

The Millennium and the Judge
A Series on Divine Judgment: Part 17

When the Divine Millennial Kingdom succeeds the fourth Gentile kingdom (Dan 2:28-45; Rev 19:11-21), the Bible does not say why Satan is imprisoned during this millennium (Rev 20:1-3) and simply not destroyed with the Antichrist and False Prophet.

As a consequence of the reaping by the angel(s), who is told to reap the earth (Rev 14:18-19), and dispense the bowl plagues, it seems unlikely that there are any surviving human beings left on earth (Rev 16:1-21; 19:11-21).

Many commentators believe that human beings survive Armageddon; however, this interpretation does not appear to be supported:

Daniel prophesies that by the end of the 70th week, sin will end (Dan 9:24). Since human beings are born with sin, the end of sin is only possible with the end of human beings.

When Jesus Christ is coming to Armageddon, the angel standing in the sun cries out to all the birds, "Come, assemble for the great supper of God, so that you may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of commanders and the flesh of mighty men and the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them and the flesh of **all men**, both free men and slaves, and small and great." (Rev 19:18)

After the Antichrist and False Prophet were thrown into the lake of fire, "**the rest were killed** with the sword which came from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh." (Rev 19:21)

The logical questions appear to be daunting for their apparent contradictions. Is it possible for surviving sinful human beings to live in the presence of the holy glorified Jesus Christ? If these sinful human beings exist after the first resurrection (Rev 20:6), how was the wrath of God finished (Rev 15:1; 16:7)?

Thus, it appears that all who remain on earth are angels who, because of their fallen state, are confined to earth (Rev 12:7-9).

There is a basis for the view that fallen angels are all that remain on earth. In the next scene on earth, the apostle John sees thrones occupied by the resurrected saints who were beheaded for their testimony of Jesus Christ and those who did not worship the Beast. After the return of Jesus Christ and the first resurrection of saints, there is a new hierarchy among personal beings.

Or do you not know that the saints will judge the world? If the world is judged by you, are you not competent to constitute the smallest law courts? Do you not know that we will judge angels? How much more matters of this life? (1 Cor 6:2-3)

The apostle Paul indicates that glorified saints will have authority over spirit personal beings (angels).

From this perspective, fallen angels, who do not have the limited lifespan of human beings (Gen 6:3), can certainly be the beings over which glorified saints reign with Jesus Christ for one thousand years (Rev 20:4).

After the millennium, the apostle John reveals that Satan will be released from the Abyss "to deceive the nations (**ethnos**) which are in the four corners of the earth" (Rev 20:7-8).

The Greek noun "ethnos," translated into English as "nations," has the meaning of a large group of people who share something in common (i.e. ethnicity, custom, etc). When used in the book of Revelation, "ethnos" is used in a variety of contexts:

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Groups of people of different backgrounds regardless of faith (Rev 10:11; 12:5; 13:7)

Groups of non-Believers of different backgrounds (Rev 11:2, 9, 18; 14:6, 8; 16:19; 17:15; 18:3, 23; 19:15)

Groups of Believers of different backgrounds (Rev 5:9-10; 7:9; 15:3; 21:24, 26; 22:2)

If no human beings survive Armageddon and glorified saints will judge angels (1 Cor 6:2-3), it implies that the Greek term “ethnos” is used in the context of spirit angelic personal beings (Rev 2:26-29; 20:4). In plausible corroboration of this is the war that Satan instigates at the end of the millennium in which heavenly fire consumes the enemy (Rev 20:7-9). The battle is not fought by using any familiar human military means; instead, supernatural fire is used to eliminate both fallen angels and Satan (Rev 20:10).

From this perspective, Satan’s imprisonment and removal of his evil influence from his fallen angelic followers may serve a redemptive purpose. Through the atonement of Jesus Christ, all things in heaven and earth were reconciled with God (Col 1:19-20), which could include fallen angels. While the Bible does not say whether evil fallen angels reconcile with God (Heb 2:16-17), by implication it seems possible.

God’s loving compassion for His Creation could be seen in a similar precedent. Despite the demise of all Believers on earth by the time of the seventh trumpet, He still has an angel preaching the gospel “to those who live on the earth, and to every nation, and tribe and tongue and people” (Rev 14:6).

