

# Revelation Step by Step 15

## The Reign of Christ and The Saints

In **Chapter 20** we see events which draw together and build on other prophecies throughout God's word, elaborating and expanding our understanding of the Kingdom of God.

It is assumed that we have previous knowledge of God's word and that we will build these revelations of Christ upon that sound framework, without concerning ourselves with the theories and nomenclature of 'theologians', of which our Lord has little general appreciation, with a few exceptions. We can learn from all sources, but in the end we need the final authority of God's word.

**Verses 1-3:** The victory over and binding of Satan.

Here an angel descending from Heaven has the key to the abyss, and a great chain in his hand, the obvious symbol of the great power given to him by God to enable the subduing of Satan, who is already restricted to the earth. (Rev. 12:9)

Revelation 20:3, 'And he cast him into the Abyss, and shut and sealed it over him, so that he should not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed. After these things it is necessary for him to be released for a little time.' Berean literal Bible.

Satan is to be restricted to the prison where the most evil of his demons were kept until the 5<sup>th</sup> Trumpet, Rev. 9:1-11. Then, while the evidence, the results of man's deception and delusion is all around, without the evil spiritual broadcast of Satan and his demons, the foundation of God's righteous Kingdom can be laid.

**Verses 4-6:** The reign of the Saints

Who are these Saints? They are all those who took part in the First Resurrection, both the Old Testament Saints and the New, now returned from their marriage to Christ in Heaven, to rule and judge upon the earth. Daniel 9:22, 'until the Ancient of Days came, and judgment was given for the saints of the Most High, and the time came when the saints possessed the kingdom.' They are full members of the family of God, **one** with Christ and his father, John 17:21, 'that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.'

Though we may have different roles and different levels of responsibility, according to our fruits, we will share in the rule of God's Kingdom if we have proved faithful to His words. Revelation 17:14, "They will make war on the Lamb, and the Lamb will conquer them, for he is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those with him are

called and chosen **and faithful.**” Their active respect of His word has proved their faithfulness!

We will reign with Christ for 1000 years, as both Kings, and Priests verse 6, ‘ **Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a thousand years.**’ Never again will any others gain this special close relationship with Jesus Christ and His Father, for verse 6 says they are blessed and holy, and, as we will see, they will never again encounter death.

Do not confuse them with those listed in Revelation chapter 7, who are sealed with the Holy Spirit only *after* the First Resurrection in the previous chapter, for all of *those* experience the **Great Tribulation**, verse 14, ‘I answered, “**Sir, you know.**” **And he said, “These are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.**’ NIV.

They include the deluded and Laodicean ‘remnant’ of chapter 12:17, who nevertheless keep the Commandments of God, but now repent their lukewarm lack of diligence to the *whole* of God’s word. Most will give their lives during the Great Tribulation, to prove their repentance, cf. Isaiah 24:6, though they **will** gain their reward at the *future* Second Resurrection, as Revelation 7:15-17 indicates....

“For this reason,  
they are before the throne of God  
and serve Him day and night in His temple;  
and the One seated on the throne  
**will** spread His tabernacle over them.

**Never again will** they hunger,  
and never will they thirst;  
**nor will the sun beat down upon them,  
nor any scorching heat.**’

For the Lamb in the centre of the throne  
**will be** their shepherd.

‘He **will** lead them to **springs of living water,**  
and ‘**God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.**’” Compare this with Revelation, 21:4-7, as they deeply regret their failure to heed Christ’s knocking!

**Verses 7-9:** At the end of the 1000 years, at the Second Resurrection, all who have ever lived except those who took part in the First Resurrection, arise from their graves, to find a veritable Eden, after 1000 years of preparation. Not a soul will be lost, no matter where or how they died, v.13, ‘**The sea gave up its dead, and death and the grave gave up their dead. And all were judged according to their deeds**’ While they are still physical, they are not able to have children. Matthew 22:30, ‘**For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage, but are like angels in heaven.**’

There will be children though; those who died in infancy, to be raised by their parents, maybe even the aborted, as they grow to adulthood. The rest will be

resurrected in the prime of life and will live until they are 100 years old. Isaiah 65:20, ‘No more shall there be in it an infant who lives but a few days, or an old man who does not fill out his days, for the young man shall die a hundred years old, and the sinner a hundred years old shall be accursed.’

