

## End Times Prophecy (Eschatology) 314: Revelation Chronology



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### Revelation Chronology: Section 3.01 Continued

*The Resurrection of the Saints and the Millennial Reign of Christ and the Saints*

**Revelation 20:1** And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. 2 And he laid hold on the dragon, **that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,** 3 **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. 4 **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 had received *his* mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; **and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.** 5 **But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.** 6 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.**

This passage describes the next two events covered in this *Long Series*: **3)** the resurrection of the saints and **4)** the millennial reign of Christ and the saints. There are a few items worth noting.

First, just after Satan is cast down into the pit in verses 2-3, John describes seeing those who were beheaded for not worshipping the mark of the beast in verse 4. In verse 4 he states that they live and reign with Christ for a thousand years. In verse 5, John says that the rest of the dead, besides the saints, “lived not again” until after the thousand years. The status of the rest of the dead in verse 5 is clearly intended as a contrast to the status of the saints in verse 4. Thus, given that the rest of the dead “lived not again” we know that the word “lived” concerning the saints in verse 4 refers to them “living again” or being brought back to life.

This, of course, is corroborated immediately in the second sentence of verse 5, which refers to “the first resurrection.” Verse 6 goes on to state who is included in the first resurrection and it specifically includes those who reign with Christ for a thousand years, the same group described in verse 4. Thus, those who are living

and reigning with Christ in verse 4 are “living again” and have participated in “the first resurrection.” They have been raised from the dead, just as Christ Jesus was. The fact that here in Revelation 20 the saints have been resurrected from the dead just like Christ both parallels and fulfills the scriptural promises.

**Romans 5:17** For if by one man's offence **death reigned** by one; much more **they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.**

**Romans 8:11** But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

**1 Corinthians 15:20** But now is **Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.** 21 For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, **even so in Christ shall all be made alive.** 23 **But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.**

**I Corinthians 15:42** So also is **the resurrection of the dead.** It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: 43 It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: 44 **It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.** 45 And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; **the last Adam was made a quickening spirit...**49 **And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.** 50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. 51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but **we shall all be changed,** 52 **In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.** 53 **For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.** 54 So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.

**II Corinthians 4:13** We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak; 14 **Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus,** and shall present us with you.

**Philippians 3:20** **For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:** 21 **Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body,** according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

**I Thessalonians 4:13** But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have

no hope. 14 **For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.** 15 For this we say unto you by **the word of the Lord**, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. 16 **For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first:** 17 **Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air:** and so shall we ever be with the Lord. 18 Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

**1 John 3:1** Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. 2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but **we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.**

Thus, once again there is perfect continuity and no alterations or changes on this subject throughout the entire New Testament.

In addition, it should be noted that in Revelation 20:4-6 John is *not* reporting *the occurrence* of the resurrection *as it takes place*. Instead, by the time that John first sees these saints in verse 4, they are *already alive*. In verses 5-6, John goes on to describe why they are alive, which is due to their participation in the first resurrection. Thus, it is only John's *sighting* of them that occurs after Satan is imprisoned in verses 2-3, not the actual resurrection. The actual resurrection *has already occurred*, at the return of the Lord in the clouds, before the defeat of the antichrist, false prophet, and Satan at the battle of Armageddon, which we discussed earlier.

These facts are indicated by Matthew 24:30-31, Matthew 26:64, Mark 13:26-27, Mark 14:62, and Luke 21:27, Acts 1:9-11, 1 Corinthians 15:51-53, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, Revelation 11:3-13, 15-19, Revelation 14:14-20, and Revelation 19:7-8, 14, and 19, which all depict Jesus returning on the clouds at the sound of the seventh and final trumpet at which point the dead saints will be resurrected and the living saints instantly transformed also as they meet the Lord in the clouds and then proceed to tread out the winepress of God as the armies of the Lord in the battle of Armageddon.

Furthermore, please note from 1 Corinthians 15:22 that, "as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." We would like to give attention to the fact that all men are resurrected, to the same extent that all men die. Not only does 1 Corinthians 15 attest that all men, even the wicked, will be resurrected, but Revelation 20 states the same thing. Revelation 20:4-6 refers to the occurrence of the first resurrection, which includes the saints. But Revelation 20:5 also indicates that "the rest of the dead," beyond just the saints, will be resurrected after the thousand years. This "second resurrection" of the rest of the dead, including the wicked, is also described in Revelation 20:11-15, which we will discuss later.

The reasoning for this is simple. In Matthew 25:41, Jesus tells the wicked that the everlasting fire of hell was prepared for the devil and his angels. It is noteworthy that when speaking to wicked humans who are going to hell, Jesus does *not* state that hell was prepared for human beings. Instead, he asserts that hell was prepared for angelic beings. In Matthew 22:30, Mark 12:25, and Luke 20:35-36, Jesus states that when resurrected, men are like angels. In fact, in Luke's version, Jesus actually uses the word, "isaggelos," (Strong's No. 2465), which is a single Greek word, compounded from the Greek word "isos" (Strong's No 2470), which means "equal, in quantity or quality" and the word, "aggelos" (Strong's No. 32), which is the Greek word for "angel." Thus, Jesus is literally saying that in the resurrection, men are equal in quality to the angels, including such attributes as immortality, which is mentioned in all three of these accounts.

This is why all men are resurrected, even the wicked, because when they are resurrected they become like angels, which is who the eternal fire of hell was made for in the first place. In short, by becoming like angels in the resurrection, men become fit for the torment of hell, a torment designed for angelic beings.

But the parallels between the wicked and the righteous don't stop there. The fact that the antichrist and the false prophet are thrown live into the lake of fire seems to correspond to Paul's statements in 1 Corinthians 15:51-53 and 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 that some Christians will be alive when Christ returns and will be directly transformed, receiving glorified, immortal bodies, without ever dying. So, there is not only a resurrection for both the wicked and the righteous, but there are instances where both the wicked and the righteous are directly transformed without having to die first. The entire system is very consistent and logical.

At this point, we have already made a few statements about the condition of resurrected men. In particular, we saw how Jesus himself asserts their likeness or equality to angels, including the angelic trait of immortality. Likewise, we saw how Paul also mentions immortality and includes freedom from physical decay, or corruption in 1 Corinthians 15:51-53. By way of introduction, we recall a story in 2 Kings 6:11-17, in which the king of Syria sends his army of horses and chariots and a great number of men against Elisha, Elijah's successor. And when Elisha's servant sees this great army he is concerned but Elisha prays for and the Lord allows the servant to see that all around Elisha the land is filled with horses and chariots of fire. This is a depiction of the angelic armies.

With this imagery of fiery horses and chariots in mind, we turn to Joel 2's description of the day of the Lord.

**Joel 2:1** Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in my holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: **for the day of the LORD cometh**, for *it is nigh* at hand,

As we can see below, as Joel continues, he describes the people of the army of the Lord on that day. Verse 11 specifically refers to them as the Lord's army. Verse 5 refers to them as "a strong people set in battle array." Verse 7 similarly refers to

them as “men of war.” So, we know this is a description of the armies accompanying the returning Jesus Christ on the day of the Lord. But, keeping in mind that upon seeing the Lord in the clouds and being gathered together with him, the saints receive resurrected, glorified, immortal, incorruptible spirit bodies that are equal to the angels and pattern after the body of the resurrected Christ Jesus, let’s consider the details that Joel provides about these people.

