



The Revelation of Jesus Christ

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Chapter 20

- **Pre-Tribulational, Pre-Millennialism**
- **Post-Tribulational, Pre-Millennialism**
- **Post Millennialism (Jesus comes back once the church has established the kingdom for 1,000 years – wishful thinking)**
- **Amillennialism (we are in a quasi-millennium now where the kingdom is already established - all the kingdom there is, is what we've got now)**

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- **1 Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. 2 And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; 3 and he threw him into the abyss, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he would not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time.**

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- **Let's begin our study of chapter 20 with this – at this time we can put to rest our differences over whether the rapture is pre or post tribulation.**
- **The tribulation is over, Jesus is on the earth and has established His kingdom.**
- **At the close of the 1,000 year kingdom period the earth, sun, moon, stars, and all the universe will be destroyed by fire.**

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- **But we should not despair because while the earth is going to “pass away”, it is all under the sovereign management of God.**
- **Matt 24:35 Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away.**
- **To “pass away” does not mean to cease to exist – it just might mean to assume another form.**

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- **Luke 21:33** Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away. NIV
- **2 Peter 3:10** But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare. NIV
- **Rev 21:1** Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. NIV

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- **Think of this – the Apostle Paul ‘passed away’ 2000 years ago and his body cannot be found today because it has completely changed into another form of matter, dust.**
- **However, at the rapture of the church the Apostle Paul will be resurrected and his body will be restored into a recognizable Apostle Paul. (like the resurrected Jesus)**
- **If passing away was not the complete extinction of Paul, how can we be so sure the Earth that passes away cannot be resurrected and restored as well?**

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- John sees another angel coming down from Heaven with a key and a chain.
- The NASB uses the word “abyss” in chapter 20, but the same Greek word is translated “bottomless pit” in chapter 9 and verse 1.
- Rev 9:1 Then the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star from heaven which had fallen to the earth; and the key of the bottomless pit was given to him. 2 He opened the bottomless pit, and smoke went up out of the pit, like the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by the smoke of the pit.

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- **2nd Peter 2:4** For if God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment;
- **Jude 6** And angels who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode, He has kept in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of the great day.
- **Strong's Definition:** the abyss, unfathomable depth, an especially Jewish conception, the home of the dead and of evil spirits. I think we can say with confidence bottomless pit is a place of darkness, fire, and torment.

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- **This is not a place the devil wants to be – that is evident by the fact that he has to be bound and chained to remain there.**
- **Nevertheless, he will remain in the pit for 1,000 years which corresponds to the same time as the millennial reign of Christ on earth.**
- **God has always promised a kingdom, and in Revelation 20 John sees and records for us a kingdom where righteousness reigns.**

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- **“We don't know exactly what it will be like. It could be a time with no prisons, no hospitals, no mental institutions, no barracks, no saloons, no houses of ill repute, no gambling dens, no homes for the aged and the infirmed. The bloom of youth is on everyone's cheek. Cemeteries are crumbling relics of the past. And tears are infrequent. The wolf and the lamb, the calf and the lion, the cow and the bear, the child and the scorpion are all at peace. Jesus is come. The golden age has dawned. The earth is filled with the knowledge of God. Jesus is Lord. He rules the nation with a rod of iron. His reign is righteous and the nations obey. Sin is visited with swift and certain judgment. It's everything that you could never even imagine beyond your wildest dreams...that kind of life. This is the Kingdom. This is what we live for. This is what we wait for. This is what we hope for. And, beloved, this is what is really coming.”**

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- Let me remind us all of who is “in” this kingdom on earth – it begins with those believers who survived the tribulation period.
- We, the resurrected saints of God, are also in the kingdom as authority figures along with Jesus. (this holds true for whatever position you hold on who is raptured)
- 2nd Tim 2:11 It is a trustworthy statement: For if we died with Him, we will also live with Him; 12 If we endure, *we will also reign with Him;*

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- So in the millennial kingdom, there will be redeemed people living on a restored earth in absolutely great, but not yet perfect, conditions.
- We do, however, have this little ominous warning in verse #3 – “so that he would not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time.”
- We are reminded here that Satan’s confinement at the beginning of chapter 20 is not permanent. (more about that later)

Chapter 20

- **4 Then I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. 5 The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years.**

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- **4 Then I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them.**
- **Who is on the thrones? According to Dan 7:18-27, Matt 19:28, and 1st Cor 6:2-3, on the thrones are the saints of both the old and new testaments.**
- **They are judging Israel, angels (authority over angels who are of a lower order than man), and citizens of the Millennial Kingdom.**

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- **“And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.”**
- **When the plain sense makes common sense, seek no other sense.**
- **So what is the plain sense of who these are that were beheaded because they would not receive the mark?**

