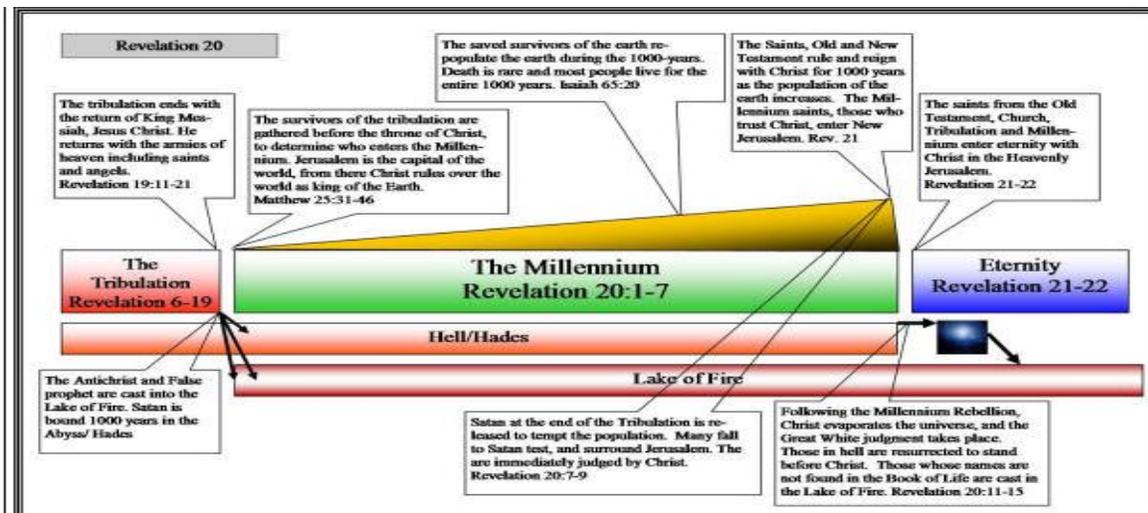


SPIRIT OF LIFE MINISTRIES INTERNTIONAL
 A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF REVELATION
 SESSION 27 – REVELATION CHAPTER 20

The 19th chapter ends with the victory of the armies of Heaven over the armies of the earth. Christ returns with the saints and angels, establishing the Messianic Kingdom. The Antichrist and False Prophet have been cast into the Lake of Fire, the armies of the kings of the earth have been completely destroyed, with their bodies eaten by the birds and their souls sent to Hades. The kingdom of Messiah is victorious, as the resurrected saints become rulers over the earth. Then the nations stand before Jesus Christ, King of the Earth and survivors of the tribulation stand before the throne of Christ, to determine who enters the Millennium.

An angel binds Satan to the bottomless pit for 1000-years. Satan is unable to influence the world during this period. During this millennium (1000-years), the population of the earth is replenished and multiplies as the saved survivors repopulate the earth, to an innumerable host. During the Millennium, the earth is at peace, and the knowledge of God is throughout the earth as waters cover the sea. The saints, rewarded for faithful service, administer the growing population of the earth. Old Testament, New Testament and Tribulation saints receive authority over the kingdoms of the earth.

After 1000 years, Satan is released from his prison, and tests the nations of the repopulated earth. Satan inspires those born in the Millennium, to gather in rebellion against Jerusalem. This is his final attempt to thwart God’s plan. Fire from heaven falls on the rebels attacking Jerusalem and Satan is cast into the Lake of Fire, receiving torment for eternity with the Antichrist and False Prophet. Then, all of lost humanity in Hades is resurrected, they kneel before the “Great White Throne” and are judged by their works.



Following the return of Christ, several events happen. The nations stand in judgment, and the survivors of the earth are brought before Christ's throne to determine who will enter His kingdom. The righteous will enter the millennium. The wicked go to hell to await judgment.

Matthew 25:31-33: *³¹“When the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then He will sit on the throne of His glory. ³²All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them one from another, as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats. ³³And He will set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left.”*

This purification of the earth will take approximately 45 days according to **Daniel 12:11-12** and those who survive the tribulation and enter the kingdom are blessed. They will repopulate the earth. How many this could be is strictly speculation. Zechariah tells us 1/3 of Israel will enter the Millennium this will include those protected for 1260 days (**Revelation 12:6**) in the wilderness.

