

This is the future – what Jesus says “will take place later.”

Ch. 20 “An Earthly Reign”

This occurs after the seven seals are opened, and the seven trumpets are heard, the seven angels pour their bowls of wrath onto the earth, the city on the coast is destroyed, and the anti-Christ & false prophet are thrown into the lake of fire.

Rev. 20:1-2 – “Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the keys to the bottomless pit and a great chain. And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, 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.”

When will Christ rule the earth for a thousand years? “Eschatology” is the word for the study of final events. “Eschaton” – the Greek word meaning last. What are the three views on when Christ will rule for a thousand years?

1. Amillennial – “a” meaning a negative – believe the reign of Christ is figurative, not literal.
2. Postmillennial – “post” after - believe Christ will return after a peaceful thousand year period on earth.
3. Premillennial – “pre” before -believe Christ will return before he establishes his thousand year reign on earth.

Satan is locked up for a thousand years. But even today he has no power over us.

Math. 10:1 – “He (Jesus) called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out evil spirits and to heal every disease and sickness.” As a Christian, you have authority over Satan. Have you ever thought about that?

The Rule of Christ on Earth

Rev. 20:4-6 – “I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony for Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshipped the beast or his image and had not received his mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years. The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended. This is the first resurrection. 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.”

“There is a thousand-year gap between verse 6 and verse 7 when the devil is released from the Abyss.”

Zech. 14:9 – Zechariah was a prophet and a priest. This was written approx. 520 B.C. “The Lord will be king over the whole earth. On that day there will be one Lord, and his name the only name.”

Isa. 2:2 – Isaiah often known as the greatest prophet. Wrote this in approx. 701 B.C. “In the last days the mountain of the Lord’s temple will be established as chief among the mountains; it will be raised above the hills, and all nations will stream to it.”

Isa. 2:17 – “The arrogance of man will be brought low and the pride of men humbled; the Lord alone will be exalted in that day, and the idols will totally disappear.”

Isa. 11:6-9 – “The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them. The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. The infant will play near the hole of the cobra, and the young child put his hand into the viper’s nest. They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain, for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.”

What does this tell you about what it will be like during Christ’s rule on earth? Did you note the waters of the sea were mentioned? What does this tell us about Christ’s rule and perhaps the earth itself?

Saints and Humans

The believers who will rule with Christ in Rev. 20:6 are those from the first resurrection. The first resurrection is the resurrection of Christ from the cross.

1 Cor. 15:22-23 – Paul explains the end times – “For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. But each in his own turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him.”

1. Christ – the firstfruits, the first resurrection
2. The Rapture – “those that belong to him.” – The church comprises the main harvest. The dead in Christ will rise first and the living at the time will be transformed into their resurrection bodies.

1 Thes. 4:15-18 – Paul wrote in AD 51 – “According to the Lord’s own word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left till the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel (The only named archangel in the Bible is Michael.) and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore encourage each other with these words.”

3. Tribulation Saints – the “end ones” – those people who give themselves to Christ at the very last.

In **Rev. 20:7-10**, Satan is released and allowed to deceive and form an army as large as the grains of sand of the sea. The army surrounds “the camp of the saints and the beloved city”. But fire from heaven consumes them and Satan is thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet are. They are tormented for eternity.

Why do you think God releases Satan and allows him to torment the earth for a short time?

Final Judgment

Rev. 20:11-15 – “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. 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. 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. 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.”

Often called “The Great White Throne Judgment”, John speaks of “the dead” but he uses the word “thanatos” which means spiritually dead or “lost” people. “This is the second resurrection of the dead, and it is for all those who never accepted Christ as Lord and Savior.”

Believers have ruled with Christ during his thousand-year reign. There will be no Christians at The Great White Throne Judgment. Who is the judge on The Great White Throne?

John 5:19-30 – Jesus said: “I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does. For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does. Yes, to your amazement he will show him even greater things than these. For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom he is pleased to give it. Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son, that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him. I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life. I tell you the truth, a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live. For as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son to have life in himself. And he has given him authority to judge because he is the Son of Man. Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice and come out – those who have done good will rise to live, and those who have done evil will rise to be condemned. By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me.”

Hades vs Hell

Aides – Greek meaning Hades – In **Luke 16** the rich man died and went to Hades, a place of punishment. In **Rev. 20:13** Hades is opened and all the dead stand before the judgement throne.

Math. 7:21-23 – Jesus says: “Not everyone who say to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on the day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?’ Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me you evildoers!’”

Do you have friends, family, or coworkers, some dead and some alive, that will stand before The Great White Throne someday and be condemned to eternal torment? How does that make you feel?

Gehenna – Greek meaning Hell – the final destination of the unsaved.

The Book of Life

2 Peter 3:9 – “God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”

God wants us all to be saved but we must repent to make our hearts acceptable to receive Christ.

John 3:16 – “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.”

God must really love us to do this for us. Have you ever thought of it this way?