



# The Revelation of Jesus Christ

“J1K”  
20:1-6

## Introduction

The word “millennium” came back into common use as we approached the year 2000. It’s a Latin word whose prefix, *mille*, means *thousand* and whose root, *annum*, means *years*. Thus people talked about the year 2000 marking the beginning of a new millennium.

The word millennium has another meaning among Christians. We speak of **the** millennium - of a very particular millennium. The millennium we speak of is a one thousand year period during which Jesus Christ reigns on the earth as King of kings.

Instead of worrying about Y2K a few years ago we should have been excited about J1K!

The word millennium is not found in the Bible but its Greek equivalent appears six times in chapter twenty of the Revelation of Jesus Christ. The millennium of chapter twenty *is* the one thousand year reign of Jesus Christ on the earth that follows His Second Coming at the end of the Great Tribulation.

You don't get a complete description of the millennium. In fact, you get very little description of it. The chapter concentrates on important events which occur at the *beginning* and at the *end* of Jesus Christ's thousand year reign.

We'll take it in those two parts. Tonight we'll look at events that occur at the beginning of that future time on the earth.

We pick up the action just after the return of Jesus in chapter nineteen.

Revelation 20:1 Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.

We talked at length about the "bottomless pit," the abyss or *abussos*. It may be the chasm or great gulf between in Hades that separates the place of torment from Abraham's bosom.

The "angel" has an assignment as a jailor. There will be no *Escape from the Abyss*. The "key" and the "chain" are real but also symbols of God's authority and power over the one incarcerated in the pit.

Revelation 20:2 He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years;

The four different names of Satan describe four aspects of his strategies over the centuries:

1. As the "dragon" he has sought to interfere with God's promise to send a Savior into the world. You see this most vividly in Revelation twelve where the dragon is seen waiting to devour the Savior born from the nation of Israel.

2. As the “serpent of old” he has sought to tempt mankind with his subtle lies. Think Eve in the Garden of Eden.
3. As the “devil” he is a liar and slanderer, accusing God before men.
4. As “Satan” he is at the throne of God, accusing men before God. Job one & two.

Satan will be bound there for one thousand years and, presumably, so will all his demons.

There are those who see the one thousand years as figurative. They don't take this to be a literal period of time.

The early church until Augustine almost universally believed in an earthly, historical reign of Jesus, initiated by His return. Tyconius (in the late 300's) was the first to influentially champion a spiritualized interpretation, saying that this Millennium is *now* (*amillennialism*) and must be understood as a *spiritual* reign of Jesus, not a literal reign. His view was adopted by Augustine, the Roman Catholic Church and most Reformation theologians.

Postmillennialism is an outgrowth of amillennialism saying the millennium will happen in *this* age, before Jesus' return - but that the church will bring it to pass.

We take the millennium to be literal. After all, everything else in this chapter is certainly literal: Jesus, the devil, the angels, the resurrections. All of that is literal. So is the thousand year reign of Jesus on the earth that follows His Second Coming at the end of the seven year Great Tribulation.

We are premillennial. Jesus Christ will return to this earth before the millennium to establish and govern it directly.

After the rapture and the Great Tribulation there will be many people left on earth. Jesus will judge those who survive the Great Tribulation in the judgment of the nations (Matthew 25:31-

46). The unrighteous will be sent to Hades. The righteous will enter and repopulate the millennial earth.

What will that earth, that time on earth, be like? There are many Scriptures which give us insight into the conditions on earth during the Millennial reign of Christ. These include Isaiah 35, 60-62, 65; Ezekiel 40-48; and Micah 4;

Here are just a few of its features.

During the Millennium, the citizens of earth will acknowledge and submit to the Lordship of Jesus. It will be a time of perfectly administrated enforced righteousness on this earth.

Isaiah 2:2 Now it shall come to pass in the latter days That the mountain of the Lord's house Shall be established on the top of the mountains, And shall be exalted above the hills; And all nations shall flow to it.

Isaiah 2:3 Many people shall come and say, "Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, To the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, And we shall walk in His paths." For out of Zion shall go forth the law, And the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

Isaiah 2:4 He shall judge between the nations, And rebuke many people; They shall beat their swords into plowshares, And their spears into pruning hooks; Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, Neither shall they learn war anymore.

Isaiah 2:5 O house of Jacob, come and let us walk In the light of the Lord.

During the Millennium, the way animals relate to each other and to humans will be transformed. A little child will be safe and able to lead a wolf or a leopard or a young lion or a bear. Even the danger of predators like cobras and vipers will be gone.

Isaiah 11:6 "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, The leopard shall lie down with the young goat, The calf and the young lion and the fatling together; And a little child shall lead them.

Isaiah 11:7 The cow and the bear shall graze; Their young ones shall lie down together; And the lion shall eat straw like the ox.

Isaiah 11:8 The nursing child shall play by the cobra's hole, And the weaned child shall put his hand in the viper's den.

Isaiah 11:9 They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain, For the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord As the waters cover the sea.

During the Millennium, King David will have a prominent place in the millennial earth, ruling over Israel.

