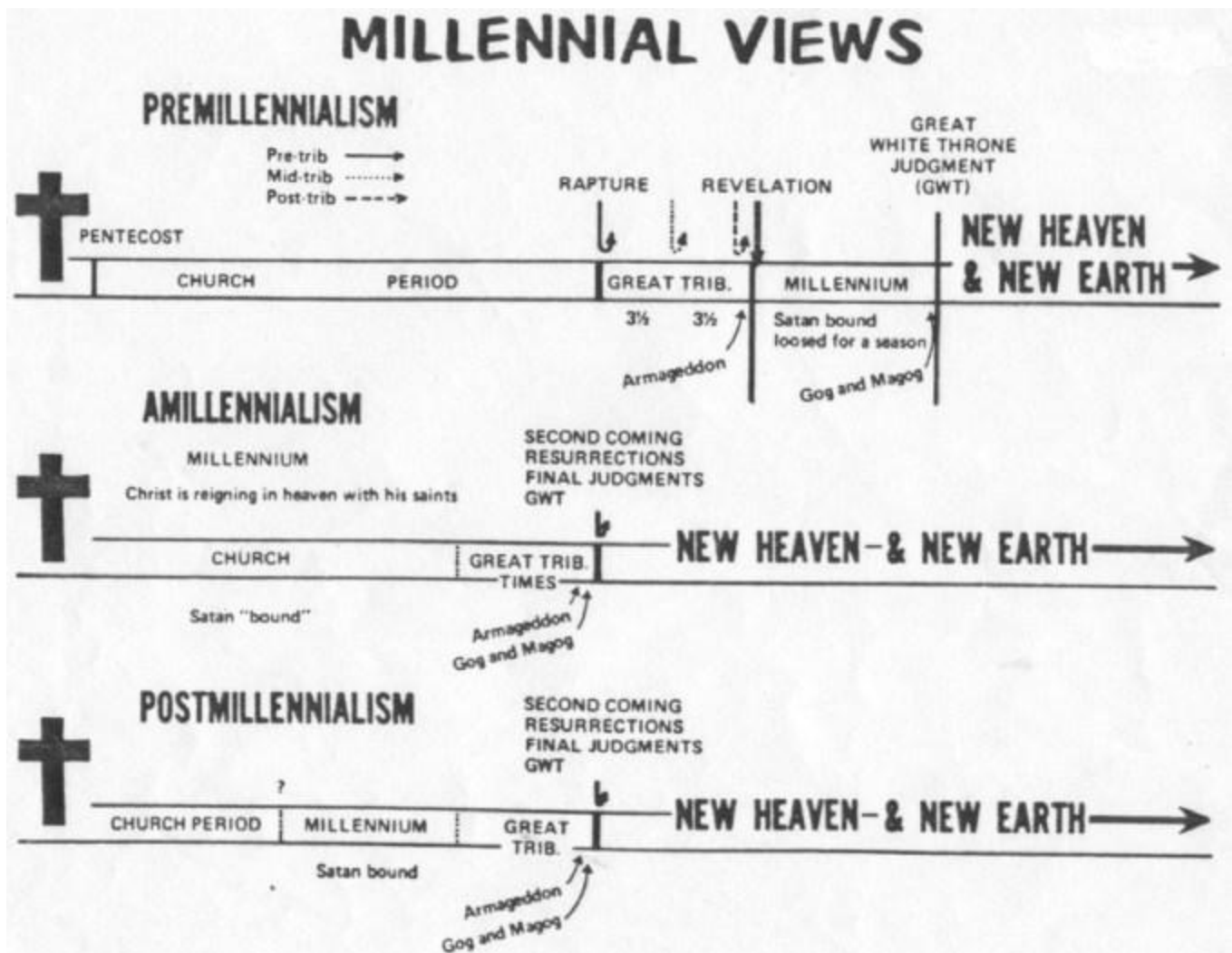


WEEK 24: CHAPTER 20

INTRODUCTION TO CHAPTER 20

- We are now entering into the Millennial Kingdom...the 1000 years of Christ's reign on the Earth.
- "This is one of the great chapters of the Bible. It presents in summary the tremendous series of events which relate to the millennial reign of Christ on earth. In this future period of one thousand years, many expositors believe that hundreds of Old Testament prophecies will be fulfilled." (Walvoord)
- There is no shortage of controversy concerning what, when, and even if the Millennial Kingdom exists.
- A quote from Michael Vlach that captures the dispensational concern is essentially that "the debate is not merely about Revelation 20 but whether the numerous Old Testament kingdom promises are fulfilled in the very way God gave them."
- In other words, has God turned His back on Israel and all that He promised them? Has the church replaced Israel and is now the rightful recipient of those promises?



