

Revelation
A Wednesday Night Bible Study

Lesson #65

1/16/2008

Following Armageddon Comes The Millennium: Part 1

19:21-20:10

The last verse of Chapter nineteen is a summary of the preceding events to emphasize three things:

- 1) **All of those who have followed the beast and the false prophet in their rebellion against the King of Kings are killed.** They are done, finished! No more will they be seen on this earth. The next time we read about them will be after 1,000 years have passed when they are summoned by **the King of Kings and Lord of Lords**, who came to this earth offering Himself as their Savior.

While they rejected His invitation to come unto Him and be forgiven of all of their sins by accepting Him as their Lord, they could not reject His summons to come to their own execution. He *“gathered them”* from the four corners of the earth, He commanded them to come and they were not able to reject His command even though they had rejected His invitation. There is yet one more command which they will have to obey and will obey. It is revealed in Philippians 2:10-11 and tells us what will take place when they stand before God, Who is God the Son, Jesus Christ at the *“great white throne:”*

“That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

When they hear **the name of Jesus**, Who will be sitting on that throne, this time they will then do as commanded. What a shame. To bow before Him at this time will do them no good at all. It will simply be their only act of obedience to the One Whom they could have willingly chosen to obey as their Lord had they any sense at all. They will obey. They will bend their knees to the ground in recognition of Who He is and out of their mouths will finally come the confession of truth they could have willingly uttered long before. Had they done so willingly when invited to, they would not be doing it under compulsion at this time, for this time it will do them no good at all. It will be at last their recognition of what has been and always is true and their last act and expression before being cast into **the lake of fire that burns with brimstone** which they have chosen and to which they must now go because they would not choose to spend eternity in the presence of **the King of Kings**.

Revelation 19:21 And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.

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- 2) **Alone, without any assistance from His angels or anyone else, the King of Kings slew each and every person who rebelled against Him.** And He did it with only the power that flowed from His mouth when He opened it and extended His tongue, that **“sharp sword,”** the same instrument He used to express His creative power when He created this world and all that is in it.

It is the same power which He expressed when He dictated His Holy Word to His scribes who penned the Bible as so succinctly and accurately described in Hebrews 4:12: ***“For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.”*** Of course, **the King of Kings** needs no other weapons to accomplish the execution of His enemies.

That very same power had expressed the most amazing example of God’s sovereign authority when He used it to invite sinners to come to Him and be converted from being His enemies into becoming His children and thus giving them a nature like unto His own. Lest there be speculators, espousing widely imaginative ideas about various weapons which **the King of Kings** would have used to win what they called a war, it appears that our Lord wants to emphasize that they are all wrong — He needs nothing other than His tongue to carry out His judgment on His enemies — He never has and never will!

- 3) **The flesh, the physical bodies that so many of those who rejected Him, seemed to hold in such high esteem, ended up being bird food.** God is the master of irony. What amounts almost to a worship of the human body by those who will not worship the Creator of those very same bodies, in the end, amounts to the greatest futility of all things. Those bodies have been conditioned in gyms, pampered by personal coaches, adored as objects of sexual gratification, and adorned with the most expensive of materials known to man and, yet, they end up just being food for the fowls of the air. In the end, that’s all they are good for. Having described it previously in 19:17 God tells us one more time what happens to that which has been so important to godless mankind. We cannot miss His emphasis. It is a fitting end to those who have chosen to worship something so temporal and of no lasting value!

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As we move into Chapter twenty, it is expedient for us to pause for an overview of what is before us.

First, this Chapter presents the justice and righteousness, the basis of peace and joy which has been so deeply desired by God's children down through time, ever since Cain slew Abel. From that time forward, Satan, and his followers have abused, tormented, persecuted and murdered God's children. The cry of God's children in His ears has been relentless and intense, often impatiently wondering if a time of justice would ever come. God, in His own time and in His own way, has answered. What He told us in Chapter nineteen, joined with what He tells us in Chapter twenty, briefly describes God answering the plea of His children and asserting His authority over all of creation, punishing and destroying the wicked and activating His righteous rule over all things. It is a time of peace and unprecedented joy for all of God's children. Enjoy reading and discovering what God tells us.

Second, notice the repetitive use of the word and to begin verse after verse. Beginning with the first verse of Chapter nineteen and continuing through Chapter twenty, with few exceptions (only 7 out of 36 verses), most of the statements God dictated to John begin with the Greek word **Kai**, (2532), accurately translated "**and,**" an extremely common particle which, "when used repetitively, has a cumulative force" according to the Bible Knowledge Commentary. It is so used here to emphasize the continuity of the statements, and stresses that they should not be separated, but, rather, considered to be various parts of one continuous and connected event. No one part may be excluded, or spiritualized away, without affecting the whole. Not only, from a grammatical constructive view, listing actions which are connected, but also actions which are interdependent and causative in nature. Each action is dependent upon and follows sequentially the one preceding it and is presented almost as one long statement. This nullifies and make specious the efforts of some people to accept some parts of God's rather long statement of His actions while rejecting others, such as those things pertaining to the millennium which is herein so strongly emphasized.

