

Revelation
Chapter 20
“He Shall Reign”

All scripture references are from the NASU unless otherwise noted

Calvary Chapel Fellowship of Enid
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Teaching: You know one of the most frequently asked questions by non-believers and skeptics is:

1. Q. Why would God allow evil to exist and persist?

And the philosophical logic behind their skepticism says that the existence of evil proves that there is no all powerful, all loving God because ...

a. Either He is all powerful, but not all loving and so therefore does not stop evil or ...

b. He is all loving, but not all powerful and therefore cannot stop evil.

And so in their philosophical world they deny the God of the Bible.

2. Q. And one of the most perplexing questions that, you and I, as believers face is the one the Apostle Paul expressed in ...

Rom 7:24 Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?

We are familiar, not only with the passage, but also with the sentiment because he's talking about his sin nature. His propensity to do what his own spirit finds deplorable.

As believers, thanks be to God ... we've been set free from the eternal penalty of sin, but we have certainly not been set apart from the presence of sin.

We still sin ... and in a sick sort of way, I'm okay with that ... I've come to complacent grips with that fact, but what gets me is this truth ... **we sin because we want to! I sin because I want to. You sin, not because you have to, but because you want to.**

And therein lies the argument ... therein lies the confusion because with Paul, we say “But I don't want to sin ... it grieves me deeply and yet I do sin and since I know that I'm indwelt and empowered by the Holy Spirit ... I know that I don't

have to sin, so ... **I do what I don't want to do because I want to do it!**

If you ask believers what they think the most important and effective thing would be in our struggle to overcome our love for sin ... the most common answer is ... "Get rid of Satan".

But we find in our text this morning a problem with that theory as well as an answer to the question of why God allows sin.

1. Having prophetically past through the Church Age and the Rapture –
2. We then looked at two events in Heaven; The Bema Seat Judgment and the Marriage of the Lamb –
3. Even as the Tribulation Period was unfolding on earth.
4. Last week we looked at the Lord's Second Coming and the Battle of Armageddon –
5. Which brings us this week to The Millennial Reign and the Great White Throne Judgment.

... so let's have a look ...

Verses 1-3: The "Abyss" is not Hell. It is some place of confinement mentioned several places in scripture ...

Jude speaks of it in ...

Jude 6 And angels who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode, He has kept in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of the great day

So it's a dark place of confinement ... sort of like those who stay in jail as they await their trial. And we also know that it is God who closes and God who opens the door to this place ...

Let's read the story together of the Gadereen man who was demon possessed until his encounter with the Living God ...

Luke 8:28 Seeing Jesus, he cried out and fell before Him, and said in a loud voice, "What business do we have with each other, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg You, do not torment me." 29 For He had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of the man. For it had seized him many times; and he was bound with chains and shackles and kept under guard, and yet he would break his bonds and be driven by the demon into the desert. 30 And

Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Legion"; for many demons had entered him. 31 They were imploring Him not to command them to go away into the abyss. 32 Now there was a herd of many swine feeding there on the mountain; and the demons implored Him to permit them to enter the swine. And He gave them permission. 33 And the demons came out of the man and entered the swine; and the herd rushed down the steep bank into the lake and was drowned.

So these demons recognized the Lord's power to sentence them to the Abyss. But in our study of **Revelation chapter 9 (verses 1-6)**, we read about the Lord letting out hoards of confined demons so that they might go out and torment unbelievers for 5 months.

So that's the Abyss and here we see that it becomes the holding cell for Satan himself.

Q. And you'll want to take note ... how is it that Satan gets confined to the Abyss? Who puts him there?

I can't stand predictable movies ... and one of the universally predictable things, in a western or an action movie is that there's going to be a showdown. At the end of the movie the best of the good guys is going to have a prolonged and dramatic battle with the best of the bad guys. Oh ... there are always some other skirmishes with lesser characters, but in the finale ... it's always to two big guys.

But not so here. God doesn't even show up. He doesn't even send an archangel ... just some unnamed angel who, in the power of the Almighty ... handles Satan like a kiddy doll.

And this has some profound implications ... for instance ...

1. It establishes for us a truth that for some reason beyond me is still debated today ... that God is in control!

More to the point ... He is in control of all things!

Q. All things? – Ya all things.

Q. Well what about when a baby dies? – Yep, God's in control of that.

Q. What about murder? ... Yep, God controls that too.

Q. Car accidents? – Well, it's no accident, but ya ... still in control.

Q. Now ... why do I say that based in this verse and what's the controversy? – Because people sometimes credit Satan when things happen that we don't understand or don't like, but as we read this verse, we have to acknowledge that God can stop Satan anytime He wants.

Again ... He doesn't even send an angel army. He empowers one angel with an arrest warrant and the necessary strength and Satan is rather un-ceremonially tossed into the Abyss.

So we are forced us to confess that the Lord could also stop Satan from doing anything that wasn't a part of the divine plan.

Q. Like a premature death? – Uh huh ... except no death is premature ... they're all right on time ... God's time.

Q. Like the Holocaust? – God could have bound Satan before he ever whispered in Adolph Hitler's ear for the first time ... but He didn't.