**Joel 2:2** A day of darkness and of gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, as the morning spread upon the mountains: **a great people and a strong; there hath not been ever the like,** neither shall be any more after it, *even* to the years of many generations. **3 A fire devoureth before them; and behind them a flame burneth:** the land *is* as the garden of Eden before them, and behind them a desolate wilderness; yea, and nothing shall escape them. **4 The appearance of them is as the appearance of horses; and as horsemen, so shall they run.** **5 Like the noise of chariots on the tops of mountains shall they leap, like the noise of a flame of fire** that devoureth the stubble, as **a strong people set in battle array.** **6** Before their face the people shall be much pained: all faces shall gather blackness. **7 They shall run like mighty men; they shall climb the wall like men of war;** and they shall march every one on his ways, and they shall not break their ranks: **8 Neither shall one thrust another;** they shall walk every one in his path: **and when they fall upon the sword, they shall not be wounded.** **9 They shall run to and fro in the city; they shall run upon the wall, they shall climb up upon the houses;** they shall enter in at the windows **like a thief.** **10 The earth shall quake before them;** the heavens shall tremble: **the sun and the moon shall be dark, and the stars shall withdraw their shining:** **11 And the LORD shall utter his voice before his army:** for his camp *is* very great: **for he is strong that executeth his word: for the day of the LORD is great and very terrible;** and who can abide it?...**31 The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the LORD come.**

Like the army protecting Elisha, this army is described using the imagery of fire, horses, and chariots. They run quickly, they leap like flames of fire, they run up city walls. The earth quakes before them. If they fall on the sword, if they are stabbed, they are not wounded. Clearly, these are immortal men. And notice that the timing of this is all on the day of the Lord, shortly after the signs in the sun, moon, and stars, which occur at the sixth seal in Revelation 6:12-17, when the men of the earth declare that “the wrath of the Lamb” and “the great day of his wrath is come.” Joel is giving an in-depth description of the return of the Lord and the battle of Armageddon, when the Lord’s army will be comprised of his immortal, resurrected saints.

There are three other items to point out from Joel. First, there is Joel 2:9’s comparison of the army of the Lord to a thief. This directly relates to the New Testament comparisons of Jesus’ return to the coming of a thief in the night (Matthew 24:43, 1 Thessalonians 5:2-4, 2 Peter 3:10, Revelation 3:3, and Revelation 16:15).

Second, there is the fire that devours both before and behind this army. And second, there is the statement in verse 11 that the Lord utters his voice before this army and they execute his word on the day of the Lord.

The statement about the fire devouring the land relates to 2 Peter 3:1-14, where Peter describes that at the Lord's coming, the earth that is will be destroyed by fire, just as the former earth was destroyed by the waters of the flood. From Joel 2's description, we understand that this destroying fire is dispensed both before and behind the army of the Lord.

The statement about the Lord speaking to his army and the army executing his word relates to Revelation 19:11-15, which describes the return of Jesus Christ, calling him the Word of God and stating in verse 15 that, "out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations." These phrases, "out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword" and "with it he smites the nations," refer to the fact that Jesus will utter a command to his army at the battle of Armageddon and they will execute it. The result will be the destruction of the armies of the antichrist, even as indicated in Revelation 19:21, which states that the antichrist's armies are "slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth." In other words, they are slain as a result of Jesus' word of command to his armies, who carry it out and defeat the army of his enemies.

Imagine the fear and awe of the ungodly on that day, when they witness the resurrection of the two witnesses at the seventh trumpet, who ascend into the sky along with the rest of the resurrected saints, meeting in the air with the living saints also to stand with the Lord Jesus, hovering in the clouds, waiting for the order to advance. This is why Revelation 6:15-17 describes their cry as they say "16 ...to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: 17 For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?"

The *visible* hovering of Jesus in his clouds with his armies, comprised of the righteous angels and the resurrected, glorified saints who are now equal to the angels, is what Jesus refers to as the sign of the Son of Man in heaven in Matthew 24:29-31. Notice, once again, the reference to the sun, moon, and stars darkening just before this event, just as declared by Joel 2 and Revelation 6:15-17.

**Matthew 24:29 Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: 30 And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. 31 And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.**

Thus, once again, there is perfect continuity and no alterations or changes on this subject throughout the entire New Testament. And the description of those events is completed in the book of Revelation.

This brings us to the fourth event covered in this *Long Series*, the millennial reign of Christ and the saints. For reference, here again is the text of Revelation 20:4-6.

**Revelation 20:4 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 had received *his* mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; **and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.** 5 **But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.** 6 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.**

The phrase “reigned with Christ a thousand years” occurs twice in these 3 verses. Likewise, verse 4 contains a parallel assertion that, “judgment was given unto them.” It is this concept of reigning alive with Christ that Paul had in mind in Romans 5, which we saw earlier.

**Romans 5:17** For if by one man's offence **death reigned** by one; much more **they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.**

This teaching of the saints reigning with Jesus Christ has a long history in scripture. It is explicitly predicted in Daniel.

**Daniel 7:8** I considered the horns, and, behold, **there came up among them another little horn**, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn *were* eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things. 9 I beheld **till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit**, whose garment *was* white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne *was like* the fiery flame, *and* his wheels *as* burning fire... 13 I saw in the night visions, and, behold, **one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven**, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. 14 **And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion**, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom *that* which shall not be destroyed... 16 I came near unto one of them that stood by, and asked him the truth of all this. So he told me, and made me know **the interpretation of the things.** 17 **These great beasts, which are four, are four kings, which shall arise out of the earth.** 18 **But the saints of the most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom for ever, even for ever and ever...** 21 I beheld, and **the same horn made war with the saints**, and prevailed against them; 22 **Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints**

**possessed the kingdom...27 And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.**

Here in Daniel 7, we find a very early and detailed articulation of the saints of God reigning with one like the Son of Man, who comes on the clouds of heaven. This, of course, is Jesus Christ as the New Testament repeatedly states. In fact, Daniel 7 specifically indicates that the saints' time of ruling (verse 22) begins when the Son of Man comes on the clouds of heaven, which is exactly what we have seen in our chronology of Revelation. In addition, this time of the saints ruling follows after a "horn," or king, rises to persecute the saints, just as we saw was the case in the New Testament and Revelation, when the antichrist rises to make war against the saints for 3 1/2 years before the return of Jesus when they are given the kingdom.

There are two additional items to note from Daniel 7. First, verse 9 denotes a point in time when "the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit." This casting down of the thrones corresponds to verse 22, which asserts that the saints will receive the kingdom when the Ancient of days comes. The saints taking possession of the kingdom corresponds to the thrones, or dominion of others, being cast down.

