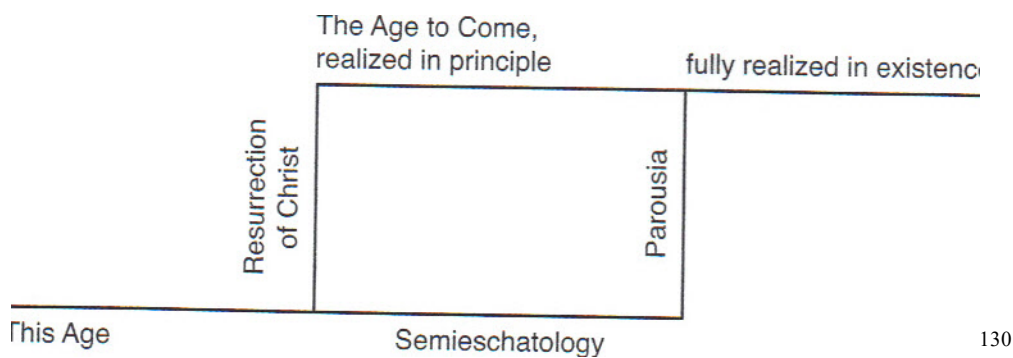


THE REVELATION

LESSON 29: THE FINAL CYCLE OF VISIONS: FOUR VIEWS OF THE MILLENNIUM

Intro:

“Throughout my career, I have avoided the millennial question like the plague, thinking that Scripture does not clearly address it.” **John Frame**¹²⁹



BIG IDEA: Christ _____, at the end of time, to _____ by what people have done, not how they _____ this chapter.

Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain.² And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years,³ and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he might not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were ended. After that he must be released for a little while.

- This refers to the next _____ John sees. It does not necessarily imply the vision is _____ after the previous vision.
- “I saw” (vv. 1, 4) is used throughout *The Revelation* to introduce _____ visions.
- The angel comes under the authority of God, holding the _____ to the _____ and a chain.
- It is clearly symbolic, since the dragon is a _____ being who cannot be _____ bound.
- The dragon is the _____, _____, the one who _____ God’s people.
- He is bound and thrown into the pit for a thousand years.
- His influence is _____, particularly his ability to _____ the nations for the duration.
- In particular, this deception is about gathering the nations against God.

¹²⁹ Frame, John, *The Doctrine of the Christian Life*. Philipsburg, NJ. P&R Publishing. 2008. pp. 281.

¹³⁰ Frame, John. pp. 279.

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“Therefore, context, and not the metaphor by itself, must determine what degree of restriction is intended.” **Greg Beale**¹³¹

- He will then be released again.

Is this 1,000 period to be taken literally and therefore referring to a 1,000 year earthly reign of Christ in which Satan is unable to exert any influence on humanity? If this view is true, who is alive during the millennium?

Or is this 1,000 year period to be taken as referring to the period of time after the conquest of the earth by the gospel, during which the saints reign and Satan has no influence, after which he will be released and Christ returns?

Or is this 1,000 year period to be taken symbolically as representing the period of time from the Fall of Jerusalem to the return of Christ during which the gospel is able to prosper due to Satan’s limited influence?

Or do we not have enough information yet?

When was Satan bound? What do Matthew 12:29; John 12:31; Col. 2:15; and Rev. 12:9 teach us about this?

Why a literal, earthly millennium that is essentially a repeat of what just happened?

Dispensationalists will argue a few things.

- 1) this is the fulfillment of the promises of a _____ state for _____.
- 2) It shows that _____, not Satan (who is now bound) is the problem.

“Jesus is reminding his churches that despite their experience of persecution and the traumas that had shaken the Roman Empire in the first century, such seemingly world-shaking troubles do not necessarily mean that ‘the last battle’ is imminent.” **Dennis Johnson**¹³²

“Because the objects he sees and what he hears are seen and heard in a vision, they are not *first* to be understood literally but viewed as symbolically portrayed and communicated, which is the *symbolic* level of vision.” **Greg Beale**¹³³

The Reign of Christ

⁴ Then I saw thrones, and seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was committed. Also I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not

¹³¹ Beale, pp. 985.

¹³² Johnson, pp. 288.

¹³³ Beale, pp. 974.

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received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. ⁵ The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended. This is the first resurrection. ⁶ Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ, and they will reign with him for a thousand years.

- The location of the thrones is not clear.
- The _____ are present, but not in _____ form. This is an indication that this _____ the _____ of Christ.
- They _____ with Christ, having been raised to life but the others do not rise again until after the 1,000 years.
- At the death of Christ, certain saints were resurrected. Are these those saints?
- They are free from the second death because of the work of the Lamb.

What, if anything, does Ephesians 2:1-7 have to do with this text?

What, if anything, does Daniel 7:9-10, 22 have to do with this text?

How does 1 Corinthians 15:25-26 inform us about this text?

If death was swallowed up in victory with the last trumpet (1 Cor. 15), why are people dying in a literal, earthly millennium?

Two Resurrections?

