**Lesson 8 The Final Downfall of Satan, New Creation, Jerusalem. Final Observations/Questions (Rev. 21-22)**

**20: The downfall of the dragon, the millennium, Final Judgment**

This is the most debated and confusing chapter in Revelation. People take several different approaches to interpreting it. The three main approaches are:

1. Premillennial

Believes that after the two beasts and their army is defeated, Satan is bound for 1,000 years. Christ comes to rule on earth during that time. After 1,000 years, Satan is released. He gathers nations in one last attempt to overthrow God. He is defeated and the final judgment takes place where he is thrown into the lake of fire.

1. Post millennial

Believe the millennium begins near the end of the Church age and that Christ’s climactic return and victory take place at its end.

1. Amillennial

Believe that the millennium is identical to the Church Age between Christ’s resurrection and his return. Some believe that the battles in Revelation 19 and 20 describe the same battle and that after it is over, the beasts and Satan are thrown into the lake of fire simultaneously and the final judgment takes place.

**20:1-3** The abyss appears to be a prison where evil spirits are held until the final judgment. Amillennialists argue that Satan was restricted in this way during the Church age and unable to fully deceive the nations to destroy the Church until the end time.

**20:2** Here four names are used for Satan: dragon, ancient serpent, devil, Satan.

**20:3** Premillennialistshold that the two beasts are in the lake of fire now, but Satan is held for 1,000 years in prison.

Some see many parallels between chapters 12 and 20 and believe they describe the same event.

1,000 years. This is the only place where the Millennium is mentioned. Some take it as symbolic or describing a long time. Others take the time literally. Because there is so much symbolism here, dragon, great chain, serpent etc. it is likely that 1,000 years is symbolic as well.

**20:4-6** Christ reigns with those who had been beheaded for their faith. They may reflect all martyrs, or perhaps all believers.

They came to life to reign with Christ in the first resurrection. This draws on Daniel 7:22. Premillennialists are uncertain if only these are resurrected at this time and the remaining believers are raised at the end of time. Or if unbelievers are not raised at this time. Coming to life may mean going to be with Christ in heaven spiritually until their bodily resurrection at the end of time. Amillennialists hold that these could represent all believers, or else martyrs who represent all believers. Of the 46 mentions of thrones in Revelation, they occur in heaven.

The saints have a dual role of kings and priests, drawing from Exodus 19:6.

**20:7-10** Premillennialists believe after 1,000 years, Satan will be released from the abyss and immediately begin deceiving the nations once more. For 1,000 years Christ will have ruled on earth, yet many will abandon him and join in the revolt. It is argued that God gives people one last chance but they prove that even after 1,000 years of Christ’s reign on earth, they would choose to follow Satan. Amillennialists view this as occurring at the same time as Revelation 19 and there being one battle of Armageddon.

Gog and Magog are drawn from Ezekiel’s description of the end of the age battle against God’s forces in Ezekiel 38-39. Some have tried to identify them with Russia and modern countries, but this is not justified.

The people gathered are like the sand of the sea.

The word “saint” is used 13 times in Revelation, always referring to Christians.

The “beloved city” may draw from Psalm 87:2-3. This has traditionally been identified as Jerusalem.

Calling fire down upon enemies looks back to Elijah 2 Kings 1:10-14.

**20:11-15**

The book of life draws on Daniel 7:10 and 12:1-2.

The sea was typically viewed as a place of evil where people are consumed to death. Now the sea must surrender its captives.

Death and Hades are thrown into the lake of fire. This could represent them as demonic or simply that they will now be utterly destroyed.

The second death is a spiritual death suffered by unbelievers. It is not an annihilation but eternal torment.

Unbelievers are ultimately thrown into the lake of fire along with the beasts, Satan, Hades, and death.

**Questions**

1. **How does Babylon reflect modern commerce and culture?**
2. **How does seeing what is happening in heaven encourage those of us still doing battle on earth?**
3. **What strikes you about how the beasts and the dragon are finally defeated?**
4. **What strikes you about how easily deceived so many people will be by the dragon and beasts?**

**The New Creation**

**21:1** “New” indicates new in quality more than in time. The earth will no longer be corrupted by sin.

It is unclear how heaven will be new, but perhaps this means the experience for people will be entirely different as a result of Christ’s final victory.

The description echoes Is. 65:17; 66:22.

The sea, representing evil, danger, and a source of idolatry will be no more.

**21:2** The words used to describe the new Jerusalem allude to an intimate fellowship with Christ (Is. 52:1; 61:10).

**21:3** God tabernacling with his people was foretold in the Old Testament (Ezek. 37:27; Lev. 26:11-12). In the Old Testament, only the Jews could enter the tabernacle, but now all nations will have access to God.

