



# REVELATION

## Session 8

October 31, 2021

### “Judgment of God’s Enemies” (pt.2 Final Judgement)

Revelation 20:1 – 15

#### BIG IDEA

God will bring an end to all His enemies forever by sending them into eternal punishment in hell. But the faithful in Christ will come back to life and reign with Him. Their names are forever written in the Lamb’s Book of Life.

#### BIBLE CONVERSATION / GENERAL INFO

For many Christians, Revelation 20 is perhaps the most perplexing chapter of the book. There are a lot of big ideas in this one little chapter and, because of this, there has arisen quite a few diverging interpretations on it and even whole schools of competing thought. Sometimes we can get so sucked into these other thoughts and ideas that we miss the mere facts of what Chapter 20 says and how it links to the rest of Revelation and the things we have seen already.

Let’s start with the visual. What we have already seen will help shed light on what we will see in Chapter 20. In the punishment section of Revelation, we have seen that God pours out His wrath on the *earth* (16:1-8), then we saw the *kings* of the earth gathered by Satan and his beasts for the battle of Armageddon (16:14-16) which ends with the two beasts being captured and thrown in the lake of burning sulfur, and the *kings* of the earth and their armies being killed by the sword that comes from Jesus’s mouth (19:19-21). This is a visceral picture and it is intended to show us the fate of even the most powerful and stately people who set themselves opposed to the True King - Jesus (17:14 and 19:16). Layered in among this we saw the micro-story of Babylon the Great and her decisive fall. God is getting things ready for His eternal reign.

In short, this punishment section, Chapters 15-20, of Revelation is all about removing the forces that stand against God once and for all. So, up to now, we have seen the *kingdom-like* forces removed, all for the purpose of a New Kingdom reigning. So, what is Revelation 20 all about? First, it is a picture about the reign of Christ with His people on earth; for all those other kingdoms and kings have been vanquished. Second, this chapter is all about the undoing of the three woes which we saw in Chapters 9-13. Thirdly, it is about God doing away with the last two forces that still need to be dealt with - that of Satan and Death itself.

These three KEYS help us see how Chapter 20 links into all the rest. It's all *a picture* of how God will wrap things up. "The kings and kingdoms have fallen. Christ and His people now reign. The woes which beset our world are undone. Satan and death, once and for all, are slain!"

So now that we have the big picture in mind, let's look at some of the particular ideas that emerge in this chapter. Ideas like: Satan being seized and locked up, the 1000-year reign, the first resurrection, Satan being cast into the lake of fire with his beasts to be tormented day and night for forever, all the dead being raised for a final judgment, and then death and hades, which is the realm of the dead, both being destroyed.

Christians can get pushed in all sorts of directions when trying to make sense of these ideas. So here is the short and sweet of each: Satan being seized and locked up shows us that he really is no match for our God. The 1000-year reign is a picture of the saints' victory on earth and Satan's incapacity to prevent their coming back to life and reigning with Christ. This first resurrection of those who were quite literally beheaded is totally in line with scripture and the power of our God. For we saw Lazarus come back to life, the dead walking around Jerusalem moments after the crucifixion, and our Lord and Savior's own resurrection. Resurrection is a real thing! It is also a picture for us who have died with Christ (Galatians 2:20, 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 5:15-17, Romans 6:3-11) and been raised up with Him in the power of His resurrection. We too are counted blessed and holy and the second death- the lake of fire, has no power over us.

Finally, we see Satan himself being cast into the lake of fire, that is into hell itself, where he will be tormented. In other words, Satan doesn't rule hell, he himself suffers there. Then all people great and small, kings and common folk, will be raised and will stand before the throne of God. We will all be judged by what we have done (Revelation 22:11, Romans 2:6, John 5:29, 2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 5:10 and 11:15, Titus 1:16, Ezekiel 34:17-22). In other words, it matters what you do and think and believe in this life. Lastly, death and hades are destroyed along with anyone who hasn't repented and trusted in Christ and had their name written in the Book of Life (2Thes 6-9).

**Question #1** How is God's power and authority shown in Revelation 20?

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**Question #2** What power does Satan have? In what ways is he subject to God?

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## SERMON OVERVIEW

The sovereignty of God as per His sovereign actions throughout history is the meaning and purpose of His people in the present. In other words, human history exists that God may tell His story. Yet we need reminders that correct us from building up our own reality, which always disappoints us in the end. Revelation Chapter 20 can be divided into 4 sections each with a cardinal truth, which helps us in the reframing of our own world in light of God's reality.