Perhaps some form of reconciliation between fallen angels and God is purpose of the Divine Millennial Kingdom after which final judgment takes place for those who resume their allegiance with Satan. What is noteworthy to observe is that the Bible devotes more attention on Satan in relationship to the Millennial Kingdom rather than the Kingdom itself.

Of the Millennial Kingdom, it is significant to note how the term “resurrection” is defined, and the meaning of the “first resurrection.”

The definition of resurrection appears to include “coming to life” (Rev 20:4). This has several implications:

When the Two Witnesses were taken up, it was not considered a resurrection (Rev 11:12).

When Jesus Christ came in the clouds and gathered up all Believers (Rev 14:16; 1 Cor 15:51-54; 1 Thess 4:16-18) and the gathered saints were at the Marriage of the Lamb and wedding banquet in heaven (Rev 19:7-9), it was the beginning of the process of resurrection for Believers.

Thus, after the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the first Believers to complete their process of resurrection occurs at the start of the Millennial Kingdom. They are a special class of Believers – those who were martyrs or who did not worship the beast during the Great Tribulation (Rev 20:4). See the article: “What is the Great Tribulation?” at <http://www.Helpmewithbiblestudy.org/12End/DefGreatTribulation.aspx>.

The apostle John places an emphasis on the first resurrection by calling these resurrected saints as “blessed and holy” and “over these the second death has no power” (Rev 20:6). This is what Jesus had in mind when exhorting the church of Smyrna (Rev 2:10-11) and Thyatira (Rev 2:25-28).

And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand;... (Rev 20:4)

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Special because of their stalwart perseverance during this unique period of harsh persecution of their faith, these Believers were honored with authority to reign as priests of God and of Christ with Jesus during the Divine Millennial Kingdom (Rev 20:4).

An example of these martyred Believers can be seen as those under the alter (Rev 6:9-11). It is conceivable to include the 144,000 sealed bond servants of God (Rev 7:1-8; 14:1-5) and the Two Witnesses (Rev 11:3-12). This view provides a literal perspective to Jesus' statement of "many who are first will be last; and the last, first" (Matt 19:27-30; 20:1-16).

After the Divine Millennial Kingdom and the hurling of Satan into the lake of fire, the apostle John sees a great white throne at some unknown location that is not of earth or heaven (Rev 20:11).

In this second resurrection, the rest of humanity, who were not of the first resurrection, come to life and present themselves before Jesus Christ the Judge (Acts 17:30-31; Rev 20:12).

Believers, whose souls in heaven join with their glorified bodies, complete their process of resurrection and come to life (Rev 20:12).

Non-Believers, whose souls in Hades join with their bodies and come to life (Rev 20:13). Their resurrection is a singular event.

Jesus, who is sitting on the great white throne, judges each person by a) looking for their name in the Book of Life and b) evaluating their life in the books that recorded their deeds (Rev 20:12-13; Matt 7:21-23).

Non-Believers, discovering their names missing in the Book of Life, were thrown into the lake of fire (Rev 20:15).

Believers, evaluated in accordance to their deeds, were rewarded for their faithful service (Matt 19:28; Luke 22:28-30; Rev 22:12). The apostle Paul refers to this in his exhortation to Believers in Rome and Corinth:

But you, why do you judge your brother? Or you again, why do you regard your brother with contempt? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. For it is written,

"As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to Me,
And every tongue shall give praise to God."

So then each one of us will give an account of himself to God. (Rom 14:10-12)

Therefore we also have as our ambition, whether at home or absent, to be pleasing to Him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad. (2 Cor 5:9-10)

It is difficult to know where the lake of fire and brimstone is. There is an impression that it might be a heavenly location; however, the unknown location of the great white throne allows for a view towards earth or heaven as "throwing," if taken literally, requires a physical presence of Jesus Christ or His angels.

Then another angel, a third one, followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, he also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger; and he will be **tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb**. And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever; they have no rest day and night, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name." (Rev 14:9-11)

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Here, last to join the Antichrist, False Prophet, and Satan into the lake of fire and second death, is the final place for non-Believers. It is a place of torment and without any rest.

In the very end, death and Hades are also thrown into the lake of fire (Rev 20:14).

With the end of death, introduced by Adam's sin, and evil, introduced by Satan, the apostle John sees a new heaven and a new earth (Rev 21:1).