**21:4** God wiping away people’s tears indicates both the intimacy with which people will experience him and the fact there will no longer be a need for tears (Is. 25:8; 35:10; 51:11).

 **21:5** All things will be new. Nothing will be corrupted from the sinful past (Is. 43:19; 66:22).

**21:6** The alpha and omega is mentioned near the beginning of the book and the end (1:8). It signifies that human history is guided and under the control of God’s will.

**21:7** Living water is a sign of refreshing and eternal life (Is. 49:10; 55:1; Jer. 2:13; Ps. 36:8-9; Joel 3:18; John 4:10; 7:38).

A son represents an intimate, loving relationship to a Father and also an heir with access to everything the Father possesses.

**21:8** Cowards and faithless may refer to those who initially professed to be Christians but who, out of fear of persecution, forfeited their belief and faithfulness.

Many of the vices listed here are characteristic of idol worship. A similar list occurs in 22:15.

Liars may be those who professed fidelity to Christ but contradicted their profession with their lifestyle. It also proves their connection to the father of lies (John 8:44).

**21:10** The new Jerusalem is modeled after Ezekiel 40-48.

The new Jerusalem was pictured in the Old Testament as being on a high mountain (Is. 2;2-3; 4:1-5; 25:6-26:2; Mic. 4:1-2).

**21:11** References to the glory of God draw on Isaiah 40-66.

**21:16** The city is laid out as a cube, with its length, width, and height the same. Ezekiel saw the temple as a cube (Ezek. 45:2). The holy of holies in Solomon’s temple was a cube (2 Kings 6:20). The altars in the tabernacle were square (Ex. 27:1; 30:2).

**21:17** The description of the city is figurative and suggests safety and magnificence. The height of the walls would be 216 feet high. The perimeter of the city would be 5,500 miles.

**21:18-19** A city of pure gold, clear as glass would magnify the brightness of God’s glory throughout.

The twelve stones are based on the twelve stones on the breastplate of the high priest (Ex. 28:17-20; 39:8-14). Written on each stone was the name of one of the twelve tribes (Ex. 28:21; 39:14).

**21:22** There will be no more temple becausepeople will enjoy God’s presence.

**21:24-25** This alludes to Isaiah 60:3, 5, 11. The gates will never close because there will be no danger lurking outside and people will be constantly coming and worshipping.

**21:27** Nothing unclean will ever enter so it will be a place of security, holiness, and peace.

**22:1** The river of the water of life is foretold by various Old Testament prophets (Zech. 14:8; Ezek. 47:1-9; Joel 3:18). It flows from the temple which symbolized eternal fellowship with God. See also Isaiah 35:65-10.

**22:2** There is apparently more than one tree of life now, for it grows on either side of the river. It may indicate the abundance of eternal life provided.

**22:3** No longer any curse may mean all effects of sin are now absent. This refers to Zechariah 14:11.

**22:4** God’s name was also written on the high priest’s forehead (Ex. 28:36-38). He was the only one allowed in God’s presence, once a year.

**22:5** The priests used to pray that God’s face would shine upon the people (Num.6:25-26; Ps. 4:6; 31:16; 67:1).

**22:6** God’s words are faithful and true as opposed to everything spoken by the dragon and beasts (Is. 65:16).

This marks the beginning of the concluding statements in Revelation.

**22:7** Coming soon, may indicate his imminent return could be at any time, or that it will be when they don’t expect him, like a thief in the night.

**22:8** John testifies that he is reporting what he has personally heard and seen as an eyewitness (1 John 1:1-2).

John tried to worship the angel a second time, suggesting he was confused between the Christ figure who appears throughout and the majestic angels.

**22:10** John is commanded not to seal up what he has seen, whereas Daniel was told to do so (Dan. 12:4; 8:26; 12:9).

**22:11** At this point, the angel is saying that those with hardened hearts will continue to be hardened, and those who are holy should continue being holy.

**22:13** Here the angel summarizes three of Christ’s titles.

 **22:15** Dogs were despised and symbols of covenant breakers, selfish, and idolaters (Matt. 7:6; Ps. 59:6, 14; Is. 56:10-11; Deut. 23:17-18).

**22:16** A morning star could indicate a new day or age that is dawning.

**22:17** This draws on Isaiah 55:1. See also John 7:37-38

**22:18-19** To add or subtract from God’s word is equally sinful and can encourage idolatry.

**Questions**

1. **How does the end of the story encourage and motivate you?**
2. **How does the end of the story help us know how live today?**
3. **Over the course of this study, what has God taught you or said to you?**