Daniel 12:11-13: *¹¹“And from the time that the daily sacrifice is taken away, and the abomination of desolation is set up, there shall be one thousand two hundred and ninety days. ¹²Blessed is he who waits, and comes to the one thousand three hundred and thirty-five days. ¹³“But you, go your way till the end; for you shall rest, and will arise to your inheritance at the end of the days.”*

Satan Bound

Revelation 20:1-3 *¹And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. ²And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, ³And 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.”*

Then I saw... John is an eyewitness, “I saw” is used over 30 times in the book of Revelation. This follows the events taking place in Revelation 19, specifically the return of Christ as victorious king over the Earth. John sees an angel who comes to the Earth from Heaven this could be Michael, or the mighty angel in Revelation chapter 10.

Key to the Bottomless pit... The bottomless pit or “Abyss” is referred to in **Romans 10:7** as the abode of the dead. The abyss is referred to seven times in the book of Revelation. In **Revelation, 9:1** a “star falling” released the demon locusts from the abyss, stinging mankind for 5 months. **Revelation 17:7-8** mentions the Beast ascending out of the pit, referring either to the death of the Antichrist at the Midpoint of the tribulation, who then is incarnated by

Satan. (Revelation 12:9) This could also refer to the future release of Satan after his imprisonment in the abyss, Revelation 20:7.

Great chain... The chain in this angel's hand is a restrainer. We see a similar chain referred to in 2 Peter 2:4 and Jude 6.

2 Peter 2:4 *“For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but cast them down to hell and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved for judgment;”*

Jude 6: *“and the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.”*

The hell referred to in 2 Peter 2:4 is the only reference to “tartarus”, a separate compartment of hell. The fallen angels probably referred to in Genesis 6:2, occupy this compartment.

According to Isaiah 14:16, Satan is sent to the abode of the dead, who see him in his weakened state.

He laid hold... The body of the Antichrist was the dwelling place of Satan during the second half of the tribulation. Now with Antichrist and the false prophet cast into the Lake of Fire, Satan is now about to be judged. Satan is weakened and is no longer the dominant force he was prior to his expulsion from Heaven. (Rev 12:9.) This angel is able to take the weakened Satan and bind him with the great chain. The chain restrains his power in the same way the chains restrain the angels in II Peter 2:4 and Jude 6.

That Serpent.... John identifies the person wrapped in the great chain by four names, Serpent, Dragon, Devil and Satan. Satan is a personal, real being according to scripture. The names used for Lucifer in the Old Testament are primarily Satan and Serpent. In the New Testament, all four names are used but “Dragon” is used only in Revelation. The word Satan means adversary, while Devil means accuser. Serpent is the animal first used by Lucifer to tempt Adam and Eve in the physical realm. The Dragon is a visual picture used to portray the Kingdom that Lucifer will personally take charge of in the second half of the Tribulation.

A thousand years... The great chain subdues Lucifer for 1000 years. This is the first mention of a specific 1000 years. This leads to a controversial teaching known as the Millennium.

The literal teaching here is that Satan is bound for 1000 years by a great chain in the abyss. However, the question many have raised: Is this a literal or symbolic teaching. There are three major positions regarding this 1000-year period.

A literal thousand years?

Amillennial. A-millennial is the belief there is no (A) 1000-year “Literal” reign of Christ on Earth. Those who hold to this viewpoint see prophecy and Revelation in more of a symbolic light. They see the 1000-year period as symbolic of eternity. The Kingdom of God is strictly spiritual and heavenly in this view. Augustine (354-430 AD), seen by many as the one who made this view popular in his book, “The City of God”, saw conflict between Satan’s kingdom and God’s kingdom. He saw God’s kingdom, the church, being victorious over Satan. Those who hold this position argue the following points.

- **II Peter 3:8** shows 1000 years is seen as one day with the Lord and therefore not literal.
- The promises of the Kingdom to Israel are fulfilled through Christ and His church.
- Augustine and other church fathers saw the millennium as symbolic for the eventual victory of the church over evil.
- Calvin & Martin Luther the early leaders of the reformation viewed the Millennium as symbolic.
- Satan was bound by Christ’s victory over him at Calvary. (**Luke 10:18**)
- This is the only place in scripture a 1000-year period is mentioned.
- Christ returns to judge all men with a general resurrection.
- The Book of Revelation was about events that happened before 70 AD.
- The book of Revelation is filled with symbolism; and is a weak document for doctrine.
- The creeds of the early church make no mention of the millennium.
- The first resurrection relates to the Christian soul taken to Heaven at death.
- The Battle of Gog & Magog is the same as that refer to in **Ezekiel 38-39**.
- The Second Coming is the termination of history, not the beginning of a completely new phase. This is clear from **1 Cor.15: 23-28**.