This includes the loss of authority by ungodly men, as the text of Daniel 7 plainly states in verse 17, when it describes those who lose their power as "kings, *which* shall arise out of the earth." Thus, ungodly human dominion comes to an end and it is instead given to godly men. But it also pertains to the replacement of the ungodly angels, who rule the earth. These ungodly angels will be replaced by saints, who are resurrected and transformed, becoming like angels (Matthew 22:30, Mark 12:25, Luke 20:35-26), including the trait of immortality and freedom from decay.

In fact, the attainment of immortality is directly connected to Daniel's assertion that the kingdom will last forever and have no end. As Daniel 7:27 specifies, this kingdom is a kingdom on the earth, as indicated by the phrase, "kingdom under the whole heaven." If it is under the heaven, it must be on the earth. Thus, it is a physical kingdom, and physical bodies are needed to be present in it and rule over it. And since that kingdom is eternal, those physical bodies need to be immortal in order to endure and rule as long as the kingdom itself. This is why Paul also concludes that mere flesh and blood cannot inherit the eternal kingdom and, thus, immortality and incorruption must be attained in order to be fit for inheriting the kingdom of God.

**1 Corinthians 15:50 Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. 51 Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, 52 In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall**

**be changed. 53 For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal *must* put on immortality.**

Furthermore, concerning the saints replacing the ungodly angelic rulers, Paul repeatedly expresses his understanding that the world is ruled by ungodly angels. We see this in the following passages.

**Ephesians 6:11** Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand **against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we wrestle** not against flesh and blood, but **against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.**

**Romans 8:38** For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, **nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers,** nor things present, nor things to come,

**1 Peter 3:22** Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; **angels and authorities and powers** being made subject unto him.

**2 Corinthians 4:4** In whom **the god of this world** hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

**Ephesians 2:2** Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, **according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit** that now worketh in the children of disobedience:

**Ephesians 3:10** To the intent that now unto **the principalities and powers in heavenly *places*** might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God.

And, in the Gospel of John we can see that Paul's understanding of this issue is identical to Jesus' own teaching that the world is ruled by ungodly angels.

**John 12:31** Now is the judgment of this world: **now shall the prince of this world be cast out.**

**John 14:30** Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for **the prince of this world cometh,** and hath nothing in me.

**John 16:11** Of judgment, because **the prince of this world is judged.**

Moreover, in 1 Corinthians 6, Paul also directly affirms the saints' rule over the earth *and over angels*.

**1 Corinthians 6:2** Do ye not know that **the saints shall judge the world?** and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? **3 Know ye not that we shall judge angels?** how much more **things that pertain to this life?**

And notice also that Paul not only speaks of the saints judging, just as Daniel 7 does, but he also contrasts judging things in “this life” to that coming judgment of the world and angels. Thus, by this contrast, Paul identifies the timing of the saints judging the world and angels as *the next life*, when saints live again after the resurrection. Paul’s view is entirely inherited from earlier scriptural teaching, including Daniel and Paul’s statements show no alteration in the New Testament of these Old Testament promises and prophecies. In addition, it is also clear that Paul also maintained Daniel’s teaching that the ungodly kingdoms are ruled by wicked angels. (For more details concerning both Daniel and Revelation’s descriptions of angelic rulers over the ungodly kingdoms, please visit our “Prophetic Symbols” study.)

We have already seen repeatedly in our study of Revelation that the ungodly angels, including the chief adversary himself, are cast down and eventually imprisoned when Christ returns. Thus, they lose their power and their kingdom and the saints are given the kingdom to rule with Christ like angels. The depiction from both the Old and the New Testament is that God is clearly replacing the ungodly angelic rulers with new angels, godly men made like angels, who will rule in accord with Christ Jesus.

Concerning the long-standing biblical precedent for the saints ruling with Christ, Jesus himself articulates this concept in his parables. In particular, in Matthew 25:14-20 and Luke 19:11-27, Jesus describes the kingdom of God in terms of a nobleman who goes away into “a far country” (Matthew 25:14) for a while to receive a kingdom. Jesus even says that the nobleman does not return until, “After a long time” (Matthew 25:19). Luke even denotes that the purpose of the parable was to inform men that the kingdom would not “immediately appear” as some thought (Luke 19:11). The servants of this nobleman are told to be faithful for this “long time” while he is away. Furthermore, two things do not happen *until* the nobleman returns *after* this long time. First, it is not until then that there is “a reckoning” (Matthew 25:19) in which the nobleman begins to enforce his rule, including punishing his enemies, who until that time had rejected his rule over them (Luke 19:27). Second, it is not until after the long time and the nobleman’s return that the servants are rewarded (Matthew 25:19, Luke 19:15). Furthermore, in Luke’s version the reward for the faithful servants is ruling “over cities” (Luke 19:17, 19).

The nobleman’s instructions to his servants before leaving are remarkably reminiscent of Jesus’ statements to his own disciples in Luke 22:29-30 just before his death, resurrection, and ascension into heaven.

**Luke 22:29 And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; 30 That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel.**

And the nobleman’s reward is similar to Jesus’ promise in Revelation 3:21 to delegate the authority of his throne to those who are faithful.

**Revelation 3:21 To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne,** even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.

All of these statements concerning the resurrected, immortal saints ruling with Christ Jesus *after* he has gone away for “a long time” and returned to punish those who rejected him are continued and completed here in Revelation 20:4-6.

However, we should also take note of the fact that Daniel 7:14, 27, as well as Daniel 2:44 and even 2 Peter 1:11 refer to the kingdom as an “everlasting kingdom” that will never end but will last forever. So, why does Revelation 20:4-6, three times assert that the kingdom lasts for 1,000 years, rather than forever?

The answer to this question is simple. The kingdom is eternal and it will continue after the 1,000 years into eternity. However, Revelation discusses the first 1,000 years because of two important factors. First, the 1,000 years is necessary as an intervening transition period in which the earth is renovated and rejuvenated, preparing it to receive the throne of God, which Revelation 22:3 indicates will move to the earth. (For more on the rejuvenation of the earth so that it can be dwelled in eternally, please visit the article, “Heaven and Earth: Replaced or Restored,” in our Cosmology section.)

Second, Jesus rules the earth with an iron rod during the 1,000 years in order to facilitate this transition period but it is not until the end of this time, when the transition is complete and Satan is released one last time for his final defeat, that Jesus hands the kingdom over to the Father. This teaching that Jesus must rule until the final defeat of Satan is also very old and can even be found clearly stated by Paul in 1 Corinthians 15.

**1 Corinthians 15:20 But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. 21 For since by man *came* death, by man *came* also the resurrection of the dead. 22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. 23 But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. 24 Then *cometh* the end, 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. 25 For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. 26 The last enemy *that shall be destroyed is death*. 27 For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under *him*, *it is* manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. 28 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.**

Notice Paul's chronology here. Christ comes once, dies, and then rises from the dead. Then “at his coming” again, there is the resurrection of those who belong to Christ, the saints who have remained faithful to him. Then, as verse 25 states, Christ reigns and remains reigning for a period of time until he has put down all enemies. It is important to note that the completion of defeating all enemies ends

with the final defeat of death. Then, after that final defeat of death, Christ will hand the kingdom over to the Father himself.

