



The Revelation of Jesus Christ

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Chapter 20

- **The first six verses of chapter 20 are about the 1,000 (Millennial) reign of Christ on the earth.**
- **Conditions are perfect for righteousness with one notable exception – the children born to the natural survivors of the Tribulation are like children today, they have sin natures.**
- **Satan is bound in the bottomless pit for the entire period, but the day comes at the end of the period when he is released from pit.**

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- **20:7** When the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison, 8 and will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war; the number of them is like the sand of the seashore. 9 And they came up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and fire came down from heaven and devoured them. 10 And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

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- **It is said that Satan, “will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war; the number of them is like the sand of the seashore.”**
- **Satan is released to lead one final and unsuccessful rebellion – and he does it by his usual method, deception.**
- **He convinces a great number of the “kids” of the kingdom; those conceived and born after their parents had entered the kingdom, that having their sin is to be preferred to having God.**

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- It is no small number because they are said to be “like the sand of the seashore” in number.
- It is hyperbolic language, meaning that it is not to be taken literally, but is intentionally exaggerated to make a point. (think of God’s promise to Abraham regarding offspring)
- Given what they are going to do, we may want to shout out something like, “where does this special kind of stupid come from?”. 😊

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- **And the answer is that the sinful mind comes from a sinful heart, and never ever underestimate the power of sin to deceive and obfuscate.**
- **The essence of the sin nature is found in John 3:19 “This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil.”**
- **It will be possible for Satan to have followers in his final rebellion because many will simply prefer their sin rather than God’s righteousness.**

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- **Given 1,000 years, perfect conditions, and long lives where people do not cease to procreate at 40, there could be billions of people born in the kingdom.**
- **We are also told that Satan will gather his rebels from the four corners of the earth (not literal corners) – meaning from all directions around the center of the kingdom in Jerusalem.**
- **And these rebels are given an identity – Gog, and Magog.**

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- **In Ezekiel 38 and 39 we read in detail an account of Gog and Magog coming against Israel.**
- **Gog is probably the territory, and Magog the leader of the attackers.**
- **Magog was the grandson of Noah and we learn from scripture that he founded a land of his own north of the Black and Caspian Seas, in the area where Russia is today.**

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- **Gog, I believe, is both a place and a synonym for the end time enemies of God's people.**
- **I reach this conclusion from Ezekiel 38 and Revelation 20 where there is evidence for both aspects of Gog.**
- **What's more is that I conclude that Gog and Magog are both a part of Armageddon (Ezek 39), and the earth's final battle in Zechariah 14 and Revelation 20.**

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- Gog at Armageddon ...
- Ezek 39:1 “And you, son of man, prophesy against Gog and say, ‘Thus says the Lord God, “Behold, I am against you, O Gog, prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal; 2 and I will turn you around, drive you on, take you up from the remotest parts of the north and bring you against the mountains of Israel. 3 I will strike your bow from your left hand and dash down your arrows from your right hand. 4 You will fall on the mountains of Israel, you and all your troops and the peoples who are with you; I will give you as food to every kind of predatory bird and beast of the field. 5 You will fall on the open field; for it is I who have spoken,” declares the Lord God.

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- Gog at earth's final battle in Rev 20...
- Zech 14:9 And the Lord will be king over all the earth; in that day the Lord will be the only one, and His name the only one. 10 All the land will be changed into a plain (happened in Rev 16) from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem; but Jerusalem will rise and remain on its site from Benjamin's Gate as far as the place of the First Gate to the Corner Gate, and from the Tower of Hananel to the king's wine presses. 11 People will live in it, and there will no longer be a curse, for Jerusalem will dwell in security. 12 Now this will be the plague with which the Lord will strike all the peoples who have gone to war against Jerusalem; their flesh will rot while they stand on their feet, and their eyes will rot in their sockets, and their tongue will rot in their mouth.

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- **Gog at earth's final battle in Rev 20...**
- **Rev 20: 9 And they came up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and fire came down from heaven and devoured them.**
- **This is perhaps what Zechariah described in 14:12 - Now this will be the plague with which the Lord will strike all the peoples who have gone to war against Jerusalem; their flesh will rot while they stand on their feet, and their eyes will rot in their sockets, and their tongue will rot in their mouth.**

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- **10 And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.**
- **At this point the devil, Satan, is banished forever to the lake of fire and brimstone where he will join the beast and the false prophet.**
- **So how does this work? The devil is a spirit, and the beast and false prophet were people.**

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- **We are not told, but I believe it is reasonable to conclude that all three will receive a permanent body of some sort that is suitable for eternal punishment.**
- **Bodies that will not be consumed in the fire, but ones that will feel the blast and burning of the fire without an end in sight.**
- **“and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever” – physical, psychological, and spiritual torment forever.**

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- **11** Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. **12** And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. **13** And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. **14** Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. **15** And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

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- **11 Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them.**
- **Now this is a strange scene and one that almost no one talks about – the heaven and earth (probably all of the universe) is no where to be found.**
- **We might call this the “un-creation”, if there were such a word.**

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- **Creationists have struggled to solve a problem over the years – that of how the light of stars that are millions of light years away can be here if the earth is a “young earth”.**
- **I am not quite ready to jump on to the “big bang” theory completely, but there is growing evidence that the universe is expanding. (the light is here because it started here)**
- **In a sense the sun, moon, and stars are all rushing away from each other which means that they all could have started from a single point.**

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- Well, if the when bible tells us in Rev 20 that the heaven and earth “fled away” it might be pointing to an event that contracts everything back to what scientists call the “singularity”.
- When we read, “and no place was found for them”, those words are there for a reason.
- It seems to me that at this point, at the end of the Kingdom age, the universe cannot be found – that is different from saying they cease to exist.