- If this is true, does the Bible speak to that end or is it man's observations and thoughts?
- How we view the relationship between Israel and the church is going to expose how we view Revelation 20 and the Millennial reign of Christ.

Why does this matter?

- Here is where every argument that we have over interpretation and application of the Scriptures needs to start...why does a particular interpretation or application matter to us as believers.
- **Where are we headed as a church and as people on earth?**
 - From a **Postmillennial view**, "According to this view the thousand years represent the triumph of the gospel in the period leading up to the second coming of Christ. The return of Christ will follow (post) the Millennium...Basically it is an optimistic view that Christ will reign spiritually on earth through the work of the church and the preaching of the gospel." (Walvoord)
 - In other words, the world is getting better, more people are responding positively to the gospel, the church is having more and more control and when we have ushered in "heaven on earth," Christ will come back to reign.
 - From an **Amillennial view**, "...the word amillennial suggests that this view believes there is no millennium. Well, it says right here there's a thousand-year reign of Christ. So more precisely, the amillennial view holds that there is no earthly, political millennium to be expected. Sometimes this name is called 'realized eschatology' or 'realized millennium,' meaning that we are right now in the millennium...."¹
 - In other words, there is a millennial kingdom, and even though millennial means 1000, it doesn't mean 1000 it means some length of time; but not really because it is spiritual in nature.
 - From a **Premillennial view**, there is no other view of Revelation 20 that takes it literally as 1000 years of Jesus ruling on earth with the saints. There is also no other view that has a distinction between Israel and the church and allows God to fulfill all His OT promises to Israel.
- **The method of our interpretation matters.**
 - When discussing the method or how we interpret the Bible, we should not think that we get to choose how it's done.
 - As we have discussed before, the one who wrote it is the one who gets to assign meaning to what he or she wrote.
 - In other words, if we allow for others to interpret the Bible's words, it becomes subjective, left up to the reader to interpret what they believe is correct.

¹ From Kevin DeYoung, <https://christcovenant.org/sermons/the-when-and-the-what-of-the-millennium/>

- Most of the time, when this method is applied, the reader will take the interpretation that most likely suits their own frame of mind and desires...not what the author intended the text to say.
- This is why we hold to a *literal-grammatical-historical interpretation* of the Bible. We want to know what the author meant when he wrote it so that we will know how to rightly apply it in our current age.
- **The purpose of our interpretation matters.**
 - Do we want to fit our interpretation into a system that makes logical sense to us, or do we want to read the Bible for what it says and do the hard work?
 - This is a major distinction in the church today. It is easier to believe one theological truth and then allow all other passages to speak to that truth.
 - *Why should we desire to get it right?*
 - Speaking of knowing the end times, Paul writes in **1 Thessalonians 4:15-18** “For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. [16] For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. [17] Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. [18] Therefore comfort one another with these words.”
 - Speaking about the Old Testament Paul writes in **Romans 15:4** “For whatever was written in earlier times was written for our instruction, so that through perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.”
 - We want to use the Bible in a way that instill hope and gives each other comfort for our present season of life.
- Once we have the right method and purpose for our interpretation, we will be able to glorify God through what we find in the Bible.
- A right interpretation of Scripture will always glorify God.
- **2 Timothy 2:15** “Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.”
- **Acts 17:11** “Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so.”
- **1 Peter 4:11** “Whoever speaks, is to do so as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever serves is to do so as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.”

- **Philippians 1:9-11** “And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment, [10] so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ; [11] having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.”
- These verses tell us that we need to put in the work to know what the Bible says, we need to be found approved workmen before God.
 - We should be searching the Scriptures to make sure that which is taught is according to what the Bible teaches.
 - Peter says that whoever speaks is speaking on behalf of God...the very utterances of God...that’s why it’s important to know what your saying...so that God may be glorified by our words.
 - As Paul prays for the church to grow and knowledge and discernment, it is so that they would be filled with the fruit of righteousness to the glory and praise of God.
- This is all to show you that knowing what the Bible says (interpretation) and how to use it (application) is far greater than we probably can imagine.
- This is why when we come to a place in the Scriptures like the Millennial Kingdom, we want to slow down and make sure that we are holding to the proper interpretation so that our application is correct and that God is glorified and not misrepresented.

WHY WE NEED A MILLENNIAL KINGDOM AND KING

- The Millennial Kingdom is the bridge between all the Old Testament promises being fulfilled and the final, eternal state being launched.
- “...the Old Testament contains numerous highly detailed geopolitical, physical, and geographical prophecies that have never been fulfilled in past history, cannot logically be fulfilled in the current ‘Church Age,’ and do not fit the description of the final Eternal State (the New Heavens and New Earth).” (Walvoord)
- **Genesis 15:18** “On that day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, ‘To your descendants I have given this land, From the river of Egypt as far as the great river, the river Euphrates...’”
 - Israel has never fully possessed or governed this entire territory in past history.
- **Zechariah 8:23** “Thus says the LORD of hosts, 'In those days ten men from all the nations will grasp the garment of a Jew, saying, "Let us go with you, for we have heard that God is with you.'”