Dispensationalism separates the resurrections of the _____ and the _____ based on this text alone.

But, the resurrections are used in _____ to the _____. The first death is _____, and the second is that of _____. The first resurrection is that of _____ (Eph. 2:6; Col. 3:1-4), and the second is _____. Only those who experience the first _____ don't experience the second _____!¹³⁴

“The allusion to Revelation 4 and Daniel 7 signals to John’s hearers that these thrones are located in heaven.” **Dennis Johnson**¹³⁵

“It turns out that it is impossible to defeat Christians. Even when demonic forces are ravaging the church, they are only establishing Christians in positions of real and permanent power!” **Vern Poythress**¹³⁶

¹³⁴ Poythress, pp. 179-180.

¹³⁵ Johnson, pp. 290.

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The Defeat of Satan

⁷ And when the thousand years are ended, Satan will be released from his prison ⁸ and will come out to deceive the nations that are at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle; their number is like the sand of the sea. ⁹ And they marched up over the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, but fire came down from heaven and consumed them, ¹⁰ and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

- At the end of the time frame, Satan is no longer _____.
- He _____ the nations, gathering them for battle, just as we saw earlier. Same battle or different battle?
- Dispensationalists usually talk about Gog and Magog in the context of _____. But this follows Armageddon in their _____.
- “*the four corners*” is a _____, a figure of speech where the parts refer to the whole.
- They _____ the saints to destroy them, but God _____ sending judgment from heaven.
- Satan, the deceiver, is _____ into the _____ lake of fire that the Beast and False Prophet were thrown into.
- They are judged for _____. They do not _____ there, but are punished.

In both the pre- and post-millennial positions, those under the rule of Christ on earth revolt against Him. Is this problematic, and why?

If, as pre-millennialists say, the first resurrection is physical and all those who experience it won't face the 2nd death and are alive in the millennium, who is being deceived and judged with Satan?

If, as the post-millennialists say, the world has been Christianized by the gospel, where do the ungodly nations that rise against the church come from?

The Chiastic Structure of 12-20

A Introduction of the Dragon (12)

B Introduction of the Beasts (13)

C Introduction of the Harlot (17)

C' Destruction of the Harlot (18)

B' Destruction of the Beasts (19)

A' Destruction of the Dragon (20)

¹³⁶ Poythress, pp. 181.

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The Case for Progressive Parallelism (Poythress)¹³⁷

- The final battle in 20:7-10 seems to be the same as the final battle in 16:14, 16; 17:14; 19:11-21.
- The various descriptions of the final battle use language that is similar to that in _____ 38-39.
- The judgment of Satan in 20:10 _____ the judgments of Babylon and of the Beast and the False Prophet. These enemies of God all receive their doom, and the visions depicting their doom are themselves _____ rather than _____ arranged.
- Certain features in 20:11-15 _____ to earlier _____ of the Second Coming (6:14; 11:18).
- Most importantly, all of Christ's _____ are destroyed in 19:11-21. If 20:1-6 describes events later than 19:11-21, there would be no one left for Satan to deceive in 20:3.

The Final Judgment

¹¹ Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. ¹² And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done. ¹³ And the sea gave up the dead who were in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead who were in them, and they were judged, each one of them, according to what they had done. ¹⁴ Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire. ¹⁵ And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

- The great white throne is set up, and _____ sits upon it.
- Parts of creation seem to have disappeared in light of the judgment.
- The _____, raised up, stand before Christ, and the books are opened to reveal what people have done.
- They are judged on the basis of their _____ as _____ in the books.
- The books are a part of the _____ proceedings we find here. They are _____.

¹³⁷ Poythress, pp. 179. Beale also deals with this in pp. 974-83.

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- The book of life records the _____ those who have been saved by the _____ of the Lamb of God, and they are delivered from the judgment. It does not contain their _____ - _____.
- Those whose names are not in the book of life join Satan in the lake of fire.

“John has seen history’s ugly end; now he will see eternity’s beautiful beginning.” **Dennis Johnson**¹³⁸

“The Lake of Fire seems to be much worse than the temporary hell, or hades, that souls experience between the death of their bodies and the return of the Lord. It appears to be a shoreless, bottomless, ocean of burning.” **Doug Kelly**¹³⁹

Conclusion:

“I agree with the amils and premils that this age is an age of suffering and persecution for God’s people. I also agree with the postmils that in the long run this age can be seen as an age of Christian triumph, not only in narrowly “spiritual” matters, but in the church’s social influence as well. That is in fact what we see in history: believers are always persecuted in some measure, but eventually Christianity triumphs and comes to profoundly influence the institutions of the societies it touches. And when Christianity declines, as in many parts of the world today, the institutions of those societies decline as well. To limit the church’s triumph to a narrowly “spiritual” realm is, as postmils emphasize, Platonic rather than scriptural. When God saves a person, that person brings his regenerate values into every area of life.” **John Frame**¹⁴⁰

¹³⁸ Johnson, pp. 300.

¹³⁹ Kelly, pp. 394-5.

¹⁴⁰ Frame, pp. 281.