Post-Millennial...This position holds that the Glorious return of Christ follows the Millennium. Daniel Whitby (1638-1726) a Unitarian controversialist popularized this viewpoint. Mankind becomes Christianized during a “Millennial” period, and then Christ returns. The 1000 years largely viewed as a literal thousand years, where the world would become a “Society of saints”. Christ invited, would take control over man’s peaceful planet. After WWI and WWII, this view diminished.

- “They shall beat their swords into plowshares” (**Micah 4:3, Isaiah 4:2**), a scripture in the front of UN headquarters is seen as a move in this direction.

Pre-Millennial... All pre-millennial interpreters consider the second advent of Christ preceding a millennial kingdom on earth. During the 1000-year reign of Christ all the covenant promises made to Israel are fulfilled, Israel becomes chief nation on the earth.

Revelation, literally fulfilled by chapters 6 thru 19, covers a 7-year tribulation period ending with the return of Christ. This view is the oldest view held by the early church and church fathers. Those who hold this view would argue the following points:

- The scriptures mean what they say and should be read literally.
- God made promises to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and the 12 tribes of Israel. These promises are not fulfilled yet.
- The apostles expected an earthly kingdom of God. (Acts 1:6)
- The promises made in the scripture could only be fulfilled in a literal earthly kingdom. Early Church fathers held this position in the 1st, 2nd and 3rd centuries.

a. Theologians who held it during the first century A.D.

- (1) Clement of Rome—40 to 100.
- (2) Ignatius—50-115.
- (3) Polycarp—70-167.

b. Theologians who held it during the second century A.D.

- (1) Justin Martyr—100-168.
- (2) Irenaeus—140-202.
- (3) Tertullian—150-220.

c. Theologians who held it during the third century A.D.

- (1) Cyprian—200-258.
 - (2) Commodianus—250.
- The term “Thousand years” repeated 6 times in the 20th chapter, reinforces its literal meaning.
 - Peace in the world is unattainable without Christ.

Cast him... Satan being cast into the abyss is described in the book of Isaiah, chapter 14. Satan, called the king of Babylon, fulfills this description, by ruling rebuilt Babylon. Satan incarnates the body of the Beast.

Isaiah 14: 4, 9-10, *4that you will take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say: "How the oppressor has ceased. The golden city ceased! 9 "Hell from beneath is moved for thee to meet thee at thy coming: it stirreth up the dead for thee, even all the chief ones of the earth; it hath raised up from their thrones all the kings of the nations. 10 All they shall speak and say unto thee, Art thou also become weak as we? Art thou become like unto us?"*

Satan is viewed by the occupants of "Sheol" or Hell as weak and without power as he had before. This is a picture or counterpart to Revelation 20:3 picturing him being cast from the surface. Isaiah picks up where Revelation stops.

Shut him up... The Amillennialist position, that Satan was bound at the cross is not confirmed in scripture. In Luke 10:18, Jesus sees Satan falling like lightning from Heaven. Jesus is referring to the eventual fall of Satan and his kingdom with the advance of Christ's kingdom, the victory of the saints over the kingdom of Darkness.

Satan's activity and work continued before and after the cross.

- Satan entered Judas to betray Christ (Luke 22:3)
- Satan wanted to sift Peter like wheat. (Luke 22:31).
- Satan filled the heart of Ananias to lie to the Holy Spirit. (Acts 5:3).
- Satan's being crushed is viewed in Romans 16:20 as a future event.
- He is called, "the god of this age", (2 Corinthians 4:4), who is currently blinding those who do not see the gospel.
- Lucifer has the ability to transform himself into an angel of light to deceive those on the earth. (2 Corinthians 11:14).
- He is a ruler over kingdoms of darkness, waging war against the saints. (Ephesians 6:12)

Satan's activity in the world will stop after he is bound. The earth will be at peace and in harmony without Satan deceiving its inhabitants for a thousand years.

Deceive the nations.... Much of the evil in the world is the result of satanic deception of the nations. The leaders and citizenry are in a lost state because Satan has blinded the eyes of the lost.

Till the thousand years.... A great chain in the abyss binds Satan for 1000 years. These thousand years will restore earth to its pre-fallen state. The earth will flourish; creation and mankind are restored.

