upon the earth today you have to be blind...**

Paul, Peter, & John all conceded to the fact that Satan was alive and well on planet earth after the work of the cross. Plus it seems to me that if Satan was bound at the death & resurrection of Christ you have to stretch hard to make a connection between that theory & what we're reading of here that happens very clearly at Jesus' 2nd coming.

The truth is that the church believed (virtually universally) in a literal, earthly reign of Christ initiated by His return until the late 300's A.D.

² The New King James Version, 1982 (Ro 8:32). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

A man by the name of “Tyconius” was the 1st to influentially champion a spiritualized interpretation of the millennium saying that it is now & should be understood as a spiritual reign, not a literal reign. His view was adopted by Augustine, the Roman Catholic Church & most Reformation theologians from there...

However I’m not sure how that perspective handles the over 400 verses in more than 20 different passages of the OT & NT that speak to the personal reign of the Messiah over this planet... This is not something that just pops up in Rev 19-20. Psalm 2, psalm 72, Isaiah 2:2-4, 11:4-9, 65:25, Jeremiah 23:5-6, Luke 19:12-27 all speak to it. Trust me when I tell you there are no shortage of references in the bible as to what this world will be like when Jesus is ruling over it.

It will be a time of perfectly administrated enforced righteousness, a time of world peace, *“He shall judge between many peoples, And rebuke strong nations afar off; They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, Neither shall they learn war anymore.”*³ Israel will be the world “superpower” & Jerusalem will be it’s capital. Everyone on the planet will acknowledge & submit to the Lordship of J.C., the lion will lie down w/the lamb, the child will play by the vipers den w/out fear of harm & will be able to lead around bears & wolfs as though common household pets. It’ll be a time of purity & devotion to God & the earth will be filled w/the knowledge of the Lord as waters cover the sea. There will be a rebuilt temple & a restored temple service during the millennium as a memorial to God’s work in the past (Ezekiel 40-48, Ezekiel 37:26-28, Amos 9:11, Ezekiel 20:39-44). Saints (in their resurrected bodies) will be given responsibility upon the earth in relationship to their current faithfulness to God’s call & personal plan for their lives...

You guys, do the research the bible declares that all of these things will come to pass. Now, if you can point to time in history that these things have happened, then I will concede to the fact that I may need to do some more research regarding my theology. But the bible declares that these are things that are yet to happen & will happen.

Now this creates a couple of more questions. #1 Who will be on the earth during the Millennium & #2 what is the point of the Millennial reign of Christ upon the earth? Those are great questions I’m glad you asked...😊

For the sake of keeping it simple let’s just say there are 6 billion people on the earth (there are more but let’s leave it at that). & Let’s say that at the rapture 2 billion catch air. (Again just to keep it simple).

³ The New King James Version, 1982 (Mic 4:3). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

Now we can account for approximately ½ the planets remaining population being destroyed throughout the Great Tribulation. **But do the math that will still leave approx. 2 billion people (give or take) alive at the return of J.C. Will they all enter the Millennial kingdom? No. Those who'd received the mark of the beast will be bird food... remember?**

But those who did not receive the mark (let's say 400 million [I just made that up]) never received the mark & therefore were granted the privilege to remain on the earth as Jesus begins His rule. **Now, something else the bible teaches is that creation will be restored during the millennium to God's original intent (Btw that may mean that even though God expressly ordained the right to eat meat in the book of Gen that we may return to being vegetarians... so those of you who like a good steak, now's the time 😊).** But w/the original intent comes what? A restoration to living incredibly long lives. Here's what the bible says, **"No more shall an infant from there live but a few days, Nor an old man who has not fulfilled his days; For the child shall die one hundred years old,"**⁴ In that day should someone die at 100 yrs of age it'll be as tragic as the death of an infant. **So w/people living 7,8, 900 yrs if not throughout the entirety of the millennium, how long do you think it'll take to repopulate the planet? 😊 Not long! You'll be 70 yrs old having your 45th child or something & you're 20 yr old children will be starting their families.**

So there will be effectively 2 classes of people upon the earth during that time. Those of us who've received their resurrection bodies (which we'll touch on before we close). & The poor schmoees that have to live life in temporary tents like these. We will be governing the affairs of the world under the Lord throughout this time.