Not only is this chronology perfectly consistent with the book of Revelation, as we have seen in great detail throughout this study, including here in Revelation 20, but also this statement from Paul specifically includes an intervening time period between Christ's return, at which point he resurrects his saints and begins to reign, and the kingdom being turned over to God the Father. This intervening period between the start of Christ's reign at his return and the start of the Father's reign is the 1,000 years described in Revelation 20. So, while the kingdom of God continues forever under the Father, with authority delegated to Christ and the saints, the first 1,000 years of that kingdom act as a transition in which Christ begins to and then completes the defeat of all enemies.

And what does Revelation 20 say happens after the 1,000 years? First, Satan is loosed out of his prison for one last defeat.

**Revelation 20:7 And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison,** 8 And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom *is* as the sand of the sea.

Then death and hell are cast into the Lake of Fire.

**Revelation 20:10 And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone,** where the beast and the false prophet *are*, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

**Revelation 20:14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire.** This is the second death.

And then *the Father* enacts judgment.

**Revelation 20:11 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it,** from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

**Revelation 20:15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.**

Notice that we have cited the closing verses above from Revelation 20 *in pairs*. The reason for this is due to the fact that the last 2 verses of Revelation 20 are a *Redundant Summary*. We will discuss this more in the next section of this study.

It should also be noted that in Section 2.04 of this study we saw how Abaddon is an angelic king who has rule over the bottomless pit, which is also known as "Sheol," "Hades," or "hell." Likewise, in our article series, "Angels in the End Times," particularly Parts 3 and 4, we establish from scripture that the chief

angelic adversary is the angelic ruler who has the authority over death. Furthermore, in that article series we examine how in both the New and Old Testaments, death and hell are at times not simply spoken of as the state of being dead or the place where the dead reside, but instead they are personified as beings. One prominent example of this is Revelation 6:8, where Death and Hell are identified as two of the horsemen. Moreover, we can see that Revelation 20:14 also uses the terms death and hell in the same manner to refer to angelic beings, rather than simply the state of death and the place of the dead, because it does not make sense for Revelation 20:14 to be stating that “the state of being dead” and “the place of the dead” are cast into the Lake of Fire. Thus, the casting of death and hell into the Lake of Fire refers to the final and permanent casting of the chief adversary and Abaddon into the Lake of Fire.

But for now, it is important to note that in both pairs of verses, the final and permanent imprisonment of the adversarial angels occurs *before* the Father enacts judgment. Thus, the comments of Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:20-28 are mirrored exactly by the chronology here in Revelation 19 and 20 concerning the 1,000 years. First comes the return of Christ, then the resurrection of his saints, then their intervening rule for 1,000 years to transition the earth, then the final defeat of death and hell at the end of the 1,000 years, and then Jesus hands the kingdom over to the Father who executes final judgment and eternity begins.

Thus, it is clear that the 1,000 year reign of Christ serves the specific function of transitioning and spanning from the time he first begins to rule the earth with an iron rod until the final defeat of the angels who are in charge of death and hell when they are released one last time at the end of that 1,000 years. Consequently, this is why Revelation gives special focus and assigns a distinct status to the first 1,000 years of the kingdom of God even though the kingdom will continue forever with authority delegated to Jesus Christ and his saints, just as Daniel 2 and 7 as well as 2 Peter 1 clearly state.

However, we also stated earlier that the 1,000 years not only functions as a transition spanning from the start until the completion of the defeat of God’s enemies under Jesus but it also functions as a transition for the physical condition of the earth itself from its present state of corruption. In addition, as some of these same passages below will attest, the 1,000 years also serves as a period of transitioning the earth from its false religions and ungodly behavior to being filled with the knowledge of God. Thus, in both these ways, the earth is made ready to receive the eternal throne of God with God dwelling on earth eternally among men, as we will see in Revelation 21-22.

We’ll start with Isaiah 11.

**Isaiah 11:1 And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots:** 2 And the spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD; 3 And shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD: and he shall not judge after the sight of

his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears: 4 **But with righteousness shall he judge** the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: **and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth**, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. 5 And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. 6 **The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them.** 7 **And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.** 8 **And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den.** 9 **They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.** 10 And in that day there shall be a **root of Jesse**, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and **his rest (04496) shall be glorious.**

Isaiah 11 begins by referring to “a rod out of the stem of Jesse,” and “a Branch...out of his roots.” This is an identifier of the Messiah as the son of David, whose father was Jesse. Furthermore, as we can see, Isaiah 11 is describing a time when the Messiah, the son of David, will judge in righteousness and “smite the earth with the rod of his mouth.” This is language that is identical with Joel 2 and Revelation’s description of Jesus Christ at his return at the battle of Armageddon, including his commands to his army, which executes his word to subdue his enemies. Thus, we know that Isaiah 11 is starting at the same point in time as Revelation 19-20, the return of the Messiah to rule the nations with an iron rod.

However, as verses 6-9 demonstrate, this reign of the Messiah will be accompanied by some remarkable changes in the natural environment, particularly the end of violence between animals. The animals, even the carnivores, are eating plants instead of one another. And as verse 9 states, this time period also connects the end of violence with the spreading of the knowledge of the Lord under the rule of the Messiah.

Notice also that verse 10 again speaks of the Messiah, the “root of Jesse” and this time it mentions “his rest.” We have included the Strong’s Concordance number behind the word “rest” in the text of Isaiah above. It is the Hebrew word “manuwchah,” (Strong’s No. 04496), which means, “resting place, rest.” This is the same Hebrew word that is used in Deuteronomy 12 to describe the promised land that God was giving to the Israelites and in which they would dwell in safety.

**Deuteronomy 12:9** For ye are not as yet come to the rest (04496) and to the inheritance, which the LORD your God giveth you. 10 **But when ye go over Jordan, and dwell in the land which the LORD your God giveth you to inherit, and when he giveth you rest (05117) from all your enemies round about, so that ye dwell in safety.**

The notion of the Israelites dwelling in safety is this “rest” that God had promised to give to them is very similar to Isaiah 11’s description of the Messiah’s period

of rule and “rest” in which there would be no violence and no destruction. Notice also the occurrence of the word “rest” in verse 12, which although it is a different Hebrew word, is connected directly to the idea of “rest from all your enemies.” This concept that the Jewish people would finally have rest, safety, and deliverance from their enemies when the Messiah came to rule is also articulated by Zecharias, the father of John the Baptist, when under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

**Luke 1:67** And his father Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying, 68 Blessed *be* the Lord God of Israel; for he hath visited and redeemed his people, 69 And hath raised up an horn of salvation for us **in the house of his servant David;** 70 **As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets,** which have been since the world began: 71 **That we should be saved from our enemies,** and from the hand of all that hate us; 72 **To perform the mercy promised to our fathers,** and to remember his holy covenant; 73 The oath which he swore to our father Abraham, 74 That he would grant unto us, **that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear.**

Notice, that not only does Zecharias state in verse 70 that he is discussing the same things as the holy prophets, which would include Isaiah, but Zecharias also denotes that he is speaking of the son of David, the Messiah, just as Isaiah 11 does. And what does Zecharias prophesy about the Messiah, the son of David? Like Isaiah and Deuteronomy’s mention of “rest” as a time of safety for Israel, Zecharias speaks of how the Messiah will save Israel from its enemies so that they can serve him without fear. And Zecharias also connects those events to promises made by God to the patriarchs of Israel, just was the case in Deuteronomy concerning the promised land. Thus, there is a connection between the fulfilling of the covenant to give Israel the promised land and Israel living in the promised land with her enemies defeated so that she can serve God in safety, without fear. This is the “rest” this is spoken of in Isaiah.