Third, before us is life in new dimensions, most of which we have little ability to comprehend. That may be the reason why God gives us only a few details and does not provide answers to many of our questions. We have a very limited ability to comprehend anything other than those things which are related to this earth of time, material, and space upon which we live. While some of what God tells us in Chapter twenty does take place on this earth, even those things pertaining to **the Millennial Kingdom**, which is located on this earth, are drastically different from anything we have experienced. By the time we finish with Chapter twenty all that pertains to life on

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.

Revelation 20:2 And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,

Revelation 20:3 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.

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this earth, either as is now known or as experienced in **the Millennial Kingdom**, will be in the past. With His defeat and judgment of those who have rebelled against Him on this earth, our Lord takes us beyond this life as it has been known. Such ends, never to be resumed.

Fourth, Chapter twenty introduces several very important new factors and scenarios. They are briefly listed here and will be more fully explored as our study takes us through God's revelation to us which is contained in Chapter twenty.

- 1) The devil is seized and banished from the earth for a thousand years, bound in chains and cast into the bottomless pit.
- 2) During the thousand years Christ, accompanied by His faithful followers, reigns in His earthly Kingdom on the earth fulfilling the many prophecies of glory and victory found in the Old Testament concerning Israel.
- 3) The subject of the two resurrections, the first and the second resurrection, is introduced and characterized.
- 4) The devil is then released from prison and seduces many of those born during the thousand years to follow him in rebellion against the Lord Jesus, reproducing a similar scene to that which led up to Armageddon with a very brief statement of the Lord's victory over the rebels.
- 5) The devil is seized and cast into **the lake of fire and brimstone** where he is tormented forever, never again to oppose the Lord God.
- 6) **The great white throne** is presented to which **the King of Kings and Lord of Lords** will summon all who have rejected Him and then from that throne He will execute their eternal judgment by casting them into the lake of fire and brimstone where they will join the beast and false prophet, who have already been there for over one thousand years. It is that place of eternal suffering and torment which God prepared before the foundation of the world as the just, final and eternal place of punishment for the devil and all who reject Him as their Lord God.

Before we proceed, we should note that the events of Chapter twenty have been generally interpreted according to three different view points.

Amillennialism rejects any literal millennium or reign of Christ on earth in a Millennial Kingdom. It is so called *amillennialism* because it *spiritualizes away any literal view of the millennium*. Proponents of this view

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interpret references to the reign of Christ in His Kingdom as reigning in the hearts of His followers. Those who hold to this view generally spiritualize and symbolize away many portions of Scripture, not only here in Revelation twenty, but also many passages in both the Old and New Testaments. It is generally correct to say that those who interpret the Scriptures according to this view also hold a non-literal view of all of the Scriptures and do not believe that God dictated each word contained in the Holy Scriptures. Augustine, who lived in the 4th. and 5th. centuries, first introduced this view. There is no record of any advocate prior to Augustine. Modern theologians who interpret the Scriptures according to this view include Ray Summers, William Hendriksen, Abraham Kuyper, R.C.H. Lenski and Herschel Hobbs as well as most of those who translated the NIV. While some conservative Bible scholars hold to this view, it is the preferred view of those who are often classified as liberal Christians or theologians.

Postmillennialism is so named because it sees the return of Christ following the establishment of the Millennium. Since it interprets the events of Revelation nineteen and twenty in such a way as to see Christ's second coming *following* the establishment of His kingdom on earth, it is called *postmillennialism*. It is basically an optimistic view of the success of the church on this earth that will supposedly lead to a complete victory over evil and establish peace and prosperity with the world being governed by biblical principles. It is normally seen as being originated by Daniel Whitby, a controversial scholar of the the 17th century. Modern proponents of this view have included Charles Hodge, A.H. Strong and Loraine Boettner. In recent years it has strangely seen a revival among "reformed churches," many of whom see the church as replacing Israel in the fulfillment of prophecy.

Premillennialism is so described because it interprets Revelation twenty as a literal thousand-year reign of Christ in His Millennial Kingdom on this earth following His second coming. Since the second coming (Rev. 19:11-21) occurs *before* the Millennium it is called *premillennial*. Even within the premillennial position can be found some who hold to various views regarding the timing of the rapture in relationship to the seven year period of tribulation and the second coming of Christ. These are sometimes known as **1) Pre-trib**, meaning that the rapture of the church occurs prior to the seven-year period of tribulation; **2) Mid-trib**, meaning that the rapture occurs at the mid-point of the tribulation period; and **3) Post-trib**, meaning that the rapture of the church occurs at the end of the seven-year period of tribulation. Generally speaking, those who believe that God dictated the very words of the Holy Scripture and interpret the entire Bible accordingly are also premillennialists. The writer of these lessons holds to the Pre-trib Premillennial viewpoint.