Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years. **Revelation 20:6**

Sh'ma Yisrael, Adonai Eloheinu Adonai Echad Baruch Shem k'vod malchutto, I'olam va'ed

Hear, O Israel: the LORD is our God The LORD is One. Blessed be the name of His glorious kingdom for ever and ever.

Revelation 20

Enemy Locked into Abyss First Resurrection, Reigning with Messiah Millennial Kingdom, 1000 year reign **Second Resurrection Great White Throne Judgment**

Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.² He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; ³ and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while.

⁴ And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. ⁵ But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. ⁶ Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.

⁷Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison ⁸ and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea. ⁹ They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them. ¹⁰ The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

¹¹ Then I saw a great white throne and Him who 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, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. ¹³ The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. ¹⁴ Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. ¹⁵ And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

INTRODUCTORY

- Details 1000 year reign of Jesus
- "Millennium" (*mille=1,000; annum=year*).
- Continuation of chapter 19, Jesus comes, judgment, takes His throne, establishes His kingdom on earth.
- Understanding of this time comes from this chapter, <u>Zechariah 14</u>, many parts of <u>Isaiah</u> and <u>Daniel</u>.

INTERPRETATION: *Millennium viewed from 2 basic and <u>different</u> approaches:*

- Literal interpretation (*Millennialism*), belief that 1000 years <u>literal</u>, happens at end of Tribulation just as <u>Revelation and other scriptures state</u>)
- 2. Symbolic interpretation (*Amillennialism*), belief that <u>millennium NOT literal, but symbolic</u>, as is much of scripture, according to this view) Believes we are in "millennium" now.

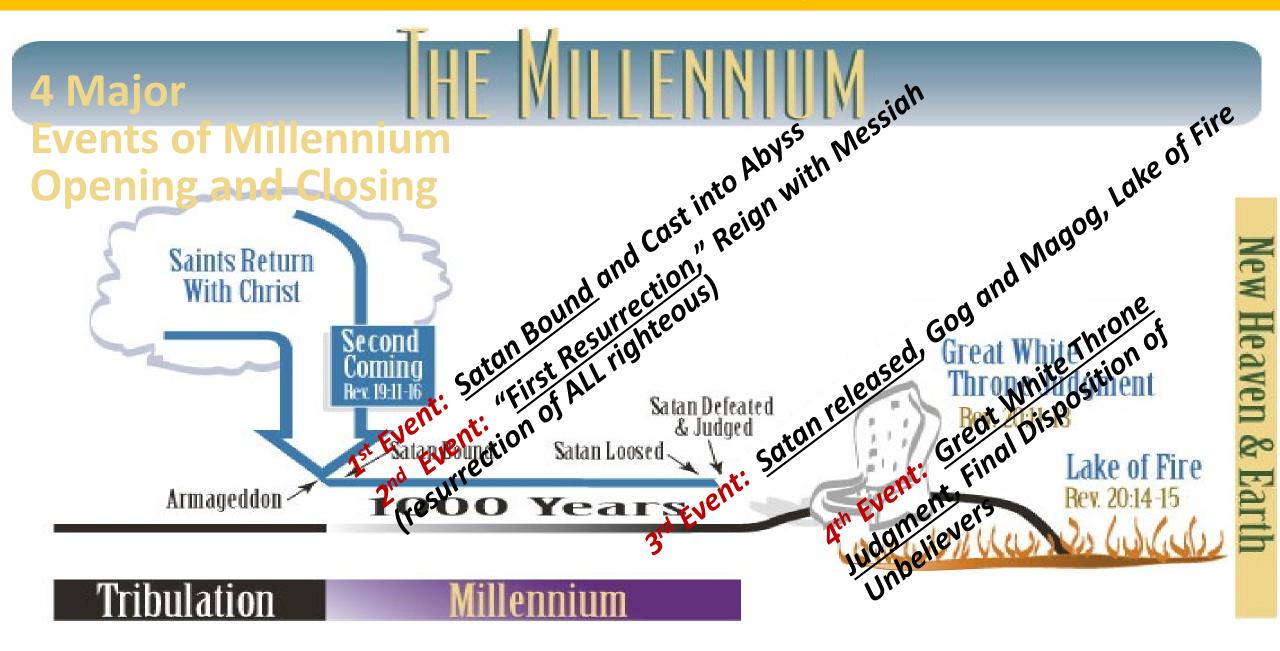
- Will not dwell on differences. We whole-heartedly reject concept of Amillennialism. Believe literal reality of 1,000 year reign of Yeshua on earth.
- Have <u>taken a literal approach to all of Revelation</u>, (to entire Bible). No reason not to literally interpret this.
- Symbolic approach to scripture is *dangerous*. Confusion/problems as each person provides his/her own symbolic interpretation.
- <u>God's Word intended to be taken literally</u>. God does what He says, and He says what He does. **Period**.