What's the point? I think there are several. Obviously, primarily it will fulfill the Word of God (ask of Me & I will give You the nations for an inheritance) over & over again the bible promises the righteous reign of Christ over the planet. God will also fulfill every promise He's made to Israel yet to be fulfilled.

It will demonstrate Jesus' victory & His worthiness to rule the nations, it will reveal the depths of man's depravity & sin nature when even after 1,000 yrs of the perfect environment man still has it in his heart to rebel against God. **So many people purport that they're products of environment, never stood a chance. The problem was all around me. The bible teaches that the problem is all w/in me, it's a called a sin nature.**

⁴ The New King James Version. 1982 [Is 65:20] Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

It will also demonstrate the eternal depravity of Satan in that even after he's been incarcerated for 1,000 yrs, he'll get back to the business of evil as soon as he's released... & he "must be" released for a little while... why? We'll get to that next time.

Vs 4-6

Ok, we obviously can't go very far w/this right now, perhaps we'll touch on it next time as well.

In Vs 4 John saw thrones, the question is, "Who are the 'they' who sat on them?" It would seem to be the church, (of course the tribulation saints are counted in that # as well, "beheaded" = executed). We've already received the promise that we will reign on the earth (Rev 3:21, 5:10 etc.) As for the judgment committed to them, it could be that this is where we judge angels (those who're fallen more than likely) 1 Cor 6, or simply receive our administrative duties on the earth.

Vs 5

There is more than 1 resurrection? Yes: there is what Jesus called "The resurrection of life" & "the resurrection of condemnation" (Jn 5:29). Now the context of the 1st resurrection spans from the time of Christ's resurrection (He is the 1st fruits of the resurrection) & continues up to this (Rev 20) point. If you are in Christ, be it you looked forward to the Messiah (in the context of OT saints) you died in Christ, were raptured & taken to be in Christ or are a tribulation saint you classify, you have part in the 1st resurrection. The 1st resurrection extends to all who are included in the grand plan of salvation.

Vs 6 tells us it's a resurrection of *blessing* (blessed & holy is he who has part in the 1st resurrection). It's a resurrection of *power* (over such the 2nd death has no power), & it's a resurrection of *privilege* (they shall be priests of God & of Christ & shall reign w/Him 1,000 yrs).

What is the 2nd death? It's the eternal state of separation from God in the lake of fire. Perhaps you've heard the phrase, "Born twice die once, born once die twice." Not only must you be born to enter the kingdom of God. *You must be born again as by the Spirit of God. If you have been born again you never need fear the 2nd death. However if you've not been born again, then not only will you die physically, you will be cast away from God eternally (ultimately) into the lake of fire...*

As for those who rejected J.C. we're told here that they won't be called to account until *after* this 1,000 yr reign of Christ is finished.

Then we will see the 2nd resurrection, the resurrection of condemnation.

However God's heart, God's desire isn't for your condemnation, it's for your salvation. There's no need for anyone to take part in the 2nd resurrection, the 2nd death. Believe on the Lord J.C. & salvation will be yours. Jesus said, *"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life."*⁵ & Over such the 2nd death has no power, but they shall be priests of God & of Christ, & shall reign w/Him 1,000 yrs. Praise God? Amen.

Prayer Points:

Father what an exciting, yet sobering section of scripture You've drawn us to today. Jesus we can't wait until the day comes that You show up & Satan is swept up, shut up & sealed off for 1,000 yrs... We grow so weary at times of the warfare, yet we realize that right now we're only in the "boot camp" of eternity, you're preparing us for a great plan You have for us & so we trust in You & we say, "Lord, have Your way." We thank You for the precious promise of Your word that being found in You, over us the 2nd death will have no power but we will priests *to* You & reign *with* You for 1,000 yrs & we give You praise...

The day will come when the righteousness of Christ will be vindicated, but right now He offers to us the precious promise of grace to all who will turn *to* Him & trust *in* Him. To believe on the Lord J.C. is to pass from death into life, from condemnation into salvation, the choice is yours but I would implore you... believe on J.C. turn from your sin & give your life to Him.

⁵ *The New King James Version*. 1982 (Jn 5:24). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.