Which means that if you don't like what happens in life ... you can't just call it bad luck or even blame it on Satan ... you must take it to the Lord. And folks ... this is important because people who don't get this ... people who persist in calling it bad luck and blaming Satan ... very quickly become angry and discouraged people, but when we take our complaints before the Lord and recognize Him as the One behind it all ... He has such a special way of showing us why it's okay and that prevents the bitterness.

2. The second thing that the binding of Satan means is that it's Millennial Reign time!

Now I wish that we had time to read all of the passages that describe for us the incredible scene on earth during this period, but we don't so I'm going to give you the paraphrase.

That being the case ... I would strongly encourage you to jot down each of the scripture references that I'll give you and read them through on your own. Let them blow your mind this week.

One thousand years of peace ... Satan is bound, the demons are either confined or rendered impotent and man has been subjected to the iron-fisted rule of Christ.

Q. What will that be like? -- Well ...

Isa 2:3 says that we will somehow be able to travel to Jerusalem anytime we want and in the synagogue there we can pop in and Jesus Himself will be teaching us how to be like Him.

Isa 2:4 says that all the implements of war will be re-forged into the implements of peace – worldwide!

Dan 7:14 and Zech 14:10 both say that during that 1,000 years, Christ's rule will not be challenged. There will be no elections and subjection to Him will be universal.

Isa 11:3-5 is particularly fascinating to me because it talks about how Christ will not only judge the circumstances and the actions, but He will also judge the heart. And the passage is in the context of the poor.

In other words, which poor person deserves the assistance of others and which poor people deserve a swift kick in the britches for being lazy and making poor decisions.

That same passage says that the death penalty will be in effect during the Millennium and that the sentence will be carried out immediately and without appeal.

And **Isa 35:1-2** tell us that the glory of the earth will be restored as the deserts are once again made fertile and the nutritional status of all land is somehow greatly enhanced.

And along those same lines, **Isa 55:13** says there won't be any more weeds and no more thorns and nettles.

Joel 2:24-26 says that as a result ... food will be plentiful. The storehouses will overflow.

And one for the coolest things ... **Isa 11:6-9**, says that animals will get along with animals and even the deadliest snake will not harm humans. The wolf and the lamb will lie down together and a child will play with the cobras and rattlesnakes.

Isa 30:26 tells us that, in contrast to the darkness of the Tribulation Period, during the Millennium, everything will get a lot brighter ... in fact seven times brighter. The sun and it's reflection off the moon will be greatly intensified.

But **Isa 60:19-20** says that the extra light won't really mean anything because the planet will be aglow with the glory of God anyway. What's known as His Shikinah glory.

Q. Remember when Moses absorbed some of that light while meeting with God on Mount Sinai (Ex 34:29)?

I don't think we can really imagine what this planet would be like without the influence and deception of Satan. No one to stir up strife and hatred. No one to fan ungodly lusts. No one to fire the first shot of war.

And yet ... we need to realize ... man will still be rotten. Man's heart will still be wicked as we will see. As one commentator put it ...

"It will be like a magazine of gunpowder without a spark to ignite it." Dr. Clarence Larkin.

Verses 4-6:

Three groups of people ...

1. Those who are seated on the thrones
2. Those who come to life to reign with Christ during the Millennium
3. And the rest of the dead ... those who come to life after the Millennium.

Two resurrections ...

1. One before the Millennium which is the resurrection unto life
2. And one after the Millennium which is the resurrection unto judgment

John 5:25 "Truly, truly, I say to you, an hour is coming and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live. 26 "For just as the Father has life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life in Himself; 27 and He gave Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man. 28 "Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice, 29 and will come forth; those who did the good deeds to a resurrection of life, those who committed the evil deeds to a resurrection of judgment.

And finally ... two deaths (the first and the second) ...

1. The first death is physical death ... the heart ceases to beat and the brain ceases to function.
2. The second death is spiritual death. Eternal separation from God.

A couple of notes on these things ...

First ... those who occupy the thrones. They are not identified, but the only resurrected ones that we've seen seated on thrones in the scripture is the church (Raptured, of course before the Tribulation Season began). As we've seen, in the Heavens, for the sake of brevity and identification, the church is represented as, and by, the Twenty-four Elders.

Second ... those beheaded and resurrected are Tribulation Saints resurrected to reign with Christ during the Millennium. Those who did not receive Christ as Lord and Savior during the Age of Grace ... today, but did receive Him during the Tribulation Period.

Third ... Those who do not receive Christ at all will be resurrected at the end of the

Millennial Reign and will be judged at the Great White Throne Judgment. And this is referred to as the Second resurrection because it will be the second to occur. And it is a judgment that ends in condemnation and damnation.

Verses 7-10: Those who survive the Tribulation period ... believers who come to Christ in the midst of that Hell on earth – they will not have glorified bodies. Their glorification is not mentioned at this point so they will enter the Millennial Reign with earthly bodies and among other things, that means ... babies.

