

WORSHIP SERVICE - 3.27.2022

THE MILLENNIUM—SATAN BOUND

I. INTRODUCTION

MAIN POINT: The millennium represents the period of time of the triumph of the church in her missionary enterprise on earth, and the triumph of departed saints who are already reigning with Christ in heaven.

Revelation 20:1-10

Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain. 2 And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, 3 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.

4 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. 5 The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended. This is the first resurrection. 6 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.

7 And when the thousand years are ended, Satan will be released from his prison 8 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. 9 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, 10 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.

II. FOUR MILLENNIAL VIEWS

- What we believe about what characterizes the millennial period is not an issue central to our understanding of the gospel, but it is important.
- We don't divide over our millennial views.
- But our view of end times does have implications and consequences.
- It impacts how you view and interpret the Scriptures.

FOUR MAIN VIEWS OF THE MILLENNIUM:

1. HISTORIC PREMILLENNIAL VIEW

- Christ comes before the millennium but after the tribulation.
- More literal interpretation of Revelation.
- There will be a literal 1000 year period in which Christ will physically rule on the earth and specific promises made to ethnic Israel will be fulfilled.

2. DISPENSATIONAL PREMILLENNIAL VIEW

- Christ comes before the tribulation to secretly to rapture his church and before the millennium.
- This view holds that God has a distinct, separate, and unique plan for Israel and the Church. Israel and the Church are not the same.
- This is what sets this view apart from all other eschatological systems. There is a Radical discontinuity between Israel and the Church.
- Dispensational View of the Bible sees God revealing his redemptive plan through seven successive dispensations or ages. It is a method of Bible interpretation.
- This is the dominant perspective on the end times in American Evangelicalism, and has been for the last century.
- John Darby, a Plymouth Brethren, was the first to develop this as a system of Biblical interpretation and began teaching it.
- Teaching was popularized by C.I. Scofield who took Darby's teaching and incorporated it into his study bible published in 1909 called the Scofield Reference Bible. The accessibility of this study bible caused the teaching of dispensational premillennialism to quickly spread throughout the U.S.
- This view remains the dominant view among conservative evangelicals as well as charismatic and pentecostal believers today.
- Why is this the most popular among evangelicals? Sam Storms gives some insight into this in his book, Kingdom Come.
- The more strict literal interpretation appealed a lot to the common Christian who found answers to questions they had about end-time Bible prophecy.
- People were drawn by the appeal of a system of theology in which "*Bible prophecy can be verified by reading the newspaper or watching the news.*"
- The view's unwavering commitment to Israel also makes for a strong appeal in the West.
- Many influential and high profile Christian leaders who held to this view became part of the Christian Right-wing political surge of the late 70's and 80's.
- It's a better story that more people find appealing.

3. POSTMILLENNIAL VIEW

- Christ will return after the millennium.
- The church age is marked by the growth and expansion of the gospel, the world becomes more Christianized, the nations come to Christ, and the church age at some point blends into the Millennium and then Christ returns.
- It is a highly optimistic view of the church age where the kingdom of God is growing and eventually the saved will outnumber the lost.

4. AMILLENNIAL VIEW

- The prefix 'a' means No—no millennium. However, amillennialists do believe in a millennium. A better name might be the realized or

inaugurated millennial view.

- Like the Postmillennial view, Christ will return after the millennium.
- Amillennialists believe the millennium is the present church age. It is the period of time from the ascension of Jesus to his second coming. Satan is bound during this time and that Christianity will not enter into a golden age prior to the return of Christ.
- Christ is reigning but it is a spiritual reign.
- The Church is the true Israel of God, composed of saints from both the old and new covenant and all of the promises to Israel are fulfilled in the Church.
- The amillennialist view has been one of the most widely held views of the Christian Church throughout the ages.

HOW ARE WE TO UNDERSTAND CHAPTER 20?

- This passage lends itself to an amillennial interpretation.
- It is important to note that John sees two distinct visions, v1-3 and then v4-6, that both occur during this same period of time of 1000 years.
- They are two distinct visions that reveal things that characterize the millennium.
- The only reference to 1,000 years is in ch20. It is not found anywhere else in the Bible.
- Millennium is the Latin word for 1,000. The Greek word for 1,000 is 'chilioi' and those who believed in premillennialism were called 'Chiliasts'.
- How you interpret the Bible plays a huge role in how you understand the end times, specifically when it comes to the Millennium.
- We have been looking at Revelation as a picture book. It is full of images, symbols, figures, drawn from OT passages, that John uses to bring to light the visions that he is being shown.
- The visions are not to be understood as happening chronologically. They are seven parallel symbol visions.
- Example: The Final Battle which is recapitulated six times in Revelation. (9:13; 11:7; 16:14; 17:13-14; 19:19; 20:7-9)

III. WHAT CHARACTERIZES THE MILLENNIUM

- When does the millennium occur?
- What is meant by Satan being bound for 1000 years?
- What does it mean for the saints to come to life and reign with Christ for 1000 years?
- We'll answer these by looking at three glorious truths illustrated in the millennial period.
- When will the millennium occur? We're in it right now!
- It is the present church age inaugurated by the resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ that continues until his Second Coming.
- The number 1,000 is symbolized here to illustrate three glorious truths taught throughout the NT and expressed in the millennial period.