### **20:1-3 Jesus has restrained evil with grace**

There is a mighty, grotesque, and demonic power in our world and only heaven has the power to intervene and keep it at bay. Jesus came to limit the active evil of Satan. The power that binds Satan for a millennium is the gospel of Jesus Christ and that power is in believers of every age and place. It's the power to share and live out the gospel in faith and reverence.

### **20:4-6 Jesus will rule, and we will join him**

Scripture tells us that we live in the overlap of the seen and unseen realms. Between the spiritual and material realities. Though we suffer in one, we may be reigning in the other, or vice versa. God's people who have died to this world enjoy Jesus's defeat of sin and death in the presence of God. Being alive in Christ and reigning means being dead to sin.

### **20:7-10 Jesus will end evil**

"Revelation explains the past, applies to the present, and gives hope to the future." God has been against evil since the very beginning. He heals us of evil's pains and torments in all circumstances and He has promised to do away with Satan and evil once and for all. The defeat of Satan was promised in Genesis 3. Now in Revelation 20, we see that promise fulfilled.

### **20:11-15 Jesus will judge everyone**

Paul warned us that God "has fixed a day on which he will judge the world" (Acts 17:31) and Jesus himself said that He will "come in glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne" (Matt 25:31). We must accept the cold, hard truth that Christ will come again to judge all people (Heb 9:27) separating the wheat from the chaff. (Matt 3:12)

**Question #3** How does the idea of "this reality being God's story in which we simply get to participate and benefit from" strike you? How might your life change if you woke up each morning considering this is all really God's story and not your own?

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**Question #4** In times of fear and stress, bible readers tend to assume that the end is about to come. How does Revelation paint a picture of encouragement and not fear?

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## OPTIONAL EXERCISE

Option 1	Option 2
<p><b>Bible Search:</b></p> <p>The OT and NT have many passages about “the end of the age” and “the Day of the Lord” and the “Final Judgment”.</p> <p>Draw three boxes on a page and title them:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) End Times</li> <li>2) Jesus’ 2<sup>nd</sup> Coming/Day of the Lord</li> <li>3) Final Judgment</li> </ol> <p>Then list as many scriptures as you can which correspond to each. To get you started, here are a few: Isaiah 2:2, 2:12, 3:14. Ezekiel 34. Amos 5:18. Zech 14. Matt 24, 26:64, 10:28. Acts 17:31. Heb 9:27-28, 10:27-39. 1<sup>st</sup> Thes 4:16, 2<sup>nd</sup> Thes 1:6-9. 2Peter3. John 14:3.</p>	<p><b>Personal Questions:</b></p> <p>It is often difficult for us to understand ruling with Jesus because we are too busy negotiating between truths of God and the lies of the world. Or we are too concerned with building our own private kingdoms.</p> <p>What lies are you believing?</p> <p>What prevents you from reigning with Christ?</p> <p>What sins do you need to repent of to step into the blessings God has in store for you?</p> <p>What do you think God will say to you when you stand before His great white throne?</p> <p>What book is your name written in?</p>

## PRAYER

- Intentionally specific prayer for this week: Father we thank you for your promise to defeat Satan and Death once and for all! We praise you and your name. Father forgive us of our sins and have mercy on us sinners for we know that we will stand before your Throne of Judgment one day.

### Next Session: Revelation 21:1-22:5

#### DIGGING DEEPER

#### Hell

Read 2<sup>nd</sup> Thessalonians 1:6-9 and Matthew 10:28. Hell is a forgotten idea in many Christian circles. It is often hard for us to stomach. But it is very much real. The deeper question is what is hell like? Is it literal fire and brimstone? Or some sort of Holocaust of suffering and torture? Is it eternal separation from God? Is it some sort of handing us over to the perpetual emptiness and darkness of our own sin and selfishness? Is it the destruction of our body and soul in agony?

All these pictures are the best descriptions and hints we have at what it is *like* but not necessarily what it is in actuality. We simply don’t know; our minds don’t have the capacity to understand or grasp the full nature of what hell is. We know it is terrible. Simply put, Hell is an eternity of agony without God while the New Heavens is an eternity of bliss in His presence.