- Symbolic Amillennialist position violates scripture, makes God a liar.
- To believe in Amillennialism you must believe that God has broken His covenants with Israel. God cannot do that. Violates His nature. (Abrahamic vs Mosaic, unconditional vs conditional, etc.)
- "1000 years" phrase 6 X in chapter. YHVH making a point this is literal period of time.
- Have seen this repetition other places to underscore a literal time period. (3½ years, 1260 days, 42 months, etc.)

<u>COMMENTARY: The thrones are literal; the martyrs are</u> literal; Jesus is literal; the Word of God is literal; the Beast is literal; the image is literal; the mark of the Beast is literal; their foreheads and their hands are literal; and the thousand years are literal. It is all literal. A thousand years means a thousand years. If God meant that it was eternal, I think He would have said so. If He meant it was five hundred years, He would have said so. Cannot God say what He means? Of course He can, and when He says a thousand years, He means a thousand years. (McGee).

- Amillennialism Uses allegory, symbolism to interpret God's Word, does not take Word of God literally, especially prophecy.
- Originated 3rd/4th centuries AD with Augustine, Origen. Ultimately spawned anti-Semitism.
- "Pre-millenial" position of early church, (Jesus would return to destroy all evil at beginning of millennium, hence "pre"), became unpopular after Christianity was made state religion of Rome.
- Roman leaders thought themselves <u>god-like</u>. Original pre-millennial view altered to appease Rome.

- "Amillennial" view says Jesus will not rule physically, as scripture says, but *spiritually*.
- Became <u>dominant view of Roman Catholic Church</u>, also held today by many protestant churches.
- Literal interpretation, that Jesus will physically reign from earth for 1,000 literal years, favored by scholars Irenaeus, Sir Isaac Newton (and many others), <u>but mostly still a</u> <u>minority belief</u>.
- Today, regardless of denomination, <u>literal Bible believers</u> stand firm on literal interpretation of this book, and *all* scripture. Only completely safe, steadfastly sure position.



Purpose of Millennium to:

- <u>Fulfill all OT covenants</u> (*i.e. Israel occupying ALL land given her by God, etc.*)
- <u>Confirm need of man for God</u>
- <u>Reveal darkness of man's heart WITHOUT influence of</u> <u>enemy</u> (*Jeremiah 17:9*)
- Provide <u>another opportunity for obedience</u> (another "grace" period!) to God (still freewill, choice, although rule enforced),
- Fulfill all OT and NT prophecies about reign of Messiah.

- 75-day gap between Armageddon and Millennium. From Daniel 12:11-12: "And from the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up, there shall be one thousand two hundred and ninety days. Blessed is he who waits, and comes to the one thousand three hundred and thirtyfive days."
- Lots of speculation, controversy about <u>mysterious time period</u>. Not told exactly why but many speculate, of course!

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1260 days = 3½
yrs
1290 days = +30
(1 month)
1335 days = +45
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What/why the extra 75 days??

- Don't know why extra time, but we <u>do know many</u> <u>things happen</u> in this time. Here's just a few of them:
 - 1) cleanup after Armageddon, including antichrist and false prophet thrown in lake of fire
 - 2) removal of <u>abomination of desolation</u>
 - 3) satan bound
 - 4) remaining Gentiles/nations judged
 - 5) resurrection of other saints.
- Will avoid speculation, take this chapter in small pieces, by event.

¹ Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.² He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; ³ and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while.