THREE GLORIOUS TRUTHS ABOUT THE MILLENNIUM

1. The millennium is the period of time during which the ultimate defeat of Satan is expressed in a preliminary manner, which anticipates his full and final defeat.

- That destruction is two-fold:
- V1-3 Preliminary: he is bound
- V7-10 Consummated: he is thrown into the lake of fire to be tormented forever.

- V1 John sees an angel come down from heaven and we are drawn to what he is holding, a key and a great chain.
- We've seen something similar to this before with the 5th trumpet (Rev. 9:1-10).
- The bottomless pit, the abyss, is the place where demonic beings are confined while they await their final destiny in the lake of fire.
- V2 The angel seizes the dragon, the ancient serpent, the devil and Satan. These are all the names John has used to refer to the devil.
- Satan is bound for 1,000 years—not a literal 1000 years.
- Like all of the numbers of Revelation, this is to be interpreted symbolically.
- 1,000 is the fullness of an extended period of time.

2. The millennium is the period of time during which the Church on earth will not fail in her missionary enterprise.

- Why is Satan bound for 1000 years?
 - The purpose for which Satan is bound is expressed clearly in v3, so that he might not deceive the nations any longer, until the 1,000 years were ended.
 - The millennium is the extended period of time during which Satan is bound so he cannot deceive the nations any longer.
 - It is what he was doing prior to him being bound, he was deceiving the nations.
 - How was he deceiving the nations? In what sense is he bound and kept from doing that?
 - **V7-8** And when the thousand years are ended, Satan will be released from his prison 8 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**;
 - Satan is bound so that he cannot deceive the nations by persuading them to come together in a unified assault against the church of Jesus Christ to destroy her once and for all.
 - At the end of the 1000 years, he will be loosed to do that very thing that will lead to the final battle and his ultimate destruction, but at the present moment he cannot do that.
 - What that means is that the church cannot fail in her missionary enterprise.
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- Prior to Pentecost, God only dealt with Israel.
 - But what marked the rest of the world was spiritual darkness.
 - All of the nations of the world, with the exception of one, Israel, were shrouded in a thick veil of darkness and deception.
 - But God promised that would change.
 - Isaiah 9 holds the great promise of the child who will be born, "*the people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness on them has light shone.*" (Isaiah 9:2)
 - John declared in his gospel that Jesus, who was coming, was the true light which gives light to everyone (John 1:9).
 - When Simeon held the Christ child in the temple, he blessed God saying, "*my eyes have seen your salvation, a light for revelation to the Gentiles.*" (Luke 2:29-32)
 - Satan had deceived the whole world and blanketed the world in darkness, but now, the undeceiving of the nations had begun.
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- In Jesus' ministry we begin to see Gentiles coming to faith in him. (Magi, the Roman Centurion)
 - At Pentecost, people from every nation were in Jerusalem and heard the mighty works of God declared in their own language and they take the good news back to their people (Acts 2:5-11)
 - Paul becomes the apostle to the Gentiles (Acts 14:16,27; Acts 17:30)

- The gospel spreads like wildfire through the Roman Empire and extends to the whole world.
 - How is this possible?
 - Because Satan has been bound for the duration of the church's missionary enterprise to preach the gospel of the kingdom to the nations of the world.
 - He cannot destroy the church. He cannot deceive the nations to come together to destroy the church.
 - Jesus said He will build his church and the gates of Hell will not prevail against her (Matt. 16:18)
 - Jesus said "this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come." (Matt. 24:14)
 - The nations of the world are coming to Christ.
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- When was Satan bound?
 - The beginning of that can be seen in Jesus' earthly ministry. (Luke 10:17-18; John 12:31-32; Matt. 12:29)
 - Satan's scheme of deception to keep the nations in complete darkness has been curtailed by the first coming of Jesus Christ.
 - Satan still has influence, he can still do evil, but what he cannot do is mount a comprehensive offensive to prevent the spread of the gospel to the nations by destroying the church's missionary endeavors.
 - The gospel will not fail. The great commission will be accomplished.
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- From Calvary onward, Satan is bound.
 - Now is the time to proclaim the gospel.
 - Satan cannot prevent anyone that Christ is drawing to himself from being saved.
 - This gives us confidence in preaching the gospel.
 - We cannot fail in the mission to which we have been called. Give your life to this.
 - Nothing else in this world is guaranteed like the missionary enterprise of the church.
 - And if you're killed for preaching the gospel, well then, the benefits of the millennium will prove to be even more glorious to you.