



FAITH PRINCETON SUNDAY SCHOOL

REV. 20:1-6 The Millennial Reign of Christ

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 11, 2026

REVELATION 20 Observation Worksheet

Chapter Theme _____

20 Satan Bound

1 Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. 2 And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; 3 and he threw him into the abyss, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he would not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time.

4 Then I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them. 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; and 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 completed. This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years.

*Enduring Word Commentary:***Revelation 20 – Satan, Sin and Death are Finally Eliminated****A. Satan bound for a thousand years.****1. (1) A nameless angel comes to bind Satan with a great chain.**

Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.

a. An angel coming down from heaven: The angel that will subdue Satan is anonymous. It is not Jesus Himself, nor is it Michael or Gabriel or any other high-ranking angel.

i. “The final importance of Satan is perhaps indicated in the fact that it is not the Father who deals with him, nor the Christ, but only an unnamed angel.” (L. Morris)

b. An angel coming down from heaven: This is a dramatic declaration that Satan is *not* God’s opposite or equal; and that God could easily stop Satan’s activity at any time. Yet God allows Satan to continue, because even in his evil, he indirectly serves the purposes of God.

2. (2-3) Satan is imprisoned for 1,000 years.

He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is *the* Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; 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.

a. Laid hold... bound him... cast him... shut him up... set a seal on him: Satan tried to imprison Jesus in a tomb, but couldn’t. Here, God has no problem restraining Satan, and this incarceration is not for punishment, but restraint. By implication, Satan’s demonic armies are also restrained and imprisoned.

i. “Is this a literal transaction? Certainly it is. The battle is literal; the taking of the Beast and the False Prophet is literal; the slaying of the kings and their armies is literal; Satan is literal; and his binding must be equally literal. It will not resolve itself into anything else.” (Seiss)

ii. Some people ask, “What kind of chain can hold the devil?” We don’t know, but God can fashion a chain for that exact purpose. We know that right now there are demonic spirits who are imprisoned and chained ([Jude 1:6](#)). If God can chain them now, He can chain Satan for 1,000 years.

iii. “The elaborate measures taken to insure his custody are most easily understood as implying the complete cessation of his influence on earth (rather than a curbing of his activities).” (Mounce)

iv. Some take this as Satan’s binding on a personal level, believing that it refers to how Satan’s work can be restrained in the life of an individual. But this view does not take the text seriously. If God *did* want to tell us of the total inactivity of Satan, how could He have said it any stronger?

v. This shows that there is no *man* who simply “binds” Satan with his prayer. This is a work done on divine initiative. “One very important detail is to notice that the conquest of Satan and his powers does not come by any human effort.” (Barnhouse)

b. That he should deceive the nations no more:

This shows us Satan's main mode of attack is revealed. Satan is a deceiver, so the most potent defense and weapon against Satan is the truth of God's Word.

i. "The truth is ever against him; therefore falsehood is his particular recourse and instrument. But naked falsehood is only repulsive. What we know to be a lie cannot command our respect... Untruth can only gain credence and acceptance by being so disguised as to appear to be the truth. Falsehood can have no power over us until we are led to believe and conclude that it is the truth. And this deluding of men, getting them to accept and follow lies and false hopes, under the persuasion that they are accepting and following the truth, is the great work and business of Satan in every age." (Seiss)

ii. Since Satan's work of deception continues today, we know that he is not bound in the way that this passage describes. We know that Satan was not bound at the finished work of Jesus on the cross, at the resurrection, or at the founding of the church. We know this because Peter said that Satan was free to walk about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour ([1 Peter 5:8](#)).

iii. Satan continues to effectively deceive. "People not only make falsehoods, speak falsehoods, print falsehoods, and believe falsehoods; but they eat them, and drink them, and wear them, and act them, and live them, and make them one of the great elements of their being." (Seiss)

c. Till the thousand years were finished: This thousand-year period is often known as the *Millennium*. Throughout church history, there have been many different ways of understanding the Millennium.

i. The Bible speaks powerfully to other aspects of the millennial earth. Tragically, the Church through history has often ignored or denied the promise of the millennial reign of Jesus Christ. The early church until Augustine almost universally believed in an earthly, historical reign of Jesus, initiated by His return. Tyconius (in the late 300's) was the first to influentially champion a spiritualized interpretation, saying that this Millennium is *now* (*amillennialism*) and must be understood as a *spiritual* reign of Jesus, not a literal reign. His view was adopted by Augustine, the Roman Catholic Church and most Reformation theologians.

