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**A0633 – August 13, 2006 – Rev 20:3-6 – The Thousand Years - Part 2**

**Revelation 20:1-2 Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. <sup>2</sup> And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years;**

Last week we identified this angel **holding the key of the abyss and a great chain** most likely as the angel in Rev 9:1 who opened the abyss under the 5<sup>th</sup> Trumpet to release the demonic locusts that stung men for five months. Now, turn there. I was notified that someone on a Kerrville Radio Station claimed that the angel in 9:1 was Satan and that Satan was opening the abyss under the 5<sup>th</sup> Trumpet to release the demonic locusts because God wouldn't do that. Well, that reasoning has several problems. First, it fails to see the connection between the angel in 20:1 with the angel in 9:1. They appear to be the same angel and it's far-fetched to think that the angel in 20:1 is Satan because the angel arrests Satan. Satan doesn't arrest Satan. Second, the theory that the angel in 9:1 is Satan is faulty because it is trying to prove either a mid-tribulation or pre-wrath Rapture. Since the NT promises that the believer is not destined for God's wrath (1 Thess 5:9-10) then they claim the first six seals and first seven trumpets can't be the wrath of God. Instead they have to be the wrath of Satan. So, they try to argue that the angel in 9:1 is Satan so they can say this is Satan's wrath and not God's wrath. This won't work for several reasons but one is because the sixth seal is said to be the wrath of God (Rev 6:17) and you can't make the sixth seal happen after the 5<sup>th</sup> Trumpet because the 7<sup>th</sup> Seal must be broken before the seven trumpets take place. So, this kind of interpretation is trying to prove that the rapture is mid-tribulation or pre-wrath but it won't work. The most likely scenario is that the angel in 9:1 and the angel in 20:1 are the same angel and neither, of course, is Satan but some people haven't seen this because they haven't squared Scripture with Scripture and plus they are trying to prove a theory that is untenable. Further, to bring the church into the 70<sup>th</sup> week of Daniel confuses Israel with the Church. The seventy weeks of Daniel are for Israel and not the Church (Dan 9:24-27). As we've

argued elsewhere the rapture must be pre-tribulational when we look at all the related texts.

This angel will come down open the abyss with a great chain used to spatially confine angels and will arrest Satan. What I forgot to tell you last week was a little about this “abyss”. It comes from a word which means a subterranean cavern. Older commentators referred to the “abyss” as the center of the earth. I think they are probably right. Now, when Satan is arrested here at Christ’s return, remember, it is the second of three stages in his final demise. He was crushed on the cross once for all, 1) then he was cast out of heaven at the middle of the Tribulation, 2) here he is arrested and cast into the abyss for the thousand years, and finally 3) he will be cast into the lake of fire for all eternity. His four names here **dragon**, the “persecutor of Israel”, **serpent of old**, the “crafty deceiver” that leads into sin, **the devil**, the “false accuser”, and **Satan**, the “enemy” of God and man, will be **bound** in the abyss for **a thousand years** in the sense that he will not be able to carry out any activity in heaven or on earth. So, the human race will still be here on earth and will be able to be tempted by the external world and the internal flesh but not by Satan or demons. So, this period of history will do away with the argument that “The devil made me do it!” The devil won’t be there to make you do it. The problem is the sin nature and negative human volition. Let’s pick up in verse 3 where we left off last week.

**Revelation 20:3 and he cast (3SAAI this angel casts) him into the abyss and locked (3SAAI) it and sealed (3SAAI) it over him, so that he may no longer deceive (3SAAS) the nations until the thousand years completed (3SAPassSubj).** The words **so that** introduce the purpose of the imprisonment of Satan. It is so that **he may no longer deceive the nations**. Deceiving the nations is the most fundamental activity of Satan but who are **the nations** in the millennium? The nations will be composed of Gentiles who believed in Jesus as their Savior during the Tribulation and survived the Tribulation so that after the Sheep/Goats judgment they enter the millennium in their natural bodies. They will then begin to procreate and increase the population. Population growth rate will be very high since death will be the exception rather than the norm (Isa 65:20). Of course, all who enter the millennium will be believers but their offspring will have to exercise personal faith in Jesus Christ to be saved. So, God wants to give these nations the opportunity to see what they can do apart from Satan’s deception. People born in the millennial kingdom may find it hard to believe that Satan once roamed about like a roaring lion just like it may be hard for you to believe that Satan will one day be bound! As I said before, the nature of the binding of Satan is that it limits him spatially. In the present age, the Church, Peter tells us that Satan is roaming about like a roaring lion

