

20: The Millennial Reign of Christ and the White Throne Judgment

Premillennialism/Chiliasm: the belief in a literal 1,000 year reign of Christ (J Martyr, Irenaeus, Tertullian)

Amillennialism: Belief that the reign in Rev. 20 is symbolic and describes the 'Church Age' between the Advent and Return of Christ (Augustine et al)

Postmillennialism: a literal 1,000 year period of Gospel triumph and peace will precede the Second Coming (Whitby, Edwards)

Numbers in Revelation: 144,000 (7.4); 42 months (11.2)

20.1-3: Before the Millennium

Angel with a key to the abyss – 9.1

Angelic power over demons – 12.7-9; also Mark 3.27 on 'binding' demonic power

The Dragon/Satan bound and thrown into the abyss for 1,000 years

Three stages to the fall of the Devil: From heaven to earth (12.7-9); from earth to the Abyss (20.1-3), to the Lake of Fire (20.10) (S Thompson)

What power do the forces of evil have in this period? How effective are they? What does that say about men?

20.4-6: During the Millennium

Saints will reign with Christ for 1000 years, fulfilling promise of 2.26-27 that they receive authority (also 3.21)

Lit: 'And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them';

Who is 'they'? 24 Elders (4.4; 11.16), or victorious martyrs (6.9-11, 16.6, 18.20, 19.2) or all the saints (2.26-27; 19.14; Luke 22.30; 1 Corinthians 6.2)

The 'souls of the beheaded' came to life and reigned with Christ for 1,000 years; 'souls' (*psuche*) also in 6.9

'beheaded' – probably refers to all forms of martyrdom

1 Cor. 6.2: 'Do you not know that the saints will judge the world?'; also Daniel 7.22; Matt. 19.28

'come to life' – He who believes in me will come to life even though he dies' (John 11.25); also Matt. 9.18

First Resurrection: Saints resurrected after the Millennial reign of Christ

Second Death: Godly Judgment (John 5.25-30); Rev. 20.14

Matthew 10.28: 'Be afraid of the one who can destroy both body and soul in hell (the second death)'

Consider 1 Thessalonians 3.13-18

20.7-10: After the Millennium

The Dragon/Devil cast into the Lake of Fire for Eternity

5 aspects:

1. The release of Satan
2. The devil's deception and nation gathering ('like the sand' – 2 Samuel 17.11; Job 29.18; Psalm 78.27)
3. The Wicked surround God's people
4. Fire comes from heaven to destroy the wicked nations
5. Satan cast into the Lake of Fire

Gog and Magog in Ezekiel 38-39: Gog (King of northern lands) and Magog (the land of Gog) come to wage war against the people of God. Early sources identify them as Ethiopians in 2C B.C.; Josephus identifies Magog with the Scythians north of the Black Sea. Other sources connect the names with Assyrian origins.

The destruction of the wicked army in 19.17-21; Who was there?

What are the implications of this? What does it say about sin nature?

The 'Beloved City' – Jerusalem (Ps. 78.68; 87.2; 122.6; 132.12-14) or the New Jerusalem (21.10)

Matt. 8.29: '(Demons ask), Have you come here to torment us before the appointed time?'

20.11-15: Great White Throne Judgment

4.2; 5.7; Matthew 10.32-33; 3.12; 24.51; Mark 8.38; 9.43-48; Ezekiel 1.26-28

Daniel 7.9-10: The Ancient of Days (God) opens the Books of judgment

Believers judged 'according to their works': Matt. 16.27; Romans 14.12; 1 Cor. 3.12-15; 2 Cor. 5.10; 1 Peter 1.17

How does this reconcile with John 3.16 and many other NT passages which teach about Grace through the Cross?

'Death and Hades thrown into the Lake' – Death as we know it will cease to exist; 1 Cor. 15.54-55; Isa. 25.8

'The Second Death' – Eternal Punishment; exclusion from the Resurrection

Book of Life/Lamb's Book of Life – 13.8; 21.27; a metaphor for God's unfailing memory and redemption of those who follow the Lamb that was slain, Jesus Christ

21.1-8: The New Jerusalem

Descending from heaven – a heavenly city on earth (3.12; Isaiah 65.17-20; Galat. 4.26; Phil. 3.20; Hebr. 11.10)

Literal or Figurative? A new place or a new relationship?

3-5: Comfortable words – God 'dwelling' with the saints (7.15; 12.12; 13.6; 15.5; Numb. 10.11; 17.7)

Alpha and Omega (1.8)

'Living Water' – John 4.7-15: the Woman at the Well

Sheep and goats: Matthew 25.31-46