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- We do know that the very next paragraph of the Bible, Rev 21, begins with “Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away”.
- From my devotions this morning ... Psalm 102:25 In the beginning you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. 26 They will perish, but you remain; they will all wear out like a garment. Like clothing you will change them and they will be discarded. 27 But you remain the same, and your years will never end.

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- **Do you see the picture? At this moment in history there is a great white throne and nothing else.**
- **John told us in his gospel who is on the throne – John 5:22 For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son.**
- **John 5:26 For just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life in Himself; 27 and He gave Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man.**

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- **12 And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds.**
- **Daniel 12:“Now at that time Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people, will arise. And there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time; and at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued. 2 Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt.”**

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- **Daniel's prophecy is a broad one that covers several times and events that can only be understood against the whole of scripture.**
- **Generally speaking, Daniel's prophecy points to the tribulation period, and to two resurrections.**
- **The first resurrection started in 1st Thessalonians and was completed in Rev 20:4; the 2nd resurrection happens in our text today in Rev 20:12.**

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- **What John sees at the Great White Throne Judgment is the resurrection of the unsaved dead of all time and they are there for judgment.**
- **The fact that they have been resurrected is important because it speaks to us of having a body – yes, the unsaved will also receive a new and eternal body.**
- **But while the new body of the saint is suitable for eternal life on the new earth, the new body of the unsaved is suitable for sustaining eternal punishment and torment.**

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- **Matt 10:28 Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather *fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.***
- **So this becomes the proof text for my assertion that the unsaved dead also get a new body.**
- **So those who die now in their sins in the created world of time and space, will die a second death in a world where there is no time and there is no space, but will be given a body to accommodate their new environment so as to feel pain, regret, and agony.**

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- **At the Great White Throne a trial of sorts is conducted for the unsaved dead – evidence is presented from the infallible records of God written in His books.**
- **As it turns out, this intuitive sense that all people have that their deeds are recorded somewhere, and will play a role in their eternity is true after all.**
- **While this is a trial of sorts, it is really more of a sentencing because there are no innocent people at this judgment. (Rom 3:23)**

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- **In fact, everyone at this judgment could have, and should have pleaded guilty while they were living so as to secure a pardon from the Judge.**
- **When we come to Christ we effectively say, “God be merciful to me a guilty sinner”, and the Judge will say, “of course, that is why I died in your place”.**
- **Think of the Pharisee and the Tax Collector in Luke 18.**

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- Let's examine "according to their deeds" – what does this imply?
- Matt 10:14 Whoever does not receive you, nor heed your words, as you go out of that house or that city, shake the dust off your feet. 15 Truly I say to you, it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for that city.
- Matt 11:22 Nevertheless I say to you, it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment than for you.

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- **Mark 12:38** In His teaching He was saying: “Beware of the scribes who like to walk around in long robes, and like respectful greetings in the market places, 39 and chief seats in the synagogues and places of honor at banquets, 40 who devour widows’ houses, and for appearance’s sake offer long prayers; *these will receive greater condemnation.*”
- **Luke 12:47** And that slave who knew his master’s will and did not get ready or act in accord with his will, *will receive many lashes,* 48 but the one who did not know it, and committed deeds worthy of a flogging, *will receive but few.*

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- I could go on, but the clear teaching is that just as there are degrees of rewards for believers at the Bema Seat, there are degrees of punishment for the lost.
- If there were not, then how could we claim that God is just?
- Rom 2:5 But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, 6 who will render to each person according to his deeds:

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- **The unsaved dead of all time are judged and sentenced based upon the content of the “books” of their deeds.**
- **So, if all of the people here are lost, why even have the book of life at the throne?**
- **I think it’s because Jesus is showing the lost what really sealed their eternal fate – their works earned them punishment, but their rejection of Him is what matters far more than their sinful deeds.**

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- **Hebrews 10:26** For if we go on sinning willfully (see 1st John 3:10) after receiving the knowledge of the truth, there no longer remains a sacrifice for sins, 27 but a terrifying expectation of judgment and the fury of a fire which will consume the adversaries. 28 Anyone who has set aside the Law of Moses dies without mercy on the testimony of two or three witnesses. 29 How much severer punishment do you think he will deserve who has trampled under foot the Son of God, and has regarded as unclean the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified, and has insulted the Spirit of grace?

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- **14 Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. 15 And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.**
- **“Death and Hades” – I see these as synonyms for the same thing; the place of the unsaved dead.**
- **Jesus gave us a great description of “Death and Hades” in His account of the Rich Man and Lazarus.**

OT Saints, Jesus, Paradise, and Hades

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- **The lake of fire is also called “the second death”.**
- **Most people, especially the unsaved, have a healthy fear of death as well they should.**
- **Well, the really bad news is that for those who reject the gift of life offered in the cross, they will not only die once and suffer torment, but they will die again suffer eternal torment.**

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- **15 And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.**
- **Jesus spoke of hell and compared it something called Gehenna – Gehenna was Jerusalem's version of the city dump.**
- **Something was always burning, something was always rotting, and it was a place where you just didn't want to go to except to throw out the garbage.**

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- **It was actually located southwest of Jerusalem in the Valley of Ben-Hinnom.**
- **It is also true that when criminals died, when no family claimed the body, that their body was thrown into Gehenna like garbage.**
- **So when we read in Rev 20 “And if anyone’s name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.” we kind of get the picture.**

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- **So in all of this then, where is hell? Hell has at least two forms – Hades and the Lake of Fire.**
- **Both are described as places of pain, suffering, torment, and most importantly, banishment from the presence of God.**
- **When we speak of “going to hell” – today it means Hades, and one day it will mean the Lake of Fire where Hades will be cast.**

Questions