ii. Growing out of *amillennialism* is the doctrine of *postmillennialism*, saying the millennium will happen in *this* age, before Jesus' return – but that the church will bring it to pass. Yet the clear teaching of the Bible isn't *amillennialism* or *postmillennialism*, but what is called *premillennialism* – the teaching that Jesus Christ will return to this earth *before* the millennial earth, and *He* will establish and govern it directly.

iii. There is no need to say that Satan is only bound in a spiritual sense, and Jesus only rules in a spiritual sense. When we consider the rest of the Scriptures, the earthly reign of Christ and His people on this earth is plainly taught in the Old and New Testaments. In the Old Testament, we see it in [Psalm 72](#), [Isaiah 2:2-4](#), [Isaiah 11:4-9](#), [Jeremiah 23:5-6](#), and in many, many more passages. In the New Testament we see it in [Luke 1:32-33](#), [Matthew 5:18](#), [Luke 19:12-27](#), among other passages. All in all, there are more than 400 verses in more than 20 different passages in the Old Testament which deal with this time when Jesus Christ will rule and reign personally over planet earth.

iv. Who will be on the earth in the Millennium?

Even after the rapture and the vast judgments of the Great Tribulation, there will be many people left on earth. After Jesus returns in glory, He will judge those who survive the Great Tribulation in the judgment of the nations ([Matthew 25:31-46](#)). This is not a judgment unto salvation, but a judgment of moral worthiness, and entrance into the Millennial Kingdom of Jesus. The unworthy will be sent into eternal damnation, and the worthy will be allowed in Jesus' Millennial Kingdom.

d. Till the thousand years were finished: Some of what we know of the Millennium from other passages of Scripture.

i. *During the Millennium, Israel will be the superpower of the world, the leading nation in all the earth, and the center of Israel will be the mountain of the LORD's house – the temple mount, which will be the "capital" of the government of the Messiah. All nations shall flow to the "capital" of Jesus' government ([Isaiah 2:1-3](#), [Ezekiel 17:22-24](#)).*

ii. *During the Millennium, the citizens of earth will acknowledge and submit to the Lordship of Jesus. It will be a time of perfectly administrated enforced righteousness on this earth ([Isaiah 2:1-5](#)).*

iii. *During the Millennium, there will be no more war. There will still be conflicts between nations and individuals, but they will be justly and decisively resolved by the Messiah and those who reign with Him ([Isaiah 2:1-5](#)). It isn't the reign of the Messiah itself that will change the heart of man. Citizens of earth will still need to trust in Jesus and in His work on their behalf for their personal salvation during the millennium. But war and armed conflict will not be tolerated.*

iv. *During the Millennium, the way animals relate to each other and to humans will be transformed. A little child will be safe and able to lead a wolf or a leopard or a young lion or a bear. Even the danger of predators like cobras and vipers will be gone. In [Genesis 9:2-3](#), the LORD gave Noah, and all mankind after him, the permission to eat meat. At the same time, the LORD put the *dread* of man in animals so they would not be effortless prey for humans. Now, in the reign of the Messiah, that is reversed. For this reason, many think that in the reign of the Messiah (the Millennium) humans will return to being vegetarians, as it seems they were before [Genesis 9:2-3](#) ([Isaiah 11:6-9](#)).*

v. *During the Millennium, King David will have a prominent place in the millennial earth, ruling over Israel ([Isaiah 55:3-5](#), [Jeremiah 30:4-11](#), [Ezekiel 34:23-31](#), [Ezekiel 37:21-28](#), [Hosea 3:5](#)).*

vi. *During the Millennium, there will be blessing and security for national Israel ([Amos 9:11-15](#)).*

vii. *The Millennium will be a time of purity and devotion to God ([Zechariah 13:1-9](#)).*

viii. *During the Millennium, there will be a rebuilt temple and restored temple service on the earth as a memorial of God's work in the past. ([Ezekiel 40-48](#), [Ezekiel 37:26-28](#), [Amos 9:11](#), [Ezekiel 20:39-44](#)).*

ix. *During the Millennium, saints in their resurrected state will be given responsibility in the Millennial Earth according to their faithful service ([Luke 19:11-27](#), [Revelation 20:4-6](#), [Revelation 2:26-28](#); [3:12](#), [21](#), [1 Corinthians 6:2-3](#)).*

e. Thousand years: Is it a literal 1,000 years? We should take a number literally *unless* there is clear reason or evidence to do otherwise. We should take this **thousand years** literally, because God

has an important work to accomplish during the Millennium.