1st Event: Satan Bound and Cast into Abyss

- "Bottomless pit" <u>Abyss, holding place of fallen angels</u> (Jude 6). Pit mentioned seven times in Revelation (9:1, 2, 11; 11:7; 17:8; 20:1, 3)
- Angel acting on God's authority. He is sovereign. All creation answers to Him....*one way or another!*
- "dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan..." very clear ID! No mistaking who this is. Bound (which means he is not active or able to deceive) for the 1,000 years.



- "...and set a seal on him...." no one opens this prison without God's authority!
- "...so that he should deceive the nations no more..." purpose of satan's binding. During 1000 yrs, will not be around to deceive. Truth will prevail. (But so will man's black heart!)
- Isaiah 24 says **he will not be alone**: *"It shall come to pass in that day That the LORD will punish on high the host of exalted ones, And on the earth the kings of the earth. They will be gathered together, As prisoners are gathered in the pit, And will be shut up in the prison; After many days they will be punished."* (Isaiah 24:21-22)

- *"... thousand years..."* Time frame specified 6 times here. God underscoring literal understanding of 1,000 years.
- Allegorization of 1,000 years uses these verses as justification: Psalm 90:4 "For a thousand years in Your sight Are like yesterday when it is past, And like a watch in the night." And 2 Peter 3:8 "But, beloved, do not forget this one thing, that with the Lord <u>one day is as a thousand</u> years, and a thousand years as one day."
- Repeated use of this clear reference, however, should most likely be interpreted literally.

- "But after these things he must be released for a little while..." many have asked very legitimate question, WHY? Why is he released?
- Don't know for sure, but one reason to show man's black heart even without influence of the enemy.



 Do not always understand <u>why</u> God does what He does, the way He does. But we know He always has a plan, and <u>His plan always has a purpose</u>, and is always better than ours, and *often beyond our understanding at this time*.

⁴ And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

2nd Event: First Resurrection, Reign with Messiah

- *"Thrones, ...and judgment was committed to them"* ...WHO ARE THESE? Not stated, most believe saints (including those caught up), same as those in chapters 4 and 5 (elders on thrones, the redeemed).
- <u>Another group seen</u>, "souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus..." Clearly martyred saints of Tribulation. Resurrected, co-reign with Jesus, and other saints. <u>End of 1st resurrection</u>.

- Believed 4 groups will participate (co-reign) with Jesus during Millennium:
 - 1) ones on their thrones, same **elders** of chapters 4 and 5, <u>the redeemed Church</u>; (co-regents with Messiah)
 - 2) tribulation martyrs, those killed for their faith;
 - 3) Old Testament saints (Daniel 12:1-4, Isaiah 25:8-9);
 - 4) **living tribulation saints** (those who remained true to God, who lived through the tribulation).

Note, only people who go into Millennium are believers. All the rest have been killed at last battle (Har Megiddo).

⁵ But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. ⁶ Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.



