

# The Millenium

Revelation 20



# Approaches to the Millennium

1. Premillennial – The 1,000 years follows the return of Christ.
  - Dispensational Premillennial: Special status of Israel in a restored Jerusalem complete with temple, priests, and sacrifices.
  - Historic Premillennial: The church, rather than Israel, will be prominent in the millennial period.
2. Postmillennial – Christ will return after the 1,000 years.
  - Christ will accomplish his reign through the church fulfilling its gospel mission.
3. Amillennial – Christ will return after the 1,000 years.
  - The millennium is symbolic of the church age.

The previous positions (historicist, preterist, futurist, idealist) don't have bearing on Revelation 20. We have different camps here.

#1.a. Dispensationalists also believe that the church will be raptured 7 years prior to the millennial kingdom.

B. Historic premillennials believe the church will be caught up simultaneously with the descent of Christ to the earth.

#2. Postmillennials typically believe in a golden age of the world being Christianized before the coming of Christ.

#3. Amillennials are closely related to postmillennials although they do not hold that the world must be Christianized before Christ returns. He can return at any time (immanence).

The millennium refers to the age of the covenant where the gospel has gone out to that nations.

Some postmillennials believe the millennium is future (a coming golden age), others that it refers to the church age.

Examples:

#1. MacArthur. Ryrie. Chafer. Scofield. (Dispensational)

Historic (Ladd, Carson, Schreiner)

#2. Sproul, Bahnsen, Wilson, Durbin, Edwards, many of the Puritans

#3. Luther, Calvin, Beeke, many of the Puritans, many reformed theologians.  
I agree with the third category.

## Revelation 20:1-3 Binding of Satan

Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain. <sup>2</sup>And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, <sup>3</sup>and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he might not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were ended. After that he must be released for a little while.

Who is the angel?

Could be Michael, the archangel. He is described as casting Satan out of heaven in Revelation 12.

Some believe this is Christ.

Symbols (revelation is a book of symbols)

Bottomless pit (abyss). It is locked, shut and sealed after the dragon is cast into it.

Great chain (can a chain bind an angel?)

Dragon, ancient serpent (devil and Satan/accuser)

1000 years (10x10). 10 is regarded as the number of fullness (10 commandments, 10 plagues, 10 virgins (Matt 25), 10 servants (Luke 19), the tithe (10%), 10 minas, 10 lepers, the holy of holies was 10 cubits in every direction.

It is elsewhere use to suggest the idea of a very long time (Psalm 90:4, Eccl. 6:6; 2 Peter 3:8).

Earlier, a star fallen from heaven (a fallen angel) referring to Satan, or Apollyon or Abaddon (Rev 9:11). Is given the key to unless the fiends of hell.

Revelation 9:1, "And the fifth angel blew his trumpet, and I saw a star fallen

from heaven to earth, and he was given the key to the shaft of the bottomless pit.”

Here he does not have the key any longer, but is shut up in hell.

Binding of the strong man

Matthew 12:**28** But if it is by the Spirit of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. **29** Or how can someone enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? Then indeed he may plunder his house.

Luke 11:**20** But if it is by the finger of God that I cast out demons, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. **21** When a strong man, fully armed, guards his own palace, his goods are safe; **22** but when one stronger than he attacks him and overcomes him, he takes away his armor in which he trusted and divides his spoil.

Luke 10:**17** The seventy-two returned with joy, saying, “Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name!” **18** And he said to them, “I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. **19** Behold, I have given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you. **20** Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.”

1 John 3:**8** Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil.

Colossians 2:**15** He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame, by triumphing over them in him.

Hebrews 2:**14** Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil

Therefore. This has already happened.

Objection. If Satan is bound now, why would 1 Peter 5:8 say, “Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.”

Notice: SO THAT “he might not deceive the nations any longer.”

Before Christ, the nations were in darkness. The ruler of this world had blinded their eyes (Col 3). When Jesus was tempted, Satan offered the kingdoms of this world.

But now that Christ has come, the nations are coming to Christ. The Gentiles are now included and the gospel went from Jerusalem to Samaria to the ends of the earth. Why? Because Satan's power over the nations was broken by Christ. His cross conquered the devil and his kingdom of darkness is now being plundered.

The very reason why the gospel is successful in this age is because the strong man has been bound and now his house is being plundered.

This does not mean that Satan does not remain an adversary or seek to thwart the church or cease from being a prowling lion. He does that. But as it relates to his grip on the nations, that is broken.

It is not a full binding as if he is completely out of the way, but a symbolic or figurative binding such that his grip on the nations has been broken.

The imagery, like Jesus' words about the strong man, provide a vivid dramatization of this concept, in keeping with the symbolic and apocalyptic style of the book of Revelation.

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The premillennial position doesn't make sense at this point if the nations are all destroyed in Revelation 19 and then Satan is bound so the nations wouldn't be deceived.