In addition, notice that not only does Deuteronomy 12:9 use the same Hebrew word for “rest” that Isaiah 11 uses to describe the rest of the Messiah, the son of David, but also that Deuteronomy 12:10 uses another word for rest, the Hebrew word “nuwach” (Strong’s No. 05117), which means simply, “to rest.”

**Deuteronomy 12:9** For ye are not as yet come to the rest (04496) and to the inheritance, which the LORD your God giveth you. 10 **But when ye go over Jordan, and dwell in the land which the LORD your God giveth you to inherit, and when he giveth you rest (05117) from all your enemies** round about, **so that ye dwell in safety.**

For comparison, below are the definitions for these two words. In addition, we have also included two other Hebrew words in order to show how manuwchah (Strong’s No. 04496) is actually derived from “nuwach” (Strong’s No. 05117), which are the two different words used for “rest” in Deuteronomy 12:9-10.

**04496 manuwchah**

**from 04495;** TWOT-1323f; n f

AV-rest 15, resting place 2, comfortable 1, ease 1, quiet 1, still 1; 21

1) resting place, rest

1a) resting place

1b) rest, quietness

“Manuwchah” comes “from 04495,” which is the proper name “Manowach.”

**04495 Manowach**

**the same as 04494;** n pr m

AV-Manoah 18; 18

Manoah = "rest"

1) a Danite, father of the judge Samson and inhabitant of Zorah

And “Manowach” comes “from 04494,” which is the general term “manowach.”

**04494 manowach**

**from 05117;** TWOT-1323e; n m

AV-rest 7; 7

1) resting place, state or condition of rest, place

1a) resting place

1b) rest, repose, condition of rest

1c) coming to rest

Finally, “manuwach” comes “from 05117,” which is the word “nuwach.”

**05117 nuwach**

a primitive root; TWOT-1323; v

AV-rest 55, ceased 1, confederate 1, let down 1, set down 1, lay 1, quiet 2, remain

1, set 1; 64

1) to rest

What is significant here is that the word “nuwach” (Strong’s No. 05117) is not only related to Isaiah 11’s word “manuwchah” (Strong’s No. 04496) and used in conjunction with “manuwchah” in Deuteronomy 12:9-10, but “nuwach” is the Hebrew word used to describe the “rest” on the Sabbath, or seventh day.

**Exodus 20:11 For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested (05117) the seventh day:** wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it. **12 Six days thou shalt do thy work, and on the seventh day thou shalt rest (07673):** that thine ox and thine ass may rest (05117), and the son of thy handmaid, and the stranger, may be refreshed.

And, of course, “nuwach” is also used elsewhere in Exodus and Deuteronomy to once again refer to God’s giving Israel “rest” and deliverance from its enemies in Exodus 33:44, Deuteronomy 25:19, Joshua 1:13-15, just to name a few. Likewise, from Exodus 20:12 above, we see that “nuwach” is used side by side with another Hebrew word for rest, the word “shabath” (Strong’s No. 076073), which means,

“to cease, desist, rest.” Like “nuwach,” “shabath” is used in such passages as Exodus 16:30, 23:12, 31:17, and 34:21 to refer to the Sabbath rest.

Thus, we can see the connection that this 1,000 year rule of Christ has to the idea of the Sabbath rest on the seventh day. For a more detailed examination of how the 1,000 years functions as a Sabbath for the preceding 6,000 years of human history, please visit our article, “The Sabbath Millennium,” under the Premillennialism section.

However, we can also see that Isaiah 11 is clearly referring to a time when the Messiah will bring not only deliverance to Israel from her enemies, but will establish justice and righteous judgment, peace among the animals so that they eat plants instead of each other, and a time of knowledge of the Lord so that men cease from violence. All of these things signify the function of the 1,000 years as a transition for the earth’s physical and moral corruption to a condition when it is ready to be dwelled in by God the Father.

And this is not the only passage in Isaiah, which describes this 1,000 year rule of the Messiah. The phrase “They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain,” which is connected with the phrase, “the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD” in Isaiah 11:9, also occurs in Isaiah 65:25. And examination of the surrounding context of Isaiah 65 quickly reveals that this chapter is also talking about the Messiah’s 1,000 year reign.

Notice, first of all, that verse 25’s statement that, “They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain” is connected to peace between the animals, just as it was in chapter 11:6-9.

**Isaiah 65:25 The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock:** and dust *shall be* the serpent’s meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the LORD.

In fact, as we mentioned above from Isaiah 11, verse 25 actually states that carnivores, such as the lion, will no longer eat other animals but will instead eat plants. This occurrence of animals being at peace and the phrase “They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain” clearly informs us that Isaiah 65 is describing the same time period as Isaiah 11.

Furthermore, notice that like Isaiah 11, Isaiah 65 begins by referring to the coming of an heir only this time the description is not an heir of David but an heir of Jacob and Judah. These, of course, also are references to Jesus Christ, who is both an Israelite and from the tribe of Judah. But notice that like Daniel 7, Isaiah 65:9 connects the coming of this single “inheritor” with the giving of dominion to “the elect,” the saints of God.

**Isaiah 65:9 And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains: and mine elect shall inherit it,** and my servants shall dwell there.

In addition, since Isaiah 65 is describing the same time period as Isaiah 11, consider the specific details provided in Isaiah 65 concerning this time period in which the Messiah rules. Notice that verse 17 below directly connects this time of the Messiah's rule to a time of renovating or restoring the condition of the earth. (Once again, for more on how the earth will be restored rather than replaced, please visit our article entitled, "Heaven and Earth: Replaced or Restored," in our Cosmology section.)

**Isaiah 65:17** For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. 18 But be ye glad and rejoice for ever *in that* which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. 19 And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying.

Notice from verse 20 below that Isaiah connects the Messiah's rule to a time in which the human lifespan will once again extent to hundreds of years, just as it was before the Flood.

**Isaiah 65:20** There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner *being* an hundred years old shall be accursed.

This elongated lifespan does not refer to the resurrected and transformed saints, who have become immortal, but instead this speaks of those people from the nations who survive the tribulation without taking the mark of the beast. They are not resurrected or directly transformed but because they have not taken the mark of the beast they are allowed to enter the kingdom during which, natural lifespan will expand as the condition of the earth is itself delivered from corruption and decay. The groups most likely to enter the millennial kingdom of Jesus Christ in this manner include the poor and children as well as the secured people of Israel. After all, those least likely to need the mark of the beast in order to buy and sell are the poor. Passages indicating mortal survivors among the nations entering the kingdom include Zechariah 14:16-19, Matthew 5:3, 5, and Luke 6:20.