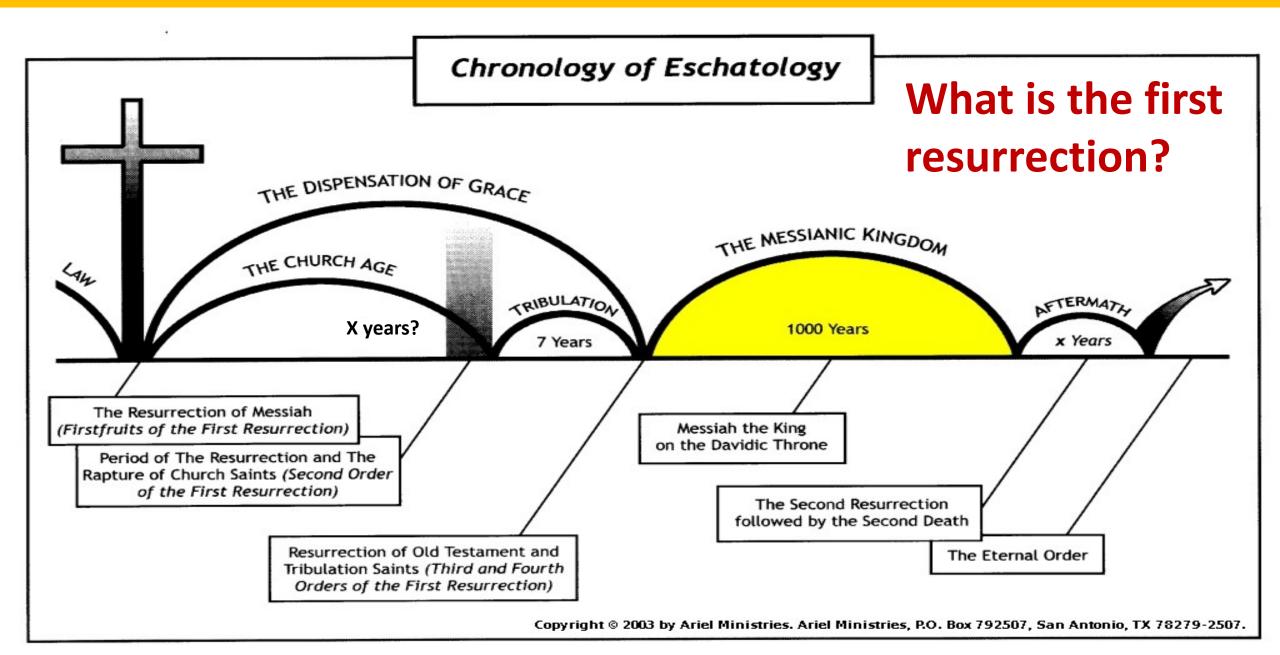
What is the FIRST resurrection?

COMMENTARY: *"The Resurrection at the Second Advent"* One of the major revelations concerning the second coming of Christ is the prediction of the resurrections which will take place at that time. According to Revelation 20:4-6, the event described as the "first resurrection" takes place immediately after the second coming. The expression "first resurrection" has constituted an exegetical problem for all interpreters. Posttribulationists cite this reference as evidence that the rapture could not occur until after the tribulation. Pretribulationists have rightly held that the first resurrection is not an event, but an order of resurrection. ...

It is evident that our Lord rose from the dead as the first one to receive a resurrection body—others previously raised from the dead had merely been restored to their former natural bodies. His resurrection, though widely separated from resurrections which follow, is included in the first resurrection, otherwise the event described in Revelation would not be "first." According to 1 Corinthians 15:20, Christ is "the firstfruits of them that are asleep," i.e., the first part of the resurrection of all saints. Likewise, the evidence that the translation of the church takes place before the tribulation would point to a large segment of the righteous dead being raised before the tribulation.

These also would qualify as taking part in the first resurrection. In contrast to the first resurrection of Revelation 20 is the resurrection of the wicked dead portrayed in the latter part of the chapter . <u>The first</u> <u>resurrection therefore becomes the resurrection of</u> <u>all the righteous in contrast to the final resurrection</u> <u>which is the resurrection of the wicked</u>."

(John Walvoord)





- "First resurrection" for believers only, "category" not single event.
- "Rest of the dead" = all other dead (unbelievers) not resurrected until <u>after Millennium</u>.
- Greek "resurrection" = "anastasis" literally to stand up again, or be raised back to life.
- Resurrection a *literal* event, all dead believers raised to *literal* life, with *literal* uncorrupted body (see 1 Cor. 15).

- "...over such the second death has no power..." 1st death = body, separation of body from soul. 2nd death = separation from God. 2nd death, separation from God, has no power over believers. Reserved for unbelievers.
- "...they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years." Those who reign with Jesus of first resurrection, all believers.
- All believers priests, not just Jewish Levites. All serve Him in some capacity. Many <u>references in both OT and</u> <u>NT</u> about believers being "priests" of God.