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- **When John says, “I saw the souls” we are learning an important chronological fact – the tribulation saints have not yet been raised when he first sees them.**
- **However, they are about to be raised and given new bodies with this phrase, “and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years”.**
- **So we had the rapture, where both old and new testament saints are resurrected and now we have the completion of the first resurrection.**

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- **5 The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. *This is the first resurrection.***
- **So the first resurrection was in at least 2 phases, and possibly even three.**
- **Now John mentions the “rest of the dead” – so who are they? It looks like they will all be raised, but this final group’s resurrection will be delayed for another 1,000 years. (these are the lost of all time)**

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- **6 Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years.**
- **“Blessed and holy “ – if you are part of the first resurrection you are blessed and holy. (saved, and sanctified)**
- **The same group are said to be “priests” and will also “reign” with Christ in the Millennial kingdom.**

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- **And more good news for the saints – “over these the second death has no power”. Very few people ever want to die even once, so a second death must be really bad.**
- **The second death is what we will study in our next lesson described for us in Rev 20:14 – it is the lake of fire; commonly called hell.**
- **An old saying – born once, die twice; born twice, die once.**

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- **Rev 16:17** Then the seventh angel poured out his bowl upon the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple from the throne, saying, "*It is done.*" **18** And there were flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder; and there was a great earthquake, such as there had not been since man came to be upon the earth, so great an earthquake was it, and so mighty. **19** The great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell. Babylon the great was remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of His fierce wrath. **20** *And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.* **21** And huge hailstones, about one hundred pounds each, came down from heaven upon men; and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, because its plague was extremely severe.

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- **Gen 1:6** Then God said, “Let there be an expanse in the midst of the waters, and let it separate the waters from the waters.” **7 God made the expanse, and separated the waters which were below the expanse from the waters which were above the expanse;** and it was so. **8** God called the expanse heaven. And there was evening and there was morning, a second day. **9** Then God said, “**Let the waters below the heavens be gathered into one place, and let the dry land appear**”; and it was so.
- Just allow your mind to picture what is described above without the encumbrance of what you think you know.