Also worthy of note is that while verse 25 is the last verse in chapter 65, it is immediately followed in verse 1 of chapter 66 with the reference not only to the "rest" of God, which once again invokes not only the imagery of the Sabbath rest but also the previous connections to the "rest" as a time of Israel being delivered from its enemies.

**Isaiah 65:25** The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust *shall be* the serpent's meat. **They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain,** saith the LORD. **66:1** Thus saith the LORD, The heaven *is* my throne, and the earth *is* my footstool: where *is* the house that ye build unto me? **and where is the place of my rest (04496)?**

And Paul himself also speaks of how the return of Christ will mark the beginning of a transition period in which the physical environment is itself freed from corruption. In Romans 8 below, the English word “creature” is translated from the Greek word “ktisis” (Strong’s No. 2937), which occurs 19 times in the New Testament of which 6 times it is translated as the word “creation.” In fact, “ktisis” is simply the noun form of the Greek verb, “ktizo” (Strong’s No. 2936), which simply means, “to create.”

In fact, the same word, which is translated as “creature” in verses 19, 20, and 21 is translated “creation” in the phrase “whole creation” in verse 22. Thus, Paul is simply talking about the expectation of the whole of the created world itself, not simply “creatures,” which we might think of as animals or plants or other specific created entities.

**Romans 8:19 For the earnest expectation of the creature (2937) waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. 20 For the creature (2937) was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected *the same* in hope, 21 Because the creature (2937) itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. 22 For we know that the whole creation (2937) groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. 23 And not only *they*, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, **waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.****

In this passage, Paul identifies the time period he is talking about in verse 23, when he speaks of the “waiting for” the “redemption of our bodies.” In verse 19, Paul speaks of this same time period as “the manifestation of the sons of God.” Here Paul is referring to the return of Jesus Christ when the saints will be either resurrected or directly transformed to receive immortal, incorruptible bodies like the resurrected, glorified body of Jesus Christ. This is spoken of by Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:42-53, Philippians 2:20-21, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 and by John in 1 John 3:1-3. Thus, by speaking of the transformation of our bodies into a condition where they are free from the curse, Paul is identifying the point in time when that event takes place, which is at the return of Jesus Christ. And more to the point, here in Romans 8, Paul is saying that the whole creation waits for that point of time because at that time, it too will be delivered from corruption, just as the saints of God are. Thus, Paul himself clearly identifies the 1,000 years, which begins at Christ’s return, as a time of transition in which the earth itself will be restored and rejuvenated.

The orthodox, early church writers of the first two centuries also believed this.

**“IV.(12) [As the elders who saw John the disciple of the Lord remembered that they had heard from him how the Lord taught in regard to those times, and said]: "The days will come in which vines shall grow, having each ten thousand branches, and in each branch ten thousand twigs, and in each true twig ten thousand shoots, and in every one of the shoots ten thousand clusters, and on every one of the clusters ten thousand grapes, and every**

**grape when pressed will give five-and-twenty metretes of wine.** And when any one of the saints shall lay hold of a cluster, another shall cry out, 'I am a better cluster, take me; bless the Lord through me.' **In like manner, [He said] that a grain of wheat would produce ten thousand ears, and that every ear would have ten thousand grains, and every grain would yield ten pounds of clear, pure, fine flour; and that apples, and seeds, and grass would produce in similar proportions; and that all animals, feeding then only on the productions of the earth, would become peaceable and harmonious, and be in perfect subjection to man.**" – FRAGMENTS OF PAPIAS, FROM THE EXPOSITION OF THE ORACLES OF THE LORD

"1. Inasmuch, therefore, as the opinions of certain [orthodox persons] are derived from heretical discourses, **they are both ignorant of God's dispensations, and of the mystery of the resurrection of the just, and of the [earthly] kingdom which is the commencement of incorruption, by means of which kingdom those who shall be worthy are accustomed gradually to partake of the divine nature** (capere Deum(2)); and it is necessary to tell them respecting those things, that it behoves the righteous first to receive the promise of the inheritance which God promised to the fathers, and to reign in it, when they rise **again to behold God in this creation which is renovated, and that the judgment should take place afterwards...**It is fitting, therefore, that the creation itself, being restored to its primeval condition, should without restraint be under the dominion of the righteous; and the apostle has made this plain in the Epistle to the Romans, when he thus speaks: "For the expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature has been subjected to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope; since the creature itself shall also be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God."(3)" – Irenaeus, Against Heresies, Book V, CHAP. XXXII

"4. **And these things are bone witness to in writing by Papias, the hearer of John, and a companion of Polycarp, in his fourth book; for there were five books compiled by him. (4) And he says in addition, "Now these things are credible to believers." ...the Lord declared, "They who shall come to these [times] shall see."** When prophesying of these times, therefore, Esaias says: "The wolf also shall feed with the lamb, and the leopard shall take his rest with the kid; the calf also, and the bull, and the lion shall eat together; and a little boy shall lead them. The ox and the bear shall feed together, and their young ones shall agree together; and the lion shall eat straw as well as the ox. And the infant boy shall thrust his hand into the asp's den, into the nest also of the adder's brood; and they shall do no harm, nor have power to hurt anything in my holy mountain." And again he says, in recapitulation, "Wolves and lambs shall then browse together, and the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and the serpent earth as if it were bread; and they shall neither hurt nor annoy anything in my holy mountain, saith the Lord."(5) I am quite aware that some persons endeavour to refer these words to the case of savage men, both of different nations and various habits, who come to believe, and when they have believed, act in harmony with the righteous. But although this is [true]

now with regard to some men coming from various nations to the harmony of the faith, nevertheless **in the resurrection of the just [the words shall also apply] to those animals mentioned.** For God is non in all things. **And it is right that when the creation is restored, all the animals should obey and be in subjection to man, and revert to the food originally given by God (for they had been originally subjected in obedience to Adam), that is, the productions of the earth.** But some other occasion, and not the present, is [to be sought] for showing that the lion shall [then] feed on straw. **And this indicates the large size and rich quality of the fruits.** For if that animal, the lion, feeds upon straw [at that period], of what a quality must the wheat itself be whose straw shall serve as suitable food for lions?" – Irenaeus, Against Heresies, Book V, CHAP. XXXIII

Moreover, above we have documented the fact that the language describing this 1,000 years corresponds explicitly with the language of the rest on the Sabbath, or seventh day. This imagery of the millennial reign of Christ as a Sabbath millennium that arrives after six millenniums of human history also corresponds to the idea of a transitional period for restoring the earth itself from corruption.

As the excerpts from Exodus and Leviticus below clearly state, every seven years the land was to be left uncultivated so that it could rest and be rejuvenated. Both passages also specifically denote that this seventh year of rest for the land correlated directly to the seventh day of rest on which the Jews were to cease from labor.

**Exodus 23:10 And six years thou shalt sow thy land,** and shalt gather in the fruits thereof: 11 **But the seventh year thou shalt let it rest and lie still;** that the poor of thy people may eat: and what they leave the beasts of the field shall eat. In like manner thou shalt deal with thy vineyard, *and* with thy oliveyard. 12 **Six days thou shalt do thy work, and on the seventh day thou shalt rest:** that thine ox and thine ass may rest, and the son of thy handmaid, and the stranger, **may be refreshed.**

**Leviticus 25:4 But in the seventh year shall be a sabbath of rest unto the land, a sabbath for the LORD:** thou shalt neither sow thy field, nor prune thy vineyard.