- "Priest" = Hebrew = KOHEN (or COHEN). Literally one who officiates, executes (administratively) and generally serves highest authority. "Chief ruler" ("principal officer") of Most High God.
- Priest's role multi-faceted, acting not only as officials of Temple worship, but also as intermediaries between God and man through sacrificial system.
- Role to keep order and execute laws of God. We will serve in a similar way.
- At Mt. Sinai: "And you <u>shall be to Me a kingdom of priests</u> (cohanim) and a holy nation.' These are the words which you shall speak to the children of Israel." (Exodus 19:6, NKJV)

In this book (CJB):

- "who has caused us to be a <u>kingdom</u>, that is, **cohanim** for God, his Father — to him be the glory and the rulership forever and ever. Amen." (1:6)
- 2. "You made them into a kingdom for God to rule, **cohanim** to serve him; and they will rule over the earth." (5:10)
- 3. "Blessed and holy is anyone who has a part in the first resurrection; over him the second death has no power. On the contrary, they will be **cohanim** of God and of the Messiah, and they will rule with him for the thousand years." (current verse, 20:6)

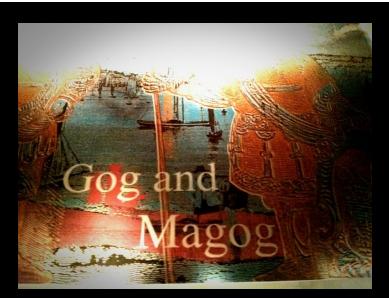
⁷ Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison⁸ and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea.



3rd Event: Satan released, Gog and Magog, Lake of Fire

- Satan released at end of 1000 years. He will immediately go out to deceive nations again.
- <u>Shows basic defect in man</u> perfect environment (*Millennium*) still <u>reveals fallen nature of man</u>, even under rule of the Lamb. *Human nature <u>must be redeemed first</u>*.
- Millennium starts well, populated with believers. In 1,000 years, <u>unbelief/rebellion, nature of unredeemed man</u>, returns.

- Even after perfect rule by perfect ruler, deceitful heart of man still around.
- This perfect environment will reveal man's sinful nature, because environment alone cannot produce a perfect heart. Only God can do this, and only if the heart is yielded to Him.
- "Gog and Magog." Don't confuse with same mention in Ezekiel 38 and 39. Much debate, controversy about these two references.



- <u>Ezekiel indicates pre-Trib or mid-Trib event</u>, but Revelation 20 = post-Trib. Many similarities, many differences.
- In Ezekiel, Gog is person or ruler, Magog is land of this ruler. Ezekiel gives other ancient names of nations united (an alliance) with Gog and Magog in attempt to destroy Israel. <u>Ancient names traced to modern Arab</u> <u>nations</u> today.
- Most commentators believe this = Russian/Arab alliance in Ezekiel 38-39. <u>Revelation 20 not specific</u>.

- Timing, participants, place different. However, also a group gathered together to do battle against God and His people - another vain thing! (Psalm 2).
- Some commentators insist same as Ezekiel battle. However, careful analysis of both events should lead to conclusion they are <u>separate and unique</u>.
- "whose number is as the sand of the sea..." VERY large number gathered. Sad so many still rebel against God.
- Likely more people on earth than ever before; no disease, or want. Mankind flourishes, populations swell.

⁹ They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them. ¹⁰ The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

- "...surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city." "camp of the saints" interesting term. Where believers found as a "group," co-regents with Messiah during Millennium. Refers to Yerushalayim (Jerusalem).
- Group in rebellion surrounds Jerusalem, outlying areas, again attempting to overthrow God and His people.



 Although Babylon in ruins 1000 years, spirit of Babylon drives sinful man to rebel against God again and again.
 Tale of Two Cities continues....

- "And fire came down from God..." Boom. We're done! Notice no battle mentioned here!
- Have gathered for battle, but apparently non-event since God intervenes immediately and sends fire down to destroy them. So much for that "battle."
- Battling against God, whether in body or in spirit, <u>has</u> <u>disastrous and often fatal results</u>. <u>Always</u>.
- "devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire..." Enemy sent to eternal destiny - lake of fire - joins antichrist and false prophet (still there), and eventually all other unbelievers. Will exist forever in torment.

 Many ask why this battle had to happen again, especially after one previous Gog and Magog, and Armageddon.



- First, asking "why" questions non-productive! We cannot know mind of God, only that He is perfect and just and righteous. Only thing we can understand = all sin must be destroyed prior to entering into eternal state with God.
- Since unredeemed people populated Millennial Kingdom, human heart still rebelled. Final battle reveals this, finalizes preparations for eternal state.

¹¹ Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heavens fled away. And there was found no place for them. ¹² And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books.