Isaiah 55:3 Incline your ear, and come to Me. Hear, and your soul shall live; And I will make an everlasting covenant with you - The sure mercies of David.  
Isaiah 55:4 Indeed I have given him as a witness to the people, A leader and commander for the people.

During the Millennium, there will be a rebuilt temple and restored temple service on the millennial earth as a memorial of God's work in the past. Ezekiel 40-48 describe the future millennial temple in astonishing detail.

Throughout history special attention has been given to the commencement of a new millennium. There is no real reason why this is so except that it is a mark in time, sort of like watching your odometer go over 100,000 miles. The true new millennium we should be looking to commemorate is at the return of the Lord.

Revelation 20:3 and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while.

The "seal" further communicates the certainty that he cannot and will not escape.

Satan loves to "deceive." The most potent weapon to counter deception is truth. We must hold fast to the Word of God not allowing it to be distorted or diluted lest we be deceived.

He "must" be released at the end; we will see why in verses seven through ten.

Revelation 20:4 And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast

or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

Two distinct groups are being described. One group is sitting on thrones performing the work of judges. Who are they? Jesus promised His disciples that they would sit on thrones as judges in His kingdom.<sup>1</sup> Paul told all believers - including you - that they would one day judge the world and even judge angels.<sup>2</sup>

*You will work as a judge in the one thousand year reign of Jesus!*

The second group is martyrs from the Great Tribulation. They will reign as priests with Jesus. There will be a great emphasis placed on worship, and there will be a Temple in Jerusalem requiring the ministry of priests.

It says that these martyrs will “live.” In chapter six you saw some of them in heaven:

Revelation 6:9 When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held.

Their bodies were slain but their souls lived on immediately in the presence of God in heaven. Now in the millennium they will “live.” It means they will be resurrected from the dead, that they will receive new, glorified bodies, as you read in verse five:

Revelation 20:5 But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.

The Tribulation martyrs are resurrected as part of the “first resurrection.” There are two groups here:

1. Those who take part in the first resurrection, and

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<sup>1</sup> Luke 22:29-30

<sup>2</sup> 1Corinthians 6:2-3

## 2. The “rest of the dead.”

The two groups and their two resurrections are separated by at least one thousand years. The second resurrection is called the “second death” later on in this chapter.

The designation “first” sometimes confuses people. The first resurrection is *not* a single event; it doesn’t happen all at once. It follows a particular order over a period of time:

- Jesus Christ was the first to be resurrected: 1 Corinthians 15:20  
But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. Others, both in the Old and New Testaments, were raised from the dead - but not resurrected. Others who were raised from the dead died again! Resurrection is the transformation of the body into its final spiritual state. Jesus was the first to be resurrected, and He is the “firstfruits” of the resurrection. Firstfruits of a harvest indicate a greater harvest to follow.
- Next in order in the first resurrection we find that certain saints were resurrected immediately following the resurrection of Jesus: Matthew 27:52 & 53 and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many. This was a token to show that all the saints of the Old Testament would be resurrected.
- Next in order in the first resurrection are the saints of the Church Age. In First Thessalonians chapter four you’re told that, at the Rapture, “the dead in Christ shall rise first, then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them.” Deceased believers will be resurrected, then living believers will be raptured and given their resurrection bodies.
- Next in order in the first resurrection are the two witnesses of Revelation chapter eleven: Revelation 11:11 Now after the three-and-a-half days the breath of life from God entered them, and they stood on their feet, and great fear fell on those who saw them.

- Next in order in the first resurrection are the Tribulation martyrs we are reading about in Revelation twenty.
- Next in order in the first resurrection, according to Daniel 12:2, are the Old Testament saints: Revelation 20:6 Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.

The first resurrection is the resurrection over time of all believers. You have “part” in the first resurrection if you receive Jesus as your Savior.

We go out of our way to not be sensational about prophecy. It’s amazing enough - we don’t need to embellish it.

That is the spirit in which I want to share something about the coming millennium that can be observed in the Old Testament prophet Hosea.

Speaking of Israel in the last days the prophet wrote,

Hosea 3:4 For the children of Israel shall abide many days without king or prince, without sacrifice or sacred pillar, without ephod or teraphim.  
Hosea 3:5 Afterward the children of Israel shall return and seek the Lord their God and David their king. They shall fear the Lord and His goodness in the latter days.

What a great description of Israel in her dispersion these past several centuries. Note that this is definitely looking beyond any past history of Israel because it mentions the time (yet future) when David will again be on the throne.

A few chapters later Hosea recorded this prophecy:

Hosea 6:2 After two days He will revive us; On the third day He will raise us up, That we may live in His sight.



Suppose - and I emphasize 'suppose' - that these "days" are long periods of time. Maybe even millennia, sort of like the statement by Peter that a day is like a thousand years to the Lord.

If - and it is a very big 'if' - the days are millennia, then the nation of Israel has in fact been revived after approximately two days or two thousand years.

Could the "third day," when they are "raised-up," be the millennial reign of the Lord?

If so... **J1K is very, very soon.**