- i. The Millennium is important because it will demonstrate Jesus' victory and worthiness to rule the nations.
- ii. The Millennium is important because it will reveal the depths of man's rebellious nature in a perfect environment. Some people seem to believe that man is basically good, and deep down he really *wants* God's righteous rule. Many believe that man is really innocent, and corrupted only by a bad environment. The Millennium will answer these questions *before* the great judgment ([Revelation 20:11-15](#)).
- iii. The Millennium is important because it will display the eternal depravity of Satan, who continues his evil as soon as he is released from his incarceration.
- iv. The Millennium is important because it will show the invulnerability of the city of God and God's new order.
- v. "Let us rejoice that Scripture is so clear and so explicit upon this great doctrine of the future triumph of Christ over the whole world ... We believe that the Jews will be converted, and that they will be restored to their own land. We believe that Jerusalem will be the central metropolis of Christ's kingdom; we also believe that all the nations shall walk in the light of the glorious city which shall be built at Jerusalem. We expect that the glory which shall have its center there, shall spread over the whole world, covering it as with a sea of holiness, happiness, and delight. For this we look with joyful expectation." (Spurgeon)

B. Saints reigning for a thousand years.

1. (4) The saints live and reign for 1,000 years.

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.

a. And I saw thrones, and they sat on them: Who sits on these **thrones**? Perhaps the twenty-four elders representing the church ([Revelation 4:4](#)) or the apostles ([Matthew 19:28](#)) or the company of saints as a whole ([1 Corinthians 6:2-3](#)).

i. And judgment was committed to them: Perhaps this is the "judging of angels" mentioned in [1 Corinthians 6:2-3](#), but it is more likely that these are the saints ruling on and over the earth.

b. They lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years: These saints reign with Jesus for the same period of time that Satan is bound (**a thousand years**). They administrate the kingdom of Jesus Christ over the earth, reigning over those who pass from the earth of the Great Tribulation to the earth of the Millennium.

c. Who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus... who had not worshipped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark: All those who overcome in Jesus will rule and reign with Him ([Revelation 2:26-28](#), [3:12](#), [21](#), [1 Corinthians 6:2-3](#)). Why does John only mention the Tribulation saints?

i. They are specifically mentioned so as to encourage them, while not implying others will be left out. This is special vindication for Tribulation saints. They suffered under Antichrist who had said, "*I will rule the earth*;" now *they* are in authority and Antichrist is destroyed. So, these

martyrs are literal, but also representative of all that give their lives in faithfulness to Jesus.

ii. **Beheaded** is actually a broader word than we might think. The ancient Greek word really means “executed.”

2. (5-6) The first resurrection.

But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. 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.

a. **This is the first resurrection:** This **first resurrection** is the granting of resurrection life in resurrection bodies to all those dead in Jesus.

- This is a resurrection of *blessing* (**blessed and holy is he**).

- This is a resurrection of *power* (**over such the second death has no power**).

- This is a resurrection of *privilege* (**they shall be priests of God... shall reign with Him a thousand years**).

b. **The rest of the dead:** Those who *do not* have part in the *first resurrection* are *not* blessed, they are *under the power* of the **second death**, and they are without privilege.

i. In [John 5:28-29](#), Jesus described two resurrections: *Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth – those who have done good to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.*

ii. The two events are separated by this 1,000-year period because the **rest of the dead** are not given their resurrection bodies until **the thousand years were finished**.

c. **This is the first resurrection:** If the **first resurrection** is a singular event, it argues well for a post-tribulation rapture, because it implies that all saints receive their resurrection bodies at the same time, immediately before the rule and reign of Jesus Christ.

d. **This is the first resurrection:** If the **first resurrection** is an order or class encompassing previously dead believers (who are at once with the Lord), the raptured church (already in heaven), and saints from the Great Tribulation, then the idea fits in a pre-tribulation framework.

i. Donald Barnhouse says of the phrase **first resurrection**: “It must be especially emphasized that our phrase in the Apocalypse covering this resurrection is a retrospect that looks back over all three phases (of resurrection).”

ii. “The ‘first resurrection’ is not an event but an order of resurrection including all the righteous who are raised from the dead before the millennial kingdom begins.” (Walvoord)

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