- This describes a geopolitical reality where Gentile nations travel to Jerusalem to honor national Israel and their King. This does not happen in the Church Age, and in the Eternal State, there are no distinct, unrighteous geopolitical nations (unbelievers) to rule over.
- **Zechariah 14:16-19** “Then it will come about that any who are left of all the nations that went against Jerusalem will go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to celebrate the Feast of Booths. [17] And it will be that whichever of the families of the earth does not go up to Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, there will be no rain on them. [18] If the family of Egypt does not go up or enter, then no rain will fall on them; it will be the plague with which the LORD smites the nations who do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Booths. [19] This will be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all the nations who do not go up to celebrate the Feast of Booths.”
 - This is a very important passage that tells us redeemed Gentiles will go into the Millennial Kingdom with the redeemed Jews.
 - “A converted remnant from those heathen nations will make annual pilgrimages to Jerusalem to worship the Lord and to celebrate the Feast of Booths, or Tabernacles, during the Millennium. Commemorating the time when God “tabernacled” with Israel in the wilderness.”²
- **Isaiah 65:20** “No longer will there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, Or an old man who does not live out his days; For the youth will die at the age of one hundred And the one who does not reach the age of one hundred Will be thought accursed.”
 - Again, there has never been a time in history where this was true. There is death present, but those who are dying are much, much older.
 - While they did live for hundreds and hundreds of years in the Old Testament, this talks about a future state.
 - So from the time of Isaiah’s writing forward there has never been a time like this.
 - (Amillennialists view this passage as not describing a coming kingdom which includes procreation, birth, and aging; rather it symbolically portrays the child-like joy, eternal life, and spiritual fruitfulness characteristic of God’s people in the last days.)
- “If you do not have a literal 1,000-year earthly kingdom, you are forced to allegorize or “spiritualize” hundreds of explicit Old Testament promises. The Millennium is the only era in the biblical timeline where Christ can be physically present to fulfill Israel’s land promises, rule over a mixed population of mortal sinners, and display perfect justice on the very planet where Adam failed.”

² *The MacArthur Study Bible*, Zec 14:16–19.

CHAPTER 20:1-3 ~ THE BINDING OF SATAN

Revelation 20:1-3 “Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. [2] And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; [3] and he threw him into the abyss, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he would not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time.”

- Very important to note so that we stay in the timeline that John sees.
- **Chapter 19:20**, John sees the beast and the false prophet seized. They had been deceiving people to take the mark of the beast and worship the false image.
- These two men were then cast into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone...otherwise known as hell.
- Now we are going to see the other member of the unholy trinity...Satan himself.
- John sees an angel *coming down from heaven*...this is not taking place in heaven as a battle “behind the scenes” of mortal men. This is taking place on earth.
- As the angel comes down, he has a chain and in **verse 2** he grabs ahold of the dragon...Satan himself...and bound him with that chain and then throws him into the abyss.
 - Satan will be (he is not now) thrown into the abyss and he will be there for 1000 years.
 - The purpose for his imprisonment is so that he will no longer deceive the nations.
- **Take note of the difference between the abyss and the lake of fire.**
- For those who think the false prophet, the antichrist, and Satan are different, they are put in two different and very distinct places, for different times, and then if you look at **20:10**, Satan is going to join them where they were thrown into.
 - In other words, there are a lot of details, *very specific details*, that are unnecessary and really meaningless if this is not true and real.

Comparison of New Testament Spiritual Locations

Spiritual Location	Primary Inmates	Status / Duration	Current State	Core Purpose	Key Scripture References
The Abyss	Satan & demons	Temporary	Actively populated by demons	Restricting demonic deception and active global influence	Luke 8:31 Rev 9:1-3 Rev 20:1-3
Tartarus	Specific ancient, rogue fallen angels	Permanent confinement until the Final Judgment	Actively populated	Maximum-security isolation for the ultimate cosmic rebels	2 Peter 2:4 Jude 1:6 Gen 6:1-4
Hades / Sheol	Unsaved human souls	Temporary	Actively populated by deceased unbelievers	Holding cell for human souls experiencing conscious torment while awaiting final resurrection	Luke 16:22-24 Rev 20:13 Acts 2:27

