

the
REVELATION
of JESUS CHRIST

Session 25 - Rev 20:7-21:8

The Close of the Millennium and the New Heavens and Earth

Satan Released and the Final Rebellion

(20:7-9) **“When the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison, 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. 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.”**

As we looked at the Millennial kingdom on earth we saw that it was made up of all of those who are part of the first resurrection as well as redeemed natural humanity that survived the devastation of the Great Tribulation. That group of natural humanity was made up of redeemed Jews (Rev 12:6, 13-17; Isa 60:21; Rom 11:26) and redeemed Gentiles (Rev 7:19; Matt 13:25-30; 47-50; 25:31-46). It will be under the theocratic rule of the King of kings that so much blessing, righteousness and peace will fill the earth and as natural humanity is blessed to replenish the earth under such peaceful conditions (no more war, murder, abortion, starvation; etc.) the earth will be filled with multitudes of humanity.

The glory of the Prince of Peace in His perfected humanity will be to reign over the nations while maintaining peace and prosperity in spite of the fact that there will still be sin in natural man. As the generations grow they will be faced with the same choice that man has had since the creation of Adam and Eve; to obey God or not. Since the Savior has come that choice is now centered on Him since He is the solution and only way to deal with our sin that the Father has provided. As we have said then, one of the main purposes of the Millennial reign of Christ is for this very purpose, to demonstrate with maximum proof that humanity under sin WILL NOT come to Christ as part of their natural condition, even with the Lord visibly present on the earth pouring out His abundant blessings.

Even Adam and Eve who were not in bondage to sin prior to the fall and who had true freedom, could not keep themselves from entering into rebellion under pride. All of the ages of man, therefore, serve to prove that man has no power to keep himself holy and pure, nor restore himself to a righteous relationship to God without the power of God's sovereign grace through the Holy Spirit - ALL glory be to Him! Perishing humanity doesn't reject Christ on the basis of lack of knowledge as Paul says:

"And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper, being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; they are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful; and although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also give hearty approval to those who practice them."
Rom 1: 28-32 (NASB)

Session 25 - Rev 20:7-21:8
The Close of the Millennium and the New Heavens and Earth

And John tells us that man loves his sin:

"This is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the Light, for their deeds were evil."
John 3:19 (NASB)

But the Lord Jesus Christ will effectively reign over this sin for the duration of the Millennium (Rev 2:27; 12:5; 19:15; Ps 2:9; Zech 14:16-19) and then use Satan to rally the final rebellion of human history. Even though man cannot blame Satan for his sin, it is under the supernatural influence of Satan and other wicked beings that mankind has been "unified" in such unholy efforts as in Genesis 6, the tower of Babel under Nimrod and the final one world government under the beast and his system. The battle of Armageddon will be a unified effort of fallen man under Satan to stop the return of the King and this battle will be fallen man unified by Satan in an attempt to overthrow the King.

Not only does this demonstrate man's rebellion, but it also demonstrates God is sovereign, even over Satan whom He uses to accomplish His purposes; Satan is still a created being under God's authority (Job 1:12; 2:6). Notice that after 1,000 years of the Abyss, Satan's desire is to continue to defy God and destroy man. Just as the Abyss didn't change his heart, neither will eternal destruction change the hearts of rebellious mankind.

Gog and Magog

It is interesting to find Gog and Magog here at the end of the Millennium when the same two terms show up in Ezekiel 38 and 39. That begs the question...is Ezekiel 38 and 39 describing the end of the Millennium and are the two events the same thing? In Ezekiel's account Gog is called "the prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal" and so at the very least Gog is an individual leader over the whole group of invaders known as "Magog". Rosh is actually means "chief" or "head" and so Gog is the chief prince of Magog, Meshech and Tubal. The geographic make up of these peoples consist of the ancient Scythians, Mushki and Tubali which includes modern day Russia, through the Caucasus region in between the Black and Caspian Seas down to Turkey.