## Symbols in Revelation 20:1-3

1. Bottomless pit
2. Great chain
3. Dragon (ancient serpent)
4. 1,000 years
  - 10 commandments, 10 plagues, 10 virgins (Matt 25), 10 servants (Luke 19), the tenth (tithe), 10 minas, 10 lepers, the holy of holies (10 cubits x 10 cubits x 10 cubits).
  - 1,000 suggests a very long time (Psalm 90:4; Eccl. 6:6; 2 Pet 3:8).

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**Psalm 90:4**

For a thousand years in your sight

are but as yesterday when it is past,  
or as a watch in the night.

**Eccl 6:6** Even though he should live a thousand years twice over, yet enjoy no good—do not all go to the one place?

**2 Peter 3:8** But do not overlook this one fact, beloved, that with the Lord one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.

## Event of Revelation 20:1-3

1. In Revelation 9 a “star” falls from heaven. He is referred to as Satan (Apollyon or Abaddon, v. 11). He is given the key to the bottomless pit and unleashes the fiends of hell.
2. In Revelation 20, rather than the one unleashing, he is the one leashed and bound.
3. When does this take place?
4. Jesus bound the devil (Matt 12:28-29; Luke 11:20-22; cf. 1 John 3:8; Col 2:15; Heb 2:14).
5. Objection! 1 Peter 5:8 says, “Your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.”

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## Event of Revelation 20:1-3

6. Verse 3 tells us in what way he is bound: “so that he might not deceive the nations any longer.”
7. Satan was the ruler of this world, but his grip on the nations has been broken in Christ.
8. Therefore, the events of Revelation 20:1-3 describe events begun at the ministry of Jesus and define the new covenant era until the Lord returns.

Notice: SO THAT “he might not deceive the nations any longer.”

Before Christ, the nations were in darkness. The ruler of this world had blinded their eyes (2 Cor 4:4). When Jesus was tempted, Satan offered the kingdoms of this world.

But now that Christ has come, the nations are coming to Christ. The Gentiles are now included and the gospel went from Jerusalem to Samaria to the ends of the earth. Why? Because Satan’s power over the nations was broken by Christ. His cross conquered the devil and his kingdom of darkness is now being plundered.

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## Revelation 20:4-6 The 1,000 Year Reign

<sup>4</sup> Then I saw thrones, and seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was committed. Also I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. <sup>5</sup> The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended. This is the first resurrection. <sup>6</sup> Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a thousand years.

The thrones seem to be those in heaven, as were those in Revelation 4:4 where the 24 elders sat.

Revelation 4:4, "Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and seated on the thrones were twenty-four elders, clothed in white garments, with golden crowns on their heads."

The church. 1 Corinthians 6:3, "Do you not know that we are to judge angels? How much more, then, matters pertaining to this life!"

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The souls of those beheaded are reference to martyrs as John writes Revelation. They did not worship the beast (Rome). They conquered the beast through their suffering and are "reigning" with Christ presently. Revelation 12:11, "And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death."

They are also in heaven (Revelation 6:9).

2 Corinthians 5:1, "For we know that if the tent that is our earthly home is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

2 Corinthians 5:6 So we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, 7 for we walk by faith, not by sight. 8 Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord.

They reign for a 1,000 years (to a 1,000 generations Deut 7:9). God owns the cattle on 1,000 hills (Psalm 50:10).

Verse 5. "The rest of the dead" (those who die outside of Christ, remain in the grave, remain in Sheol, until the return of Christ (the end of the 1,000 years).

"This is the first resurrection" to be raised to the presence of Christ now, even before his return. To reign with him as his kingdom advances. The saints reign in heaven during this gospel or new covenant age.

Verse 6. Those in the first resurrection (dead saints in Christ) are spared from the second death. They are with Christ for this entire interadvental age.

there will be only one physical resurrection at the end of time, which will include the righteous and the unrighteous (cf. John 5:28–29; Acts 24:14–15; compare "the last day" in John 6:39, 40, 44, 54, and 12:48).

## Interpreting Revelation 20:4-5

1. The thrones are those in heaven (Revelation 4:4; the 24 elders; cf. 1 Cor 6:3).
2. The martyrs are mentioned in Revelation 12:11 (cf. Rev 6:9) who are also in heaven (cf. 2 Cor 5:1, 6-8).
3. The “rest of the dead” are those outside of Christ.
4. The “first resurrection” is to be present with the Lord now.
5. There is only one physical resurrection (cf. John 5:28–29; Acts 24:14–15; John 6:39, 40, 44, 54, and 12:48).

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#3. Verse 5. "The rest of the dead" (those who die outside of Christ, remain in the grave, remain in Sheol, until the return of Christ (the end of the 1,000 years)).

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## Revelation 20:7-10 Satan Loosed

<sup>7</sup> And when the thousand years are ended, Satan will be released from his prison <sup>8</sup> and will come out to deceive the nations that are at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle; their number is like the sand of the sea. <sup>9</sup> And they marched up over the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, but fire came down from heaven and consumed them, <sup>10</sup> and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

At the end of this gospel age (new covenant age), Satan will lead a rebellion.

Compare with 2 Thessalonians 2:6-12. The man of lawlessness.

Likely referring to the persecution of the church at a grand scale. The “beloved city” (v. 9) is the church, the New Jerusalem (21:9-10; Heb 12:22ff).

