

MSB243

# MORE Seed and Bread

*BRIEF BIBLICAL MESSAGES FROM*

## THE WORD OF TRUTH MINISTRY

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# REVELATION 20: JUDGMENT AND SATAN'S END

By Milton B. Hammond

Most conventional Biblical scholars look at the events recorded in Revelation 20 and presume that the Kingdom of God, as proclaimed by Jesus Christ in the gospels, is the thousand-year reign of Christ upon the earth (following His *parousia* and the battle of Armageddon). Their assumption ignores the advent of the premillennial Kingdom of God, also called "the Day of Christ" and "Eonian Times." They deny the truth that today, Christ rules in secret from His throne in heaven over His footstool, the earth. As Isaiah has said, **"Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool"** (Isa. 66:1). These Biblical scholars also ignore the three resurrections in I Corinthians 15:22-25, which says, **For as in Adam all die (are dying), even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order (company), (1) Christ the firstfruits (the firstfruits anointed), afterward (2) they that are Christ's at His coming (the martyrs at His *parousia*). (3) Then cometh the end (totelos, the last company, at the great white throne), when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For He must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet.** The first resurrection brings to life those selected to live on the earth in the Kingdom of God, while the second one returns to life those martyred in the tribulation. For an examination of the events immediately following the *parousia* of Christ, we must go to Revelation 20 for the only pertinent report.

Revelation 20 begins with the binding of Satan, the evil one. It says, **And I (John) saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years. And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season** (Rev. 20:1-3). Satan is restrained during the Kingdom by the Holy Spirit, based on the control that God imposes on mankind for a righteous Kingdom. The rebellious person will be removed even as was done to Ananias and Sapphira in Acts 5: 1-10. They died for lying to the Holy Spirit. But in Christ's thousand-year reign Satan is committed to the bottomless pit (abyss), imprisoned, no longer free to roam about the earth deceiving mankind.

Some background is in order here. Satan had been part of the original creation of God and had a position among the highest order of God's mighty ones, the Cherubim. As Ezekiel says, **Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I (God) hath set thee so: thou was upon the holy mountain of God; thou walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire** (the spirits of God). **Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day thou wast created, till iniquity wast found in thee. By the multitude of thy merchandise** (deceptive acts) **they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain** (government) **of God; and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire. Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee** (such was his shame). **Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thy iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffick; therefore will I bring a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes** (final destruction) **upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee. All they that know thee among the people shall be astonished at thee: thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be anymore** (Ezek. 28:14-19). Thus, God describes the nature of Satan and his final end. Isaiah reports his major sin this way, **For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars** (angels, heavenly host) **of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation** (*Heb.-mowed*, a religious convocation), **in the sides of the north. I will ascend above the heights of**

**the clouds; I will be like the Most High** (Isa. 14:13-14). Such was the attitude of Satan and it conflicted directly with Jehovah. The first commandment given to Israel was, "**Thou shalt have no other Gods before Me**" (Exod. 20:3). When God describes Himself as a "jealous God" (Exod. 20:5), He means that He permits no rivals. Satan's declaration of his rivalry was also his own death knell.

In Revelation 20, John is given the further information: **And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go about to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog (great and small), to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed (encircled) the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city (Jerusalem): and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them (the rebels). And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are (were cast), and (they) shall be tormented (tested) day and night forever and ever (for the eons of eons) (Rev. 20:7-10).** Thus, the final doom of Satan is sealed and his power is totally destroyed. He is a mighty-created being who could have done much good as the "covering cherub," but he lost his position and will be destroyed in that day as an example to all men and the heavenly host who would try to rival God's magnificence and power. God's character contains vast love for His creation, described as "His grace," and with it His judgment (righteous order) requires that His will is to be explicitly followed by all His saints (those elected to special service by Christ, not those named by the Catholic church).

The thousand-year reign of Christ is introduced with the second of the three resurrections mentioned previously in 1 Corinthians 15:23, "they that are Christ's at His coming (*parousia*)." John says, **And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first (foremost) resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him**

**a thousand years** (Rev. 20:4-6).

This is about all we know of the thousand-year reign of Christ. We know that the testing of the great tribulation has resulted in a company of saints and nations upon the earth that have demonstrated the righteousness of God. This earth is finally cleansed of the sinfulness and the wickedness of Satan's reign over the earth.

A question has arisen about the differences between the judgments here in Revelation 20 and the "sheep and goat parable" of Matthew 25. Since this parable is preceded by the parables of "the ten virgins and the marriage feast" and "the talents," it makes sense to understand it in the figurative manner rather than attempting to equate it to the judgment in Revelation. Since both of the preceding parables refer to the preparation of men who have lived in the Kingdom of God, so does it refer to the protection and comfort provided for the Jews in the time of tribulation.

Sin is the current course of this world and even we, who are believers in Christ, cannot escape its debilitating influence. The Apostle Paul tells us in Ephesians, **And you hath He quickened (made alive), who were dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air** (this environment, Satan), **the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: among whom also we all had our conversation** (manner of life) **in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind: and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others** (Eph. 2:1-3). Without Christ we were dead, and Satan could do with us as he wished, but thanks be to God that He has cared for us and preserved us by sending the Lord Jesus Christ to save mankind. Paul goes on to say, **But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved) and has raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places** (among the elevated ones) **in Christ Jesus: that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus** (Eph. 2:4-7). Thus, our salvation has a purpose, which is to show to all the world the great and abundant grace of God toward His creation. This grace is a love and favor which is not based on some deserving quality, but it is totally undeserved to the glory of God's magnificent grace.

Now, John goes on in Revelation to describe that final and third resurrection, also referred to in 1 Corinthians 15:24 as "then cometh the end." This is the *tote/os* or the last and final company. John describes it as follows: **And I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face earth and heaven fled away; and there was no place found for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God: and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell (*hades*, the state of death with resurrection in view) delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to his works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire (the symbol of final destruction). This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire (Rev. 20:11-15). Paul in 1 Corinthians 15, declares, **The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For He hath put all things under His feet (in subjection). But when He saith all things are put under Him, it is manifest that He (God) is excepted, which did put all things under Him. And when all things shall be subdued unto Him, then shall the Son also Himself be subject unto Him that put all things under Him, that God may be all in all (everything to everyone) (1 Cor. 15:26-28).****

The people of the earth will have been tested and prepared for God's righteous order when He will make His dwelling place among men. It is beyond the scope of this study to deal with God's plan for the new heavens and the new earth which is covered in Revelation 21 and 22. They tell us almost all that we can know about it today. But we can be sure that as we will need this knowledge in our service for God, being the loving God that He is, He will graciously prepare and instruct us. Some day we will all say "Hallelujah," which is to say "Praise you the Lord." Then the people of God will see an even more glorious day, the Day of God, which is the new heavens and the new earth.

**END**

**ISSUE NO. MSB243  
Published April 25, 2000**