Not only does this idea of a Sabbath rest for restoring the land prophesy the seventh millennia as a transition period for the earth to be restored from corruption, but this practice of letting the land remain fallow every seven years has not been kept up by mankind throughout history. Therefore, the situation has arisen where the earth has been tilled without a rest and is now six thousand years overdue for a rest, which equals a total of one year of rest needed for every six the earth was cultivated. If the practice of leaving the earth fallow was largely not followed by mankind for six thousand years, then that would require exactly 1,000 years of the land being left fallow. Thus, there is not only a prophecy in Exodus and Leviticus but we can also understand the need for the earth to be left fallow for a millennium, since it has largely not been left fallow every seven years.

In conclusion, the testimony is clear, consistent, and detailed from the Old Testament to the New Testament, and even lingering in the earliest, uninspired Christian writings. Isaiah 11 and 65, Romans 8, and Revelation 20 all depict a 1,000 year reign of Christ Jesus on earth. During this 1,000 years, the Messiah will bring not only deliverance to Israel from her enemies, but will also oversee a transition period prior to the handing over of the kingdom to God the Father at the final judgment. That transition period will involve the establishment of justice and righteous judgment, peace among the animals so that they eat plants, a time of knowledge of the Lord, and the renovation and rejuvenation of the created world from corruption.

All of these things signify the function of the 1,000 years as a transition for the earth's physical and moral corruption to a condition when it prepared to receive the coming of the Father to dwell on earth with man for eternity at the end of the 1,000 years. And that is why Revelation focuses on and gives distinction to the first 1,000 years of the kingdom of God even though Daniel 2 and 7 as well as 2 Peter 1 assert that the kingdom of God will continue forever, with authority delegated to Jesus Christ and the saints.

This concludes our discussion of the second two events covered in this *Long Series*: **3)** the resurrection of the saints **4)** the millennial reign of Christ and the saints.

### *The Enemy's Final Defeat and the Final Judgment*

The next few verses of Revelation 20 discuss the last two events covered in this *Long Series*: **5)** the final unleashing of Satan for one last attempt at the end of the millennium, and **6)** the Final Judgment and the beginning of eternity.

**Revelation 20:7 And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, 8 And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle:** the number of whom *is* as the sand of the sea. **9 And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. 10 And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.**

Here in verses 7-10, the text specifically states that *after* the 1,000 years are over, Satan will again be loosed out of his prison, which is the fiery abyss that has erupted onto the earth's surface to form the Lake of Fire. He then gathers together a large number of men and, together with him, they put forward one last effort to reject God's rule over them. This indicates that although all men will be forced to live under the rules of a theocracy while Jesus reigns during the 1,000 years, not all men will do so voluntarily. Instead, they will be forced to do so, whether they

like it or not, by Jesus smiting the earth with “a rod of iron” when necessary. This concept of men attempting to resist even during the millennium is also described in Zechariah 14.

**Zechariah 14:9 And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one...** 16 And it shall come to pass, *that* every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles. 17 **And it shall be, *that* whoso will not come up of all the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain.** 18 And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, *that have* no rain; **there shall be the plague, wherewith the LORD will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.** 19 **This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles.**

As we can see, Zechariah demonstrates that the following 3 things were understood long before Revelation was written. First, there would come a day when the Lord would rule the earth. Second, that during the Lord’s reign there was the potential that some kingdoms and peoples would still, from time to time, not fully obey. And third, that when the nations did disobey, the Lord would keep them in line by smiting them with plagues. This willingness to quickly and directly punish nations for disobedience is what is meant in Revelation 12 and 19 by the phrase “a rod of iron.” It indicates the severity and swiftness with which Jesus Christ will enforce his rule over the nations, when he comes to reign in his kingdom on the throne of David.

Consequently, it is easy to understand that despite the righteousness, justice, long life, abundance and rejuvenation that are ushered in during the 1,000 year reign, at the end of that 1,000 years there are still those who resent the rules of God and desire to do their own thing and go their own way. When the transition of the earth is complete and the earth is ready to receive the throne of the Father, those who desire to reject God’s ways are given one last chance to do so in order that those who reject the Lord might be finally purged from the earth. In this way, the earth is fully cleansed of the wicked and ready for God the Father to dwell here with men.

Lastly, we should also note the occurrence of the terms “Gog and Magog” in verse 8. Gog and Magog are identified in Ezekiel 38-39. However, Ezekiel 38-39 refers to the antichrist, who comes and is defeated *before* the 1,000 year reign of Christ Jesus. So, is there some confusion? Is it contradictory to interpret Ezekiel 38-39 as a reference to the antichrist *before* the millennium when Revelation 20 clearly uses the phrase “Gog and Magog” to a battle that occurs *after* the millennium?

The answer is “no” for a very simple reason. In both Ezekiel 38-39 and Revelation 20, the phrase “Gog and Magog” is intended to denote a geographic region. Specifically, Revelation 20 mentions “Gog and Magog” as the focal point

for Satan's deception of the nations at the end of the millennium. In earlier portions of this study, including our examinations of Revelation 6, 7, and 8:6-9:21, we noted how the four angels, who are also known as the four horsemen or the four winds, typically begin at a place known as the four corners or four quadrants of the earth. This is a geographic location where the four quadrants of north, south, east, and west come together. And that location is in the land of Gog and Magog. In fact, Revelation 20:8 specifically identifies Gog and Magog as the nations located at the four corners of the earth, where the four quadrants come together.

**Revelation 20:8** And shall go out to deceive **the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog.**

Thus, the fact that Ezekiel 38-39 identifies this location as the starting point for the antichrist *before* the millennium, while Revelation 20 identifies this as the same starting point for Satan's final rebellion *after* the millennium, makes perfect sense. It is *not* the case that Ezekiel 38-39 *must* be interpreted to refer to the end of the millennium just because Ezekiel identifies this same geographic location as Revelation 20. Nor should it be assumed that Revelation and Ezekiel are using terms inconsistently or incompatibly. These passages are not describing the same event, nor are they describing the same event while erroneously placing it at two different points in time.

Instead, the use of the geographic designation "Gog and Magog" simply tells us that both rebellions begin in the same place *because* this is the place where the four winds reside, right at the four corners of the earth, where in biblical terms the four quadrants of the earth come together. This region is the very seat of their authority. Thus, it is not only perfectly logical to state that the rebellion *after* the millennium originates in the same geographic as the rebellion *before* the millennium, but the reason why both rebellions originate in the same geographic region is also logically explained in scripture.

In addition, when this rebellion takes place, it is put to an end by fire coming down from God out of heaven. Now, this might seem to indicate that perhaps Jesus has already turned the kingdom over to God the Father. However, based upon scriptural precedent, this imagery of fire coming down from heaven specifically invokes Jesus' involvement in the destruction of the enemy.

In Genesis 18, three men appear to Abraham.