WATERS ABOVE THE FIRMAMENT

THE SKY

WINDOWS AND
DOORS OF HEAVEN

MOON



CLOUDS

STARS



SUN

FIRMAMENT

FIRMAMENT

EARTH

MOUNTAINS

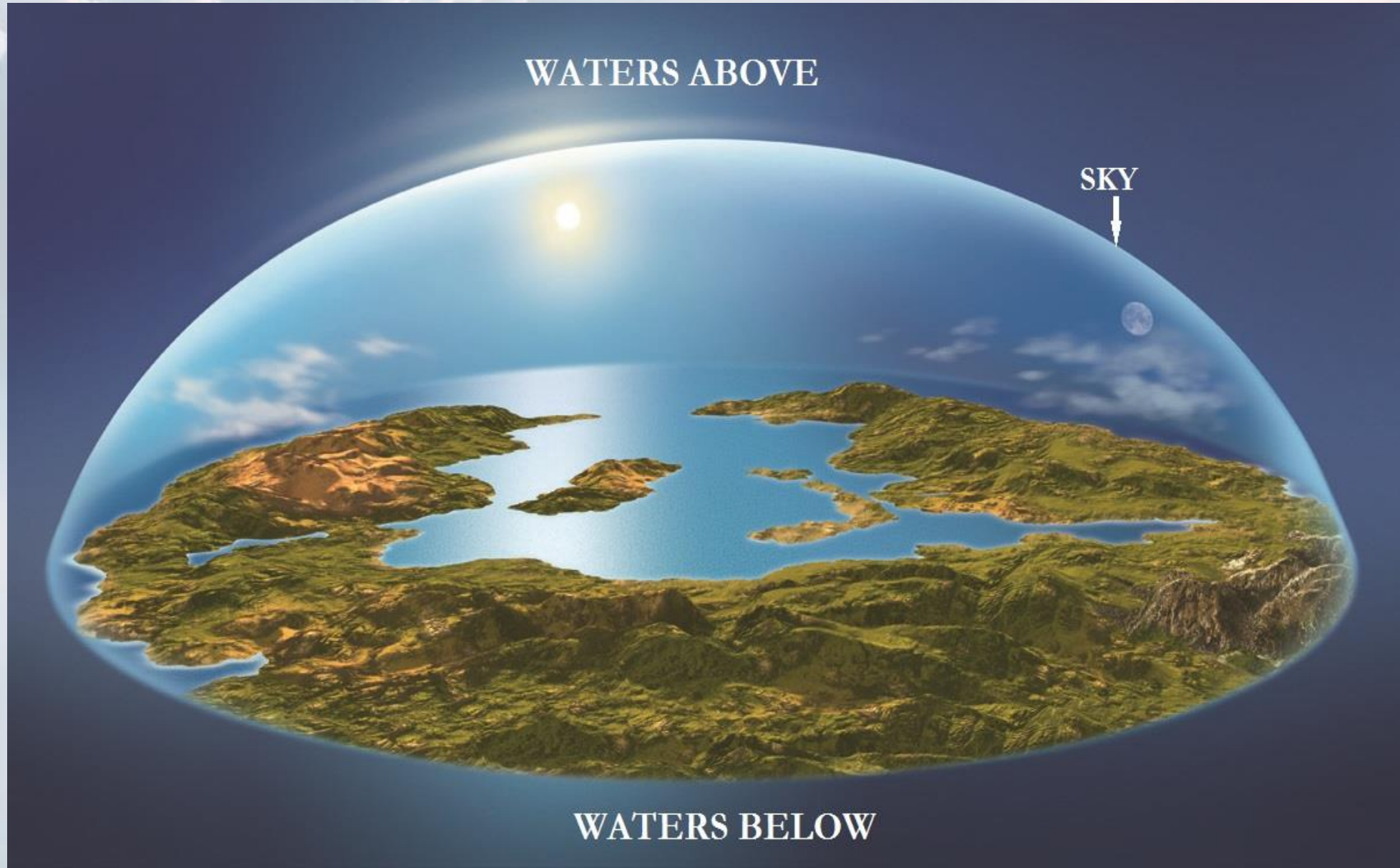
SEA

SEA

MOUNTAINS



Chapter 20



- **"The violent earthquakes and upheavals through the Tribulation time will have leveled all the polluted cities of a sinful world, the better to facilitate the erection of new, clean, peaceful communities at the beginning of the Millennium. These great land movements will also have eliminated the great mountain ranges and islands of the world, filling up the ocean depths and restoring gentle globally habitable topography and geography all over the world, as it had been in the antediluvian age before the cataclysmic upheavals of the Flood. As Isaiah the prophet has foretold, every valley shall be exalted, every mountain and hill shall be made low. The crooked shall be made straight, the rough places plain. The prophets also say the islands will flee away.**

- **... This reversal of the topographic upheavals of the Flood, however, will not send waters over the continents again." In other words, they won't flood the globe. "Since much of the waters of the ocean will already have been re-elevated above the atmosphere, restoring in some measure the antediluvian waters above the firmament, the canopy of water. The worldwide draught of the first half of the Tribulation, the cataclysmic splashdowns of bodies from the heavens during the trumpet judgments and the intensified solar radiations of the bowl judgments will all have contributed to the translation of vast quantities of water vapor far back into the skies. The earth then would be sheltered, as it was before the Flood. Sheltered from the ultra violet rays of the sun and that's why people will live to be very old, like they did before the Flood."**

- **"Quite probably the immense tectonic movements and the earthquakes and eruptions and landslides may also have trapped vast quantities of water beneath fresh sedimentary volcanic deposits, reinstating in partial degree the primeval pressurized reservoirs of the great deep, as the Bible calls it. Facilitating the birth of copious artesian springs, including one that will feed the vast river emerging from the millennial temple in Jerusalem, described both by Ezekiel and Zechariah. And the seas of the millennial world will be relatively narrow and shallow once again, as in primeval days. Furthermore the restoration of the vapor canopy should in large measure restore the globally pleasant warm climate of that period of the earth again. No longer will great atmospheric movements generate violent rainstorms, blizzards, hurricanes and tornadoes because the uniform temperatures of the global greenhouse will inhibit air mass movements of more than local extent."**

- **"In the original world the only rains were gentle mists from localized daily evaporation and precipitation, according to Genesis 2:5, keeping the world everywhere at comfortable temperatures and humidities and supporting an abundance of plant and animal life in all regions of the globe. There were no deserts or icecaps or uninhabitable mountain heights, it was all very good. The cataclysm of the Great Flood destroyed that beautiful world, but the global upheavals of the Great Tribulation will restore it, at least in measure. "The redistribution of earth's topography and restoration of its vapor canopy will result in the elimination of many if not all of its wastelands and deserts. And the prophet said in Isaiah, `The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them and the desert will rejoice and blossom as the rose, for in the wilderness shall waters break out and streams in the desert and the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water.**

- **"Originally all animals as well as man were to derive nourishment only from plant foods, but under the far more rigorous conditions of the post-diluvian environment, God authorized man to eat animal flesh as well. Evidently for the same reason many animals also had to become carnivorous. These conditions were further aggravated during the long centuries after the Flood. With the lands becoming further impoverished and the waters further contaminated, requiring increasingly great expenditures on fertilization and purification. The traumatic upheavals of the Tribulation period will have brought these conditions to a climax with devastating famine conditions and with terrestrial waters so depleted and poisoned that all the animals of the sea had perished. Had such conditions been allowed to persist much longer, all life on earth would become impossible. "In some marvelous way God will use the physical convulsions of that awful period to purge and cleanse the land and the waters of the earth, as well as its moral and spiritual climate."**

Questions