The Lake of Fire	All wicked entities	Eternal and permanent	Currently Empty	Final punitive execution, ultimate cosmic trash heap, and eternal torment	Rev 19:20 Rev 20:10 Rev 20:14-15
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- It is important to understand the words that the Bible uses. “Keeping these distinctions clear prevents confusing the temporary binding of Satan in the earthly Millennium with his final, eternal execution in the Lake of Fire.”
- **Thinking through our differing understandings of this specific text:**
 - Those who hold to an Amillennial position believe that Satan is bound right now. In fact, he was bound when Christ came the first time.
 - Jesus’ death and resurrection bound Satan and fulfilled Revelation 20:1-3.
 - They hold that Satan’s activities are now limited, he is active but “spiritually” bound...therefore he is active but also imprisoned in the abyss.
 - He is only partially bound, not absolutely.
 - The 1000 years is spiritual and started when Jesus came and will continue until His second coming.
- How does the New Testament describe Satan’s activities during Jesus’ ministry and after His life, death, resurrection, and ascension?
- **The following characterize Satan’s activities in this present age³:**
 - He is “the god of this age” (2 Cor 4:4)
 - He is “the ruler of this world” (John 12:31)
 - He “prowls about like a roaring lion” (1 Pet 5:8)
 - He tells lies (John 8:44) o He tempts believers to sin (1 Cor 7:5; Eph 4:27)
 - He disguises himself as an angel of light (2 Cor 11)
 - He seeks to deceive the children of God (2 Cor 11:3)
 - He snatches the gospel from unbelieving hearts (Matt 13:19; Mark 4:15; Luke 8:12; cf. 1 Thess 3:5; 1 Tim 1:20; 4:1–2)
 - He takes advantage of believers (2 Cor 2:11)
 - He influences people to lie (Acts 5:3)
 - He holds unbelievers under his power (1 John 5:19; Eph 2:2; Acts 26:18; 1 John 3:8–10)
 - He torments the servants of God (2 Cor 12:7)
 - He thwarts the progress of ministry (1 Thess 2:18)
 - He seeks to destroy the faith of believers (Lk 22:31)
 - He wages war against the church (Eph 6:11–17)

³ This list taken from Matt Waymeyer, *TES Premillennialism Seminar Session 3* notes

- He traps and deceives unbelievers (2 Tim 2:26)
- He holds them captive to do his will (2 Tim 2:26)
- We would, from a normal and natural reading of the biblical text, understand that Satan is not bound right now...he is active on the earth.
- Again, John gives us the exact purpose of Satan's binding during the Millennial rule of Christ...it is so that he would not deceive the nations any longer.
- That means that if Satan is bound right now, the nations should no longer be deceived.
 - This is what amillennialists teach, that Satan is *partially bound*, today he is not free to deceive the nations.
- What the Bible says about Satan's **current activity** with regards to the nations / world:
 - **2 Corinthians 4:4** "...in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God."
 - **2 Timothy 2:26** "...and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will."
 - **1 John 5:19** "We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in the power of the evil one."
- With regards to the binding of Satan and his imprisonment, perhaps one of the hardest verses to explain is **20:7** "When the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison."
 - If he is not in the abyss right now...where does he get released from? If he is only partially incumbered to do his work, what is going to happen then?
- Some believe that while Satan is partially bound now, he is going to be released at the end of the church age, when Jesus comes back, to fully deceive the nations (v. 8) and gather them together for war against the church and Christ.
 - If you remember, we talked about those who believe the book of Revelation is just looking at our current church age from multiple viewpoints.
 - Each battle in the book is the same battle, just told from different vantage points.
 - Therefore, the battle which is coming up after Satan is fully free, they would see as the battle of Armageddon, which took place in **Revelation 19**.
- This is going to be a very important piece of information when we get to **verse 8**. If Jesus destroyed all His enemies at Armageddon in **19:20-21**...where do the people come from who wage war against Jesus in **Revelation 20:7-10**? It only makes sense if there is 1000 years between the two events.
- "The difficulty with this symbolic interpretation is that it fails to satisfy the passage. The mounting evidence for Christianity does not seem to have bound Satan in the twentieth century." (Walvoord)

CHAPTER 20:4-6 ~ THE RESURRECTION OF TRIBULATION SAINTS

Revelation 20:4-6 “Then I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand; and 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 completed. This is the first resurrection. [6] Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years.”

- Asd
- asd

CHAPTER 20:7-10 ~ THE FINAL REBELLION FROM SATAN

Revelation 20:7-10 “When the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison, [8] 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. [9] 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. [10] And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.”

- Asd
- asd

CHAPTER 20:11-15 ~ THE GREAT WHITE THRONE JUDGMENT

Revelation 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. [12] 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. [13] 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. [14] Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. [15] And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.”

- Asd
- asd