**Genesis 18:1** And the LORD appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day; **2** And he lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him: and when he saw *them*, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground.

During this visit, the Lord tells Abraham that he intends to see if Sodom and Gomorrah are indeed wicked, and to destroy them if they are. This very much parallels the release of Satan at the end of the millennium because it allows for

God to make known whose hearts do not love the truth and are willing to follow Satan, at which point, like Sodom and Gomorrah, fire will be rained down upon them to destroy them. Allowing Satan to come and try to deceive men so that God can destroy those who don't love the truth was also the purpose behind Satan's coming before the antichrist as described by Paul in 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12.

**Genesis 18:20** And the LORD said, **Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great**, and because their sin is very grievous; **21 I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it**, which is come unto me; and **if not, I will know**.

After informing Abraham of his plan concerning Sodom and Gomorrah, Genesis informs us that the two men depart toward Sodom while the third man, the Lord, remains with Abraham.

**Genesis 18:22** And **the men turned their faces** from thence, **and went toward Sodom: but Abraham stood yet before the LORD**.

**Genesis 19:1** **And there came two angels to Sodom** at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing *them* rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground.

And after the two angels enter the city and send Lot and his family out, the Lord, who did not go with the two angels but remained behind with Abraham is said to rain down fire from heaven on Sodom and Gomorrah.

**In Genesis 19:24** Then **the LORD rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah** brimstone and **fire from the LORD out of heaven**.

But notice that the text states that the Lord, who remained with Abraham, rained down fire "*from the Lord* out of heaven." The text states that the Lord rained down fire from the Lord. Here is a very early assertion of the Trinity in which the Lord is on earth and the Lord is in heaven. (For more analysis on this passage in Genesis, please see our "Trinity Study" outline in our Outlines section.)

This comparison to Genesis 19:24 to Revelation 20:9 informs us that the specific imagery of fire coming down from God out of heaven to consume the wicked directly invokes the notion that it is Jesus, on the earth, who calls down fire from God out of heaven. Thus, the fact that fire comes down from God out of heaven does not indicate that Jesus has already handed the kingdom over to the Father, but instead, that this is Jesus bringing about the final defeat of Satan. And once Jesus has defeated them by calling down fire from God out of heaven, just as he did with Sodom and Gomorrah, the last enemies will be permanently defeated, and Jesus will then hand the kingdom over to the Father, who then commences final judgment.

We will discuss more on the correlation between this final defeat of Satan in verse 9 to Paul's assertion in 1 Corinthians 15 that the last enemy to be defeated is death

in our next section. But for now, we turn our attention to the final judgment, the judgment dispensed by the Father.

**Revelation 20:10 And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire** and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet *are*, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever. 11 **And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it**, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. 12 **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. 13 **And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man** according to their works.

Notice the order of events in verses 10-13. First, the devil is cast into the Lake of Fire. Then, God the Father sits in judgment. And then, in verses 12-13, all of the dead are judged according to their works.

This is a fairly straightforward series of events. However, we should comment on verse 11's assertion that the "earth and the heaven fled away" from the face of him who sat on the throne. As we establish in our article, "Heaven and Earth: Replaced or Restored," in the Cosmology section, this does not mean that the heaven or earth cease to exist. Instead, based upon a comparison to precedent, we demonstrate that this refers to a renovation of the heavens and the earth. This renovation is caused by the very glory of the face of God the Father.

This raises the question of why the earth of the millennium is in any need of further renovation by the Father, if after all, Jesus was restoring the earth during the millennium? Does Jesus not complete the task? Does Jesus hand over to the Father an earth that is incompletely restored? And, given Paul's words in 1 Corinthians 15:22-28, how can Jesus hand the kingdom and the earth over to the Father if he has not fully subdued and renovated it?

The answer is actually quite simple. During the millennium, Jesus is restoring *a corruptible earth* to its condition before corruption, before the curse. He is removing the corruption but he is *not yet* making it *incorruptible*. Once the renovation of the corruptible earth is complete, and all traces of the curse and wickedness are removed, including the final defeat of the ungodly at the end of the millennium, then the corruptible earth has been fully purified from corruption and it is ready to be made incorruptible to last for eternity.

This makes sense in two ways. First, since there will be people living on the earth, populating the nations during the millennium who are not yet immortal or incorruptible, it is logical to think that the earth itself, although freed from corruption, will not yet be made incorruptible so long as there are corruptible people living on it.

Second, this pattern follows the pattern for believers, who first must purify themselves before being transformed, receiving the incorruptible and immortal bodies that will endure for eternity (1 John 3:1-3, 1 Corinthians 15:51-53, Philippians 3:20-21). Thus, once the earth's restoration is complete and it is completely pure, including the removal of the last rebels, then it is likewise ready to be transformed and made incorruptible for eternity.

Lastly, we can conceptualize this final transformation in terms of the scriptural precedent. In 2 Peter 3:1-14, Peter describes two times when there arises a new heaven and new earth. The first time was at the Flood and the second time will be at the return of Christ Jesus. From Revelation 20, we also learn of a third renewal that takes place with the coming of the Father at the end of the 1,000 years. And, just as the earth that exists today will pass away by fire, leaving behind the new earth of the millennium in its wake, in the same way, when the Father comes, the corruptible yet restored earth of the millennium will pass away at his very appearance, leaving behind the new, incorruptible earth of eternity in the wake.

In short, Jesus will restore a corruptible earth, removing its corruption but not yet making it incorruptible. And once Jesus' work of restoration and purification is complete at the end of the millennium, that purified, restored, corruptible earth will be ready to receive the glory of the Father and to be transformed to an incorruptible, eternal condition.

This concludes our examination of this *Long Series* in Revelation 19:5-20:13. So, at this point, we will once again take a look at the status of our 8 conceptual threads.

### *Status of the 8 Conceptual Threads*

For review, here again are the 8 conceptual threads found in the book of Revelation.

1. The angel's appearing to John for the transmission of the Revelation to God's servants
2. The transmission of the Revelation from the Father to Jesus
3. The ministry of the 2 witnesses (including the Temple's building) and plagues
4. God's covenant people, Israel: purging & protection; the 144,000; building the Temple
5. The fall of the Satanic Kingdom and the subsequent falling away in the Church
6. The rise of the last empire and the antichrist; tribulation and the persecution of saints
7. The battle of Armageddon and the return of Christ
8. Millennial reign of Christ and the final judgment

Previous segments of Revelation have provided an incredible amount of detail concerning the first 6 of these threads. A few have even provided some commentary concerning the battle of Armageddon and the return of Christ in

thread number 7. But up until this point, conceptual thread number 8 has gone largely without description.

This *Long Series* in Revelation 19:5-20:13, has not only provided quite a bit of additional detail concerning the defeat of the antichrist, the false prophet, and the adversarial angels at the battle of Armageddon at the return of Jesus Christ, but it has also provided the first descriptions concerning conceptual thread number 8, involving the millennial reign of Christ and the final judgment. With the descriptions of the remaining threads now being filled up, it's not surprising how close we are to the end of the book of Revelation. In fact, the remaining chapters will focus entirely on conceptual thread number 8, thus completing the entire chronology with a description of eternity.