

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

“The Golden Age”

Revelation 20:1-3

Introduction

1. The glorious appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ is dramatically described (19:11-16). Not only has Messiah come, but He has totally decimated His enemies (19:17-21). All human efforts to oppose God’s great purposes for the universe have been successfully overcome.

2. But certain final issues must be addressed. These disclose the unfolding of the program of the ages. As always, the only legitimate way to interpret Scripture is in its plain ordinary sense. As this makes good sense, any other sense is nonsense.

3. Following the clean-up of the earth at the “supper of the great God” (19:17-21), Scripture presents three significant concerns:

1. ABOUT AN ANGEL v. 1

a. His Coming

The vision is clear (cf. 19:11, 17, here). This is no apparition, but a real angel. He is seen coming down () out of () heaven. Hence the scene is on earth.

b. His Having

This specific angel possesses two items: 1) Key of the bottomless pit and 2) A great chain in his hand. Note: 1) The pit is really the abyss. It signifies the deep or something bottomless. This word is found nine times in the N.T., seven of which are in Revelation (9:1, 2, 11:7; 17:8; 20:1, 3), once in Luke (8:31) and once in Romans (10:7). It is a place, but its locality may be undetermined. Think of it -- an angel has the key to this place! 2) The chain is great. Make no mistake, this is for real. Other Scriptures speak of other created beings in chains (2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6). No matter what the character of the chain may be, the fact is it confines God’s enemies for 1000 years.

2. ABOUT AN ENEMY v. 2

a. His Names

a) Dragon

He is so named because of incredible cruelty and hideous character. Legend and paintings show him as a monster, a sort of combination of super human cruelty and craft.

b) Old (ancient) Serpent

Ancient refers to his historicity with Adam and Eve (Gen. 3). As a serpent, His subtlety and coming are addressed (cf. 2 Cor. 11:3). He has been a murderer and liar (Jn 8:44; 1 Jn 3:8).

c) Devil ()

This points to him as accuser, traducer, tempter, slanderer.

d) Satan (Satan) connotes he is the open and declared adversary of Christ. Surely he is the public Enemy of God and His people (cf. Job 1:2; Zech. 3; Mt. 4; Eph. 6:11; 1 Pet. 5:8).

Note: There are three remarkable passages in the O.T. where animals actually spoke: 1. Serpent (Gen. 3). 2. Balaam’s donkey (Num. 22:21-30). 3. The great fish which swallowed Jonah (Jonah 2:10). The historical accuracy of these events is supported in the N.T. (cf. 2 Cor. 11:3; 2 Pet. 2:15; Mt. 12:40).

b. His Capture/Confinement

Five verbs detail this:

- 1) Laid Hold Hitherto he has escaped justice, but now he is seized ().
- 2) Bound He is not now finally dealt with, but he is made a prisoner for 1000 years.
- 3) Cast This is a definite action () which lands him in the abyss.
- 4) Shut Up From this verb, the noun “key” comes. So the abyss is now locked.
- 5) Sealed This is the final precaution to prevent escape. No rescue was possible.

3. ABOUT AN EVENT

a. Its Designation

This is the “millennium” or the “golden age.” The term “thousand year” is found six times in this chapter (vv. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7). Three of these are connected with Satan, two affirm the reign of the saints with Messiah, and one connotes the period between the resurrection of the saints and that of the wicked.

b. Its Intention

A purpose clause notes that the 1000 years is designed so that Satan will not deceive the nations during this period. He has been the culprit behind all the antagonism to God’s servants and work -- right from the beginning. This will not be now for 1000 years. Hallelujah!

c. Its Termination

Following the events outlined in this section, the text states Satan must be released () for a little season. Hence, following a rather perfect environment free of Satan, his release will trigger rebellion again against God (20:7-9). Man’s rebellious nature will be the same -- no improvement after 1000 years!

Conclusion The Lord Jesus Christ will return to establish his earthly kingdom. This is the one promised in the O.T. It is, therefore, principally intended for the nation Israel and saved Gentiles. Before that day, Scripture exhorts, indeed, urgently appeals to all mankind to believe on Jesus as Saviour from sin and be a part of His spiritual kingdom. Will you respond to Him today? Right now? Come while there is time!