Ezekiel's account specifically includes the nations of Persia (Iran), Cush (Ethiopia and Sudan), Put (Libya), Gomer and Beth-togarmah (both modern day Turkey). It also describes the motive as one of conquest of spoil and plunder of gold and silver, cattle and goods. They specifically come against Israel, the people and their possessions. This is the result of that war effort:

"It will come about on that day, when Gog comes against the land of Israel," declares the Lord GOD, "that My fury will mount up in My anger. In My zeal and in My blazing wrath I declare that on that day there will surely be a great earthquake in the land of Israel. The fish of the sea, the birds of the heavens, the beasts of the field, all the creeping things that creep on the earth, and all the men who are on the face of the earth will shake at My presence; the mountains also will be thrown down, the steep pathways will collapse and every wall will fall to the ground. I will call for a sword against him on all My mountains," declares the Lord GOD. "Every man's sword will be against his brother. With pestilence and with blood I will enter into judgment with him; and I will rain on him

Session 25 - Rev 20:7-21:8
The Close of the Millennium and the New Heavens and Earth

and on his troops, and on the many peoples who are with him, a torrential rain, with hailstones, fire and brimstone. I will magnify Myself, sanctify Myself, and make Myself known in the sight of many nations; and they will know that I am the LORD."
Ezek 38: 18-23 (NASB)

Ezekiel 39 further elaborates on the destruction that comes upon these invaders and from verse 25 to the end, the restoration of Israel is promised where God says "I will not hide My face from them any longer, for I will have poured out my Spirit on the house of Israel" (29). Whether or not this is the same campaign as Armageddon is a debate for another time. But is this the same as what we see here in Revelation 20 just because we see the use of the terms Gog and Magog?

Ezekiel 38 and 39 show Gog to be the leading force (prince) or authority behind the assembly of nations gathered against Israel and Magog (as well as the other nations) were those armies from the nations led by Gog. Here in verse 8 we see that Gog and Magog are made up of the "nations of the earth" and the motive was not simply to gain spoil and plunder, but to overthrow the King and His nation. Even though Ezekiel's account describes fire and brimstone coming down from heaven and killing the attacking armies, their bodies are left to be feasted on by the fowls of the air. But Revelation 20:9 says that these attackers are "devoured" by flames from heaven with no description of any burials that need to take place. This battle also ends with Satan being thrown into the Lake of Fire, not the Abyss.

The Dissolution of Creation and the Great White Throne

(20:11-15) **"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. 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. 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. Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire."**

Some teach that the earth will not be destroyed, but renovated and while that will be the case for the Millennium, total reversal of the created order is what is shown here as "no more place was found for them". In other words they cease to have locality. In case we may question this reality, Peter makes it clear to an even more descriptive level:

"But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up. Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the

Session 25 - Rev 20:7-21:8
The Close of the Millennium and the New Heavens and Earth

heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat! But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells. "

2 Pet 3:10-13 (NASB)

Clearly Peter is speaking of this destruction as being so thorough that there will not even be the atomic structure left. Even though there is righteousness in the saints of God and there will be a government of righteousness with Christ reigning on the earth, the new heavens and new earth will only be made up of righteousness with no sin.

The great white throne along with the One who sits upon it rise in superiority to the fading created order. Then we see what John calls the "second resurrection" where all of the "dead", both great and small are brought to life to face judgement. At this point all of redeemed humanity will have a supernatural, new body of the first resurrection. So only the wicked of the ages could be classified as dead. The books contain an accurate record of every word (Mt 12:37), deed (Mt 16:27) and even thought (Lk 8:17; Rm 2:16) of each individual (Dan 7:9,10) who are judged according to their deeds.

The most critical book, "the book of life" which contains the names of the redeemed (Dan 12:1) will have no record of the names of those who did not love the truth so as to be saved (2 Thes 2:10-12). Hell will be a place of:

- Mental Torment (Dan 12:2; Matt 8:12; 13:42, 50; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30; Luke 13:28)
- Physical Torment (Rev 14:10-11; Mat 25:41; Mk 9 43-44; Lk 16:23-24)
- Unquenchable Fire (Mk 9:43)
- The undying worm (Mk 9:48)
- Eternal Torment (2 Thes 1:9; Rev 20:10)

As heaven will have degrees of reward for the redeemed, so will hell have degrees of punishment for the unredeemed (Matt 10:14,15; 11:22; Mk 12:38-40; Lk 12:47,48; Heb 10:29). The only way that anyone will be able to avoid this second death is to be a part of the first resurrection by repenting of their sin and by trusting that Jesus Christ is the perfect sacrifice for their sins and that He is Lord (Rm 5:9; 1Thes 1:10; 5:9).