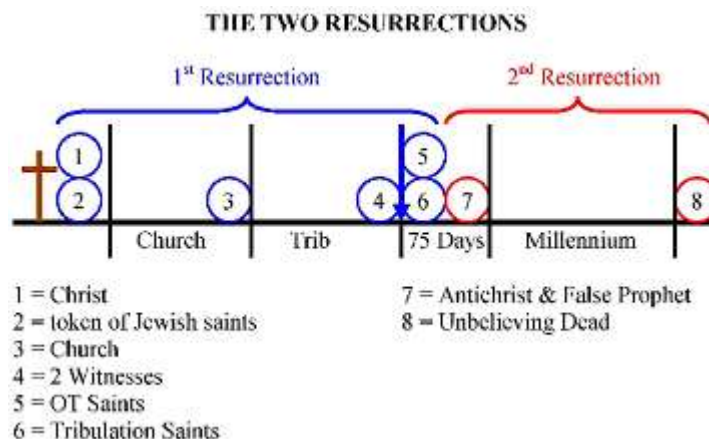
seeking to block Christ's two-fold purpose. First, that people believe the gospel and be saved and second, that the saved live by faith. Satan tries to blind the minds of the unbelieving so they will not believe and be saved (2 Cor 4:4-5) and he tries to make the believer operate by sight rather than by faith. Faith is the only means which can overcome Satan. Those who have believed in Christ have overcome Satan and those who continue to walk by faith in Christ continue to overcome him. So, the goal for the unbeliever is to believe in Christ and the goal for the believer is to walk by faith in Christ. So, he is quite active in the *kosmos* at the present. But during the future thousand years he will not be active in the *kosmos*. Rather he will be locked away in the abyss. Locked away he will not be able to practice the art of deception. Deception is basically the art of presenting a lie under the cloak of truth. Satan is a master deceiver and for it he earned the title "serpent" which we discussed earlier. As for the rest of the fallen angels (i.e. demons), they will be imprisoned in Babylon (Isa 13:21; Jer 50:39; 51:37; Rev 18:2) and Edom (Isa 34:5, 11). Why will Satan and the demons be imprisoned for a thousand years? To demonstrate that man still fails even when there is no external deception leading to sin. This will prove that the basic problem is not Satan but humans. We are the problem. Mortal humans in the kingdom will still have a sin nature and they will still sin. They will never be able to argue effectively that Satan made me do it and so God can't judge me. So, the thousand year kingdom will demonstrate that man's basic problem is not an external one but an internal one, a heart problem, the spiritual problem of the sin nature. So, the earth will be renovated, Satan will be locked away, but humans will still have the sin nature. And God will demonstrate in the Millennium that even under very good conditions man fails. Only Jesus Christ is righteous, only Jesus Christ is perfect and man can never please God. So, at this point in history there will be a shift from the Dispensation of Grace to the Dispensation of the Kingdom.

**After these things it is necessary to loose (APInf he will be loosed, presumably by the angel who locked him up) him a little time.** This is a difficult statement. "Why is it necessary to loose him for a little time?" "Why can't this be the final demise of Satan?" "What is the point of releasing him for a little time after the thousand years?" The final answer is unrevealed. One purpose may be a partial answer. "Through his release the whole universe will see that after a thousand years of his imprisonment and an ideal reign on earth, Satan is incurably wicked and men's hearts are still perverse enough to allow him together an army of such immense size" (Robert Thomas, 411). In other words, jail time never rehabilitates anyone. God's method of justice is not rehabilitation but restitution. God is demonstrating that man's idea that rehabilitation will change a person and make them better is wrong. People cannot change themselves for the better even given a very long period of time. Because we were unable to make proper restitution God

gave us His unique Son, Jesus Christ to make restitution for us on the cross. There He paid for all sin past, present, and future. Jail time doesn't help anyone. All it does is put the burden on society to make restitution and support criminals.

**Revelation 20:4 And I saw (1SAAI) thrones and they sat (3PAAI) upon them and judgment was given (3SAPI) them, and the souls of the beheaded (PerfPassPart) because of the testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God and who did not worship (3PAAI actively worship) the beast nor his statue and did not take (3PAAI actively take) the mark upon the forehead and upon their hand. And they lived (3PAAI actively lived) and reigned (3PAAI actively reigned) with the Christ a thousand years.**

**And I saw (1SAAI) thrones.** The **thrones** are **thrones** of judgment. So, those who sit upon the **thrones** carry out the function of judging. The difficulty is identifying the one's sitting upon them and carrying out judgment. The text merely says **they sat** and **they** were given **judgment**. They could be men or angels but the evidence points to these being resurrected men. At this point in history the only people who have been resurrected are Christ (1 Cor 15:23), a small token of Jewish saints (Matt 27:52) the Church at the pre-trib Rapture (1 Thess 5:9-10), and the two witnesses (Rev 11:11-12).



We get a further hint from Matt 19:27-28

**Matthew 19:27-28** Then Peter said to Him, "Behold, we have left everything and followed You; what then will there be for us?" And Jesus said to them, "Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.

Peter is asking, what reward will we have for leaving everything and following Jesus. Jesus' answer is they will sit on thrones and judge. Of course, Judas Iscariot did not follow Him and so will not follow Jesus in the regeneration and will not be one of the twelve who sit upon the twelve thrones. The twelfth will be Matthias since he was chosen in Acts 1:23-26 under an approved method of deciphering God's will during that dispensation—the casting of lots. The main point though is that the authority to sit on thrones and judge during the millennial kingdom is a reward for faithful service in this life. In our context those who sit on **thrones** and **judge** is broader than the 12 apostles and refers to all believers who have faithfully followed Jesus. However, it does not refer to all believers but only to faithful believers who used the capacity God gave them. Not all believers follow Christ. There is the possibility that a believer will fail in the Christian life. All who have faith in Christ are saved but not all who have faith in Christ are His disciples. Salvation is a free gift, discipleship is costly. Salvation results in the possession of eternal life but discipleship results in rewards. Since sitting on a throne and judging in the millennium is a reward and not all believers become His disciples and earn rewards then not all believers will sit on thrones and judge. However, faithful disciples will be rewarded with the authority to judge the world and angels according to 1 Cor 6:2-3 (also see verses 9-10 on inheritance in the kingdom of God).

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