There is a great deal of confusion about this Second Resurrection. Some believe that all resurrected are the incorrigibly wicked. Not so, for who could be more innocent than a stillborn baby, or the repentant who give their lives in proof during the great Tribulation? Our God is a God of justice and mercy, and He knows that many raised in the Second Resurrection will have never even have heard of Him, or Jesus Christ!

The wicked and the extremely wicked will be raised to punishment, though later given a chance to repent. Isaiah 24:21-22, ‘And it shall come to pass in that day, that the LORD shall punish the host of the high ones that are on high (the most wicked demons), and the kings of the earth upon the earth, And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be visited.’ Here is an example of wicked rulers like Stalin, Hitler and Pol Pot, who will be thrown into the abyss *with* the wicked demons, but all will receive their just deserts at the appropriate time.

**Verses 7-9:** At the time of the second Resurrection, Satan will be released from the abyss in order that those raised up from death into the now Eden-like conditions, may have their chance to be *educated in God’s way* **and then have their loyalty to God tested** during their long lives. Part of the reason for the Millennium was to provide enough teachers to educate the billions who will arise in the Second Resurrection, eg. Isaiah 30:20-21, ‘.....yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers: And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left.’

However, once again Satan will be able to deceive many people who are hostile to God’s way, worldwide, and they will be gathered together, metaphorically as Gog and Magog, and finally, *as the 100 years end*, they are led by Satan to attack Jerusalem.

‘Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea. They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them.’

And so, the final rebellion, orchestrated by Satan against God, his Family and His Holy city, fails. Many people, especially in ‘Israel’ remained faithful to God.

**Verse 10:** ‘And the devil, the one deceiving them, was cast into the lake of fire and of sulphur, where the beast and the false prophet also *are*; and they will be tormented day and night to the **ages of the ages.**’ Berean Literal Bible.

Notice the word 'are' is not there in the original Greek text.

The fate of Satan and His demons is as unclear as the meaning of 'ages of the ages.' We have to consider Ezekiel 28:13, '**You were in Eden**, the garden of God; every precious stone was your covering, sardius, topaz, and diamond, beryl, onyx, and jasper, sapphire, emerald, and carbuncle; and crafted in gold were your settings and your engravings. On the day that you were created they were prepared.'

14, '**You were an anointed guardian cherub**. I placed you; you were on the holy mountain of God; in the midst of the stones of fire you walked.

15, 'You were blameless in your ways from the day you were created, till unrighteousness was found in you.'

18, "You defiled your sanctuaries By the multitude of your iniquities, By the iniquity of your trading; Therefore **I brought fire from your midst; It devoured you, And I turned you to ashes upon the earth** In the sight of all who saw you."

It is hard to conclude that Satan is **not** destroyed by God, Hebrews 2:14, "Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, **that through death he might destroy the one** who has the power of death, that is, **the devil**."

**Verse 11-13:** 'Then I saw a **great white throne** and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them.'

This is the name given for that period of 100 years of judgement of those who arose in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Resurrection. Their lives during that time are judged by Christ according to their works - whether or not they prove repentant.

At the end of the 100 years, only those who have repented, been baptised and received God's Holy Spirit, and so have qualified to become a spirit being, will survive the change to a new Heavens and a new earth. **The unrepentant, still in their sin, will be consumed in that "lake" of fire**, 2 Peter 3:10-12, 'But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; **both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up**. Therefore, since all these things will be dissolved, what manner of persons ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be dissolved, being on fire, and the elements will melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for **new heavens and a new earth** in which righteousness dwells.'

**Verses 14-15:** This is the 'second death', making death and the grave then redundant, for there are then no wicked left, 'Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the **book of life**, he was thrown into the lake of fire.'

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and in in Matt 24:15-22, 32-34; Mark 13:14-23, 29-30 (cf. Luke 19:41-44; 21:20-23, 32-33; 23:28-30).