The second coming of Christ ends this rebellion (cf. 2 Thess 1:8; 2 Pet 3:10).

The devil will not just be chained or bound but now cast into the lake of fire. Isaiah 27:1, “In that day the LORD with his hard and great and strong sword will punish Leviathan the fleeing serpent, Leviathan the twisting serpent, and he will slay the dragon that is in the sea.”

## Revelation 20:11-15 The Last Judgment

<sup>11</sup> Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them.

<sup>12</sup> And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books,

according to what they had done. <sup>13</sup> And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. <sup>14</sup>

Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. <sup>15</sup> And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

After the return of Christ, we have the final judgment (cf. Matt 25:31; Rom 2:5-10; Rev 11:18).

This judgment is always associated with Christ's return (not 1,000 years after it) Matt 25:19, 31; 2 Thess 1:8ff; 2 Tim 4:1)

This is the "second resurrection" or simply the resurrection.

All the dead are presented before Christ and all are judged by what they have done and whether their name was written in the book of life. (i.e., both believers and non-believers).

Judged by works?

Salvation is not attained through works (Eph 2:8-9; Titus 3:5).

But a saved person is known by their works (Jas. 2:15-18; Titus 1:16; 2:14).

Therefore, Christians works will be examined (Matt 16:27; 25:31ff; 1 Pet 1:17).

Death, hades, and anyone not found in the book of life are cast into the lake of fire (along with the beast, false prophet, and Satan). This is the second death. (The saints do not take part in the second death).

The sea is eliminated (all this is unclean, having harbored the bodies of the dead). God is making all things new.

## Interpreting Revelation 20:11-15

1. After the return of Christ, we have the final judgment (cf. Matt 25:31; Rom 2:5-10; Rev 11:18).
2. The final judgment is always associated with Christ's return, not 1,000 years after it (Matt 25:19, 31; 2 Thess 1:8ff; 2 Tim 4:1).
3. Christ will judge according to their/our works?
  - Salvation is not attained through works (Eph 2:8-9; Titus 3:5).
  - But a saved person is known by their works (Jas. 2:15-18; Titus 1:16; 2:14).
  - Therefore, works will be examined (Matt 16:27; 25:31ff; 1 Pet 1:17).
4. All that is unclean or unholy will be cast into the lake of fire (the 2nd death)

#1. After the return of Christ, we have the final judgment (cf. Matt 25:31; Rom 2:5-10; Rev 11:18).

Matt 25:31 "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne.

Rom 2:5 But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the day of wrath when God's righteous judgment will be revealed.

**6** He will render to each one according to his works: **7** to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life; **8** but for those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be wrath and fury. **9** There will be tribulation and distress for every human being who does evil, the Jew first and also the Greek, **10** but glory and honor and peace for everyone who does good, the Jew first and also the Greek.

Revelation 11:18 The nations raged,  
but your wrath came,  
and the time for the dead to be judged,  
and for rewarding your servants, the prophets and saints,  
and those who fear your name,  
both small and great,

and for destroying the destroyers of the earth.”

#2. This judgment is always associated with Christ’s return (not 1,000 years after it) Matt 25:19, 31; 2 Thess 1:8ff; 2 Tim 4:1)

2 Thessalonians 1:8 in flaming fire, inflicting vengeance on those who do not know God and on those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. 9 They will suffer the punishment of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might, 10 when he comes on that day to be glorified in his saints, and to be marveled at among all who have believed, because our testimony to you was believed. 11 To this end we always pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling and may fulfill every resolve for good and every work of faith by his power, 12 so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Timothy 4:1 I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom:

This is the “second resurrection” or simply the resurrection.

#3. All the dead are presented before Christ and all are judged by what they have done and whether their name was written in the book of life. (i.e., both believers and non-believers).

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Salvation is not attained through works (Eph 2:8-9; Titus 3:5).

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James 2:15 If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, 16 and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and filled,” without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? 17 So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

18 But someone will say, “You have faith and I have works.” Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.

Titus 1:16 They profess to know God, but they deny him by their works. They are detestable, disobedient, unfit for any good work.

Titus 2:14 who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

Matthew 16:27 For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the

glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done.

1 Peter 1:17 And if you call on him as Father who judges impartially according to each one's deeds, conduct yourselves with fear throughout the time of your exile,

#4. Death, hades, and anyone not found in the book of life are cast into the lake of fire (along with the beast, false prophet, and Satan). This is the second death. (The saints do not take part in the second death).

The sea is eliminated (all this is unclean, having harbored the bodies of the dead). God is making all things new.

## Significance of Revelation 20

1. Christ will return to judge the living and the dead.
2. The cross has defeated Satan such that his kingdom of darkness is being plundered by the proclaimed gospel.
3. Those who die in Christ dwell in his presence during this gospel age.
4. Satan will (again) bring great persecution to Christ's church before his glorious return and judgment.
5. Christ will return and all that is old and evil will flee and be destroyed, preparing his bride for the eternal state.

#1. Some may feel that if Revelation 4-19 is speaking about the destruction of Jerusalem... is Christ returning? Yes, he is!