The New Heaven and New Earth

(21: 1-4) "Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there is no longer any sea. And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, made ready as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne, saying, "Behold, the tabernacle of God is among men, and He will dwell among them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be among them, and He will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will no longer be any death; there will no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away. " "

Session 25 - Rev 20:7-21:8
The Close of the Millennium and the New Heavens and Earth

A clear distinction is made to support the fact that this initial created order will be uncreated and then a new heavens and earth will be created. 3/4 of this current earth is covered by water and the hydrological cycle is a vital component to life. But this new created earth will have “no sea”. Additionally John speaks of the capital of the new creation – new Jerusalem. This is an actual city linked to heaven because dimensions and details are given to distinguish it. Cannot be confused with the historic Jerusalem of this age or the future Millennial Jerusalem to come during the kingdom age.

This Jerusalem is new in its connecting the newly created earth to God’s throne, but it is not new in existence. Abraham looked for a city whose architect and builder are God (Heb 11:10). Hebrews further describes this already existing city in chapter 12:

“But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to myriads of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect”

Heb 12:22-23 (NASB)

So the whole of heaven will touch the earth and represent the permanent bond between the two. All of redeemed humanity will dwell there forever in their perfected state and now are all included in the bridal imagery. Just as the nation of Israel is viewed by God as His wife, and the church viewed by the Son as His bride, the fullness of the redeemed for all of eternity are viewed as the “bride adorned for her husband” - the Godhead. As Paul describes this time it is within the context of the Son having given back the authority of His earthly reign to the Father:

“Then comes the end, when He hands over the kingdom to the God and Father, when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be abolished is death. For HE HAS PUT ALL THINGS IN SUBJECTION UNDER HIS FEET. But when He says, “All things are put in subjection,” it is evident that He is excepted who put all things in subjection to Him. When all things are subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also will be subjected to the One who subjected all things to Him, so that God may be all in all.”

(NASB)

1 Cor 15:24 -28

In the eternal state all will enjoy with maximum pleasure and fulfillment the presence of God who will be veiled no longer from humanity in their former estate (Ex 33:20; Ps 104:2; John 1:18;6:46; 1Tim 6:16; 1John 4:12), but fully manifested in His glory. Because of this reality, there will no longer be a need for a temple as both the Father and the Son are the temple. There will no longer be any body of light as the full strength of the light of the Father and the Son are what illuminates the eternal realm.

This is what we can now only hope for as the author of Hebrews says that “faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen”(Heb 11:1). But in the eternal state faith will truly become sight where faith is no longer required. Just as in the Millennial aspect of His kingdom, the saints of God will be equipped to serve in various capacities (1Cor 3:12-15; 4:5).

Session 25 - Rev 20:7-21:8
The Close of the Millennium and the New Heavens and Earth

Both weeping acquainted with sorrow and death will be completely nonexistent in the eternal state as the Lord swallowed up death in victory (1Cor 15:54). Satan who has the power of death (Heb 2:14) and death itself will be the inhabitants of the lake of fire.

It is Done

(21: 5-8) **“And He who sits on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." And He said, "Write, for these words are faithful and true." Then He said to me, " It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give to the one who thirsts from the spring of the water of life without cost. He who overcomes will inherit these things, and I will be his God and he will be My son. But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death."”**

Those who thirst are longing for the righteousness of God to be their permanent reality as expressed by Christ in the beatitudes:

“Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.”
Mat 5:6 (NASB)

It is the water that forever satisfies the longing soul as Jesus describes while speaking in the temple of Jerusalem during the Passover:

“Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, " If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.' "”
John 7:37-38 (NASB)

This water that fills the heart of the repentant is eternal life of God given by His grace that satisfies forever. But this water will only be for the overcomer as described in the letters to the churches and in Johns 1st epistle:

“For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world --our faith. Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?”
1John 5:4-5(NASB)

By way of contrast are those who are characterized by a life long pattern of sin without repentance who will inherit the lake of fire in the second death. They are unbelieving, and practicing things that are contrary to the character of God. While believers still have sin to contend with, evidence of their salvation lies in the fact that these patterns begin to diminish as the patterns of the fruit of the spirit begin to permeate the believers life. As such we are to “examine ourselves” to be sure that we are of the faith (1Cor 11:28; 2Cor 13:5; Gal 6:4).