4th Event: Great White Throne Judgment, Final Disposition of Unbelievers

- "Then I saw a great white throne..." event often referenced as "Great White Throne Judgment"
 judgment of unbelievers, doomed, <u>not</u> judgment of believers. Post-Millennium.
- "...and Him who sat on it.." The judge: Jesus!



 "...from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was found no place for them." Reminds of <u>chapter 6</u>, where sky rolled up, no one could stand before wrath of the Lamb!

¹⁴ The sky receded like a scroll being rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved from its place. ¹⁵ Then the earth's kings, the rulers, the generals, the rich and the mighty — indeed, everyone, slave and free — hid himself in caves and among the rocks in the mountains, ¹⁶ and said to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us, and hide us from the face of the One sitting on the throne and from the fury of the Lamb! ¹⁷ For the Great Day of their fury has come, and who can stand?" (6:14-17).

- Sounds like destruction of heaven and earth, referenced in chapter 21. Corrupt earth and heavens cannot remain in presence of a holy God.
- Unbelieving dead gathered here. Second resurrection.
 All believers have been resurrected prior.
- No difference between "small and great" in God's eyes.
- <u>ALL unbelieving dead appear here</u>, including those in sea, Hades. Prevents belief in "existentialism" or thought that after death there is nothing. **Wrong**. After death is *judgment for unbeliever*, ultimately an eternal torment in the lake of fire. *Very sobering*.

- "...and books were opened." What books? Not told. Books where deeds written by God, or books of Law?
- God judges ONLY in two ways, either under the <u>Law</u>, or under <u>Grace</u>. <u>We choose</u>.
- If under the Law, Law judges us guilty, as all sin and fall short (miss the mark, what "sin" means) of glory of God.
- <u>If under grace</u>, covered by the blood of Jesus, **judged by His righteousness.** (Judged not guilty)
- Jesus told Pharisees <u>Moses</u> would judge them the Law. <u>Declined His grace</u>. *These books may very well be the Law*.

 "And another book was opened..." Identified as Book of Life. Much speculation about this book.

 Thought Book of Life initially contains names of EVERY person ever born; God desires "none lost."

 However, as people make choices against God, not to receive gift of His Son, these names blotted out from Book of Life (due to unbelief). (See Exodus 32:32-33; Psalm 69:28; Revelation 21:27; Philippians 4:3; Revelation 13:8; 18:8, Luke 10:20) Notice NOT Lamb's Book of Life!

- "And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books." Unbeliever's works known here (perhaps included in books opened) compared to the Law.
- These have declined grace of God, so this only other judgment basis.
- Results? Romans 3:23. This judgment formality only. No one in this judgment pardoned. <u>All condemned to</u> eternal separation from God, the second death.

¹³ The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works. ¹⁴ Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. ¹⁵ And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.

- All unsaved dead raised here, regardless of where their "matter" ended up (sea, fire, etc.)
- "Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire..." literal physical death, coupled with <u>Hades</u>, <u>holding place of the dead</u> (Hades in NT, Sheol in OT, a temporary place, incorrectly translated as "hell.")
- These also thrown in lake of fire (No more death, no more Sheol/Hades).
- Lake of fire = ultimate permanent destiny of everything/everyone in opposition to God. What most today call "hell."

- "This is the second death..." = separation from God, an eternity of torment, only for unbeliever. No power over believer.
- Remember, completely necessary for a holy God, and for our protection from sin. Sin must be completely banished forever.
- All whose names not found in Book of life cast into lake of fire. *Their names have been blotted out.*
- Lamb's Book of Life is like a subset of the Book of Life.
- OT saints didn't have Jesus to believe in, although they believed in God's promises of a Messiah.

- Everyone starts out in Book of Life, then as decisions made against God, names removed (blotted out). In same manner, as decisions made for Jesus, names ADDED to Lamb's book.
- In this passage are all who <u>never</u> made that decision.
- Simple, straight-forward passage. <u>Final event before</u> <u>ETERNAL state</u>, what we call eternity.

- Lots we don't know, but God has given what we need to know.
- Any speculation beyond what we are told is *futile, waste of time, perhaps even harmful.*

Believe what God says.

That is enough.