And in this case lots and lots of babies.

Q. Why? – Because in addition to all those other things that we’ve already learned about the Millennium, **Isa 65:20** says ...

"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 ...

People will still be consider a youth when they’re 100 and living the 1,000 years will not be unusual at all. People will still be having babies when their great, great, great, great, great, great, great, great grandchildren are having babies. So the earth will polulate very quickly.

And what’s amazing here is that we see a large percentage of this huge population born during the Millennium will turn on God when the Satan ... the source of ignition for man’s sinful nature is released.

Q. And why is he released? -- To test the people. Who’s loyal and who’s a fake.

And by their willingness to go to war against Christ we see that although they’ve been giving outward obedience to the one who rules with a rod of iron during this season, they never actually gave Him their hearts.

And consider how this flies in the face of modern-day psychology which tells us that people are basically good. That people who do bad things are just a product of their unfavorable environments, but way down deep inside, if it wasn’t for the fact that they were raised in the presence of bad people and wrong activities, they’d be an upstanding citizen. A truly virtuous individual.

Hog wash! We are rotten and do what we consciously choose to do.

Q. God provides for people the perfect environment and what do they do? – Exactly what they want.

Q. Have you ever found yourself saying “The devil made me do it”? – Well God proves to us in the text before us this morning that Satan doesn’t make us do anything.

We do what we do because we want to!

Also note with me here that the Beast and the False Prophet are in the Lake of Fire and Brimstone. We studied that at the close of **chapter 19** and it speaks of literal Hell. So at this point ... they've been there 1,000 years and are just as alive as the day of their confinement.

Because Hell is not about annihilation, it's about punishment.

John 15:6 "If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire and they are burned.

“Burned”, but not burned up or consumed.

Verses 11-15: The Great White Throne Judgment. The judgment that everyone who does not receive Christ will face. Believers will NOT face this judgment.

Now it speaks here of Books of Deeds and a Book of Life.

Here's how it works ...

If you've given your life to Jesus Christ then your name has been eternally recorded in the book of life and your deeds (whether good or bad), have no bearing whatsoever on your eternal destiny. Your evil deeds, we are told, have been blotted out in blood and your good deeds are reworded at the Bema Seat.

But, if your name is not written in the Book of Life, then your deeds have not been blotted out and they will condemn you, because ...

Rom 3:23 ... all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God

And it says that the dead from the sea, the dead from the grave and the dead from Hades are all judged here and because their names were not written in the book of life ... they are cast into the Lake of Fire.

Two things quickly ... we don't have time to study them this morning, but I want to throw them out there for you students ... although we will be taking a look at them again together as well ...

1. Q. What's this “Hades” thing all about? Is it the same as Hell or the grave? – No ... it's a fascinating study for you.

2. Matthew 25:31-46, is the only place where we have reference to yet another judgment. It's not the Bema Seat of Christ where believers are rewarded for their righteous works. And it's not the Great White Throne judgment where

unbelievers are sentenced to eternal damnation.

This is a judgment most refer to as the Judgment of the Nations and it seems to be just that ... a judgment of the nations for the way they've treated God's kids ... the Jews. You can read more about that one on your own as well.

And so finally --- Satan goes to Hell! But note that it's not as we often imagine. Satan's not going to Hell as some sort of king. He's not going there to get his jollies tormenting people ... he's going there to be tormented.

You know Satan is known as the accuser of the brethren. He accuses you before God and he is constantly accusing us to us ... always reminding us of our past. So I really liked one commentator's suggestion. He said, "The next time Satan reminds you of our past, just remind him of his future."

*** Signal Usher to get P & W Leader ***

Conclusion: So picture it ... the Millennium ...

No more presidents

No more first ladies

No more kings

No famine

No hunger

No terrorism

No orphanages

No foster homes

No abortion centers

No pornography

No drugs

No alcohol

No medicine

No surgery

No cancer
No disease
No miscarriages
No infertility
No FBI
No IRS
No crack houses
No immorality
No bigotry
No discrimination
No divorce
No custody battles
No infidelity
No bribes
No corruption
No cults
No heresy
No astrology
No psychic hotline
No inflation
No ACLU
No environmentalists
No biting dogs

No hurricanes
No earthquakes
No bee stings
No snake bites
No kidnappers
No more prime ministers
No more congress
No more senate
No more legislature
No more cabinet members
No more governors
No more city councils
No more generals ... in fact, no more military at all
No more police force or sheriff's office or state troopers
No more prisons or jails
No more criminals
No more hospitals or doctors
No more courts or judges
No more lawyers
No more dentists
No more nursing homes
No more mental institutions
No more bars

No more casinos

Oh ... and no more churches ... just The Church!

Now ... just for one minute consider what this list rally represents ... it represents the result of doing things God's way!

Q. So how foolish are we to do otherwise?

Q. Did you know that God is pro-choice? In fact He has gone to the most extreme lengths to offer you the choice ... eternal Heaven or eternal Hell.

We all live, we all die and we will all be resurrected. But the specifics of that are a matter of choice for each one of us.