

## THE BOOK OF REVELATION

"What About the Millennium?"

Revelation 20:1-6

Review: How is the stage set? Get the picture!

1. God has cleansed the earth with His great Supper (19:17-21). What a magnificent triumph.
2. An angel from heaven remarkably has a key and chain with which he seals Satan in the abyss for 1000 years (20:1-3).
3. With the confinement of the Devil secure, the text reveals God's program of resurrection for the Church (seated on thrones) and tribulation saints (martyrs and loyalists) (20:4-5). This is the first resurrection. The benefits of this are listed (20:6).
4. This first resurrection is consistent with Scripture elsewhere (1 Cor. 15:20, 23, 24). This passage teaches two orders of resurrection:

a. First Order: Christ. This word "order" (τάγματι tagmati) is a military term and refers to a corps of troops. Christ is the first order of resurrection. He is the "first fruits" (ἀπαρχή aparche) or the beginning of many more to come. He is taken from the mass left in the grave. This related our Lord to the feast of first fruits in the O.T. (Lev. 23:9-14).

b. Second Order: The specific phrase is "they that are Christ's" (v. 23). The idea does not have the technical significance of the phrase "in Christ." That is used only of Grace dispensation believers (1 Cor. 12:13). However, the phrase surely refers to all who have participated in the redemptive work of Christ (Ro. 3:24, 25). This would include O.T. and tribulation saints (Dan. 12:2; Rev. 20:4).

c. Third Order: This is included in the expression "then cometh the end" (v. 24). While not stating a "second resurrection," as such, it is clearly what is meant (cf. Rev. 20:5). Scripture calls this the "second death" Rev. 20:14; 21:8). How fearful!

5. Now all the above considerations have extraordinary implications:

### 1. THEOLOGICALLY

To understand how to interpret Scripture (hermeneutics), one major consistent true-to-the-text view is "dispensational." The whole of the Bible, by this method, is viewed literally (as it is), distinguishing the Body of Christ (as the Church begun at Pentecost), and finding a future for the Jews (as a composite nation before God). A specific study in dispensations is its view of eschatology (study of last things), but must not be construed as limited to it (i.e. eschatology). Dispensations is a system in understanding all Scripture.

According to our text, the Church (20:4) is seen in heaven before the millennium. The saints from the Tribulation are also (20:4). Hence, the view of our text clearly teaches what is referred to as "pretribulational premillennialism." Latch on to this

important doctrinal statement. It is a cardinal facet to understanding the Word of God. To minimize it or make it insignificant will affect one's interpretation of the entire Bible. Beware!!

### 2. CATEGORICALLY

There are four distinguishable kingdoms given in Scripture:

a. Eternal This represents the eternal and timeless control of God over all things (Ps. 10:16; 103:19).

b. Messianic This is also referred to as the Davidic kingdom because of the promises made to him (2 Sam. 7:12-16). Following Christ's return to the earth, he will reign for 1000 years. This is the millennium outlined in our text (Rev. 20:1-6). This kingdom will be overt when Christ returns.

c. Mystery Between Christ's first advent to the earth (His birth and life) and His second advent (at end of Tribulation), the Lord revealed what is called the mysteries of His kingdom. Generally speaking, it is "Christendom." The reference therefore is to the time between the advents.

d. Spiritual Believers on Christ are placed into this (Col. 1:13) and enter into it by the new birth (Jn. 3:3).

### 3. DESCRIPTIVELY

The pretribulational premillennial view of Scripture which incorporates the categories of "kingdoms" (just listed), provide reasons for such a millennium.

a. It will demonstrate the Messianic kingdom to the world. The entire universe will have an open show of the theocratic kingdom under the direct rule of Christ. (Ps 2; 110).

b. It will demonstrate that a perfect environment is no solution to man's sin problem. At the end of the millennium, rebellious man revolts against God (Rev. 20:3, 7-10).

c. It will demonstrate God's faithfulness to His promises (Luke 1:32). The entire gamut of O.T. promises to Israel will find literal fulfillment (cf. Isa. 2:2-4; 9:6, 7; Ezek. 34:11-31; 37:24, 25).

Conclusion The Bible is filled with information for a true believer on Christ. What a thrill to know the best is yet to come. However, if you are not a genuine believer, know very well there will be an "end resurrection" which is called the "second death." Flee this, my friend, and receive Jesus as your Saviour from sin today. Amen.