MORALS have changed CHURCHES have changed SOCIETY have changed PEOPLE have changed BUT GOD'S WORD REMAINS THE SAME

- What about believer's judgment? There WILL be one.
 We call it the BEMA seat of Christ, from Greek word for official seat of judgment *bema*.
- Referenced in 2 Corinthians 5:10
- "For "we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad."
- <u>NOT salvation judgment</u>, *rewards judgment*. Where we will give account for what we did with what God gave us.

- Don't know when takes place, but most think after "catching away," before second coming.
- Will receive our rewards (aside from salvation) based on this judgment.
 "Believers only" judgment.

• Believers taken to heaven

RAPTURE

O JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST

- Believers judged and rewarded
- Takes place in Heaven

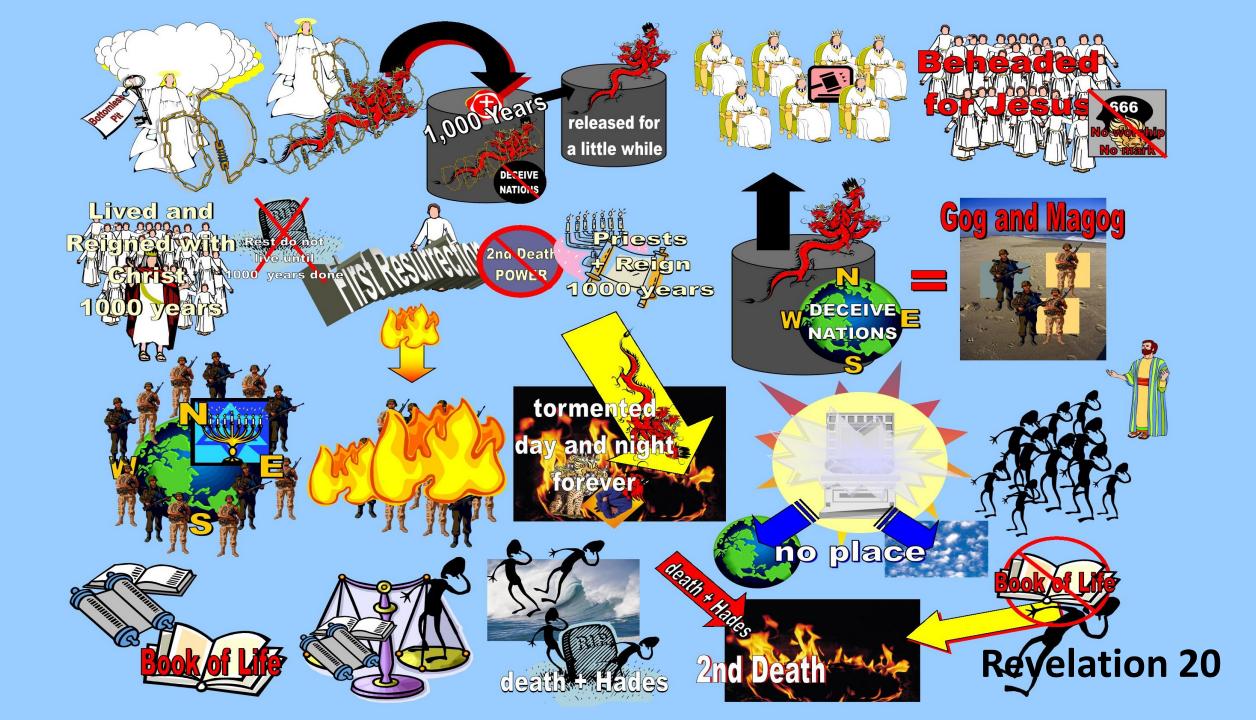
TRIBULATION

- 7 years of distress on earth
- Antichrist rises to power

Christ reigns 1,000 years on earth

GREAT WHITE THRONE

Unbelievers judged and thrown to Lake of Fire



Coming up next.... The "Eternal State"

Yevarekh-kha Adonai veyishmerekha May the LORD bless you and keep you

Ya'er Adonai panav elekha vihunneka May the LORD make His face shine upon you and be gracious to you

Yissa Adonai panav elekha viyasem lekha shalom. May the LORD lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace.