

Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near.  
Rev. 1:3

# Verse by Verse Through the Book of Revelation

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## REVELATION CHAPTER 20

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The time is coming when the instigator of all evil will be destroyed. God's character will be vindicated. The conflict will be over!

The thousand year period called the millennium is mentioned in the bible only in Revelation Chapter 20. It occurs 6 times in verses 1-7.

It is interesting to note that the entire book of Revelation is missing from the Codex Vaticanus—a Vatican manuscript



1. **And I saw an angel come down from heaven**, Literally “coming down.” The act of descending.

**having the key** Having the key indicates that Heaven has complete control of events

**of the bottomless pit** This is a symbolic vision. John is describing what has unfolded before his wondering eyes. The shutting up of the dragon in the pit was merely a symbolic way of showing that Satan's activities would be brought to a halt. According to 19:19,21 the wicked are all destroyed in connection with the coming of Jesus—the same time as the righteous will be caught up in the air to meet the Lord. The group that is caught up to meet the Lord in the air includes both the righteous dead, who are raised at the time of the advent, and the righteous living who are “changed.” (1 Cor. 15:51; 1 Thess. 4:16)

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**and a chain in his hand.** A symbol of restraint. Something used to bind or tie up

2. **And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan,** This refers back to ch. 12:9, where the same list of names appears.

**and bound him for a thousand years.** The binding of the dragon is symbolic of the restrictions placed upon Satan's activities. The wicked will have been slain at the second coming. The righteous are in Heaven. Satan and his angels are bound to the desolated earth and aren't permitted to wander the universe as they do now.

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** Satan will have nobody to deceive. But, at the end of the thousand years he will once again be in a position to deceive men. Of the "little season" we are not informed. It will be time enough for Satan to organize the resurrected wicked for an assault upon the New Jerusalem.

4. **And I saw thrones and they sat upon them,** Symbols of authority to exercise rule as a king or judge

**and judgment was given unto them:** Authority to pass sentence

**and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God,** Martyrs

**and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands;** Refused to worship the beast—chose death rather than disobedience to God's law

**and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.** The saints assist with the work of judgment while the wicked lay dead and Satan and his angels are "bound to earth." The saints are able to read the Book of Life and understand why the wicked are lost. Everyone will understand that God is just and good. The wicked will have excluded themselves from heaven and, in truth, they wouldn't be happy there.

5. **But the rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.** This includes the wicked dead from all time. Those who died without Christ and those who perished at the second

coming. This is clear from the fact that all the righteous dead arose in the first resurrection. Therefore, the “rest of the dead” must refer to the wicked dead. (Some manuscripts don’t have this clause ‘*but the rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years were finished,*’ but what is said in this clause is clearly implied in the context so most scholars believe that it is authentic.

6. **Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power,** (the death that comes to the wicked after their resurrection at the close of the 1000 years) but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

7. **And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison.** His prison has been the earth desolated with no humans to torment.

8. **And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog,** These terms represent the hosts of the unsaved of all ages who come forth in the second resurrection.

**to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.** This host is composed of all the unsaved from the beginning of time. This verse alone should make people realize that everybody is NOT going to be saved.

9. **And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city:** The beloved city is the New Jerusalem that descended and is located on earth. One of the significant events following the close of the 1000 years is the descent of Christ, the saints, and the Holy City. Satan leads the wicked to believe that they can capture the city—the surround it ready to do battle!

**and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.** When God finally purifies the earth it will look like a boundless lake of fire.

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 .** The lake of fire is the surface of the earth turned into a sea of flames which both consumes the wicked and purifies the earth. The entire universe will witness the judgment. Sin will not appear attractive but will be seen in all its hideous magnitude. How long the wicked will burn, we do not know. We do know that the fire will go out. It will end, because Malachi 4:3 says “You shall trample the wicked, for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet on the day that I do this, says the Lord of hosts.”

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**for ever and ever** Literal translation “unto the ages of the ages”

11. **And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away;** symbolic of the absolute power of the one on the throne

**and there was found no place for them.** Meaning Jesus and God. The two work in closest unity.

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.** These are the books that contain the records of the lives of men. Ellen White says that not a word or deed will escape our memory. Let every man search his own heart.

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.** Some say that it doesn't matter what you do because nothing you can do will get you to heaven. It is true that we need the blood of Jesus to save us—but after we come to Christ we are expected to behave like Christians.

14. **And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.** Remember that this is symbolic.

15. **And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.** Only the names of the faithful will be retained in the book of life. The names of those who do not endure until the end will be blotted out (ch. 3:5). Many never had their names recorded there, for the book contains only the names of those who at some time in their lives professed faith in Christ (See Luke 10:20)

In the book of heaven our lives are as accurately traced as in a photograph. Not only are we held accountable for what we've done but for what we've left undone—our undeveloped character and our unimproved opportunities. Review and Herald. Sept. 22, 1891.

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