Romans 8:19-22 *¹⁹For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God. ²⁰For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of Him who subjected it in hope; ²¹because the creation itself also will be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. ²²For we know that the whole creation groans and labors with birth pangs together until now.”*

He must be released... Satan is released to test the untested of the nations. The earth will flourish for the 1000-year period. Those who survive tribulation and enter the Messianic kingdom will repopulate the earth. The earth’s population will explode as war, disease, famine, and pestilence are eliminated. Those born in the millennium are not tested during the thousand year period of time. To reveal their true character, Satan will be unleashed to test those born on the earth.

The Saints Reigning

Revelation 20:4 *⁴And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.”*

I saw thrones... (Gr. thronos a stately seat (“throne”); by implication *power* or (concretely) a *potentate*:—seat, throne.) These are thrones of authority and rule.

Judgment was committed... Who sits on these thrones? In addition, whom do they rule? Scriptures in both the Old and New Testaments give us the answer. Three distinct groups will sit on these thrones. *Old Testament saints, New Testament saints, and Tribulation saints* will rule and reign with Christ during the Millennium. They will sit on the thrones mentioned in this verse and rule over a repopulated earth. If the population of the earth when the tribulation begins is 10 billion, according to the book of Revelation at least 47% will die in the first 3 ½ years. In addition, in the second half a substantial amount of those left will join the kingdom of the Beast, die from the bowl judgments. Others will be killed as martyrs. If 1% survive after the judgment of the “Sheep and Goats” (Matthew **(25:31-46)**) then about 100 million would enter the Millennium. If the population of the earth doubled every 50 years in 1000 years, there would be a tremendous amount of people living during the 1000 years.

We know that 1/3 of Israel will enter the Millennium. (**Zechariah 13:9**)

Old Testament Saints:

- **Jeremiah 30:9** ***⁹But they shall serve the LORD their God, And David their king Whom I will raise up for them.***
- **Psalm 149:7-9** ***⁷To execute vengeance on the nations, and punishments on the peoples; ⁸To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron; ⁹To execute on them the written judgment. This honor have all His saints. Praise the LORD!***

New Testament saints

- **Matthew 19:28** ***²⁸So Jesus said to them, “Assuredly I say to you, that in the regeneration, when the Son of Man sits on the throne of His glory, you who have followed Me will also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.***
- **Luke 19:17-19** ***¹⁷And he said to him, ‘Well done, good servant; because you were faithful in a very little, have authority over ten cities.’ ¹⁸And the second came, saying, ‘Master, your mina has earned five minas.’ ¹⁹Likewise he said to him, ‘You also be over five cities.’***

Tribulation saints

Daniel 7:18,22,27 ***¹⁸But the saints of the Most High shall receive the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever. ²²until the Ancient of Days came, and a judgment was made in favor of the saints of the Most High, and the time came for the saints to possess the kingdom. ²⁷ Then the kingdom and dominion and the greatness of the kingdoms under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people, the saints of the Most High, His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey Him.’ “***

Here Daniel writes about saints who will live during the tribulation period and will receive the kingdom. In **Revelation chapter 5** the saints rejoice with a new song. Kings and priests reigning on the earth are part of this song. These are the Old Testament and New Testament saints who will reign with Christ.

Revelation 5:9-10 ***“You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seal; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood, out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,¹⁰ And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth.”***

Those who die during the tribulation, can also look forward to reigning with Christ. God's mercy and love is demonstrated by his extending the blessing to those who arrived at the last moment, through the tribulation.

The souls... These souls specifically mentioned are tribulation saints from the 2nd half of the tribulation. They are martyred for their faith in Christ and their refusal to worship in the satanic system.

They lived... This message is to those who will go through the tribulation. Faced with the choice of worshiping the beast and living or rejecting the beast and dying, those in fear of their future will be encouraged by this message. Death means eternal life with Christ. Life means eternal damnation.

Reigned with Christ.... The tribulation saints will rule in the Millennial earth along with the Old and New Testament saints.

The First Resurrection

Revelation 20:5-6 ***⁵But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. ⁶Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.***

The rest of the dead... Those who were not resurrected prior to the Millennium would have to wait for the 1000 years to be complete. They are in hell, (Gr. Hades) waiting to be judged. Their judgment will take place at the "Great White Throne Judgment" (**Revelation 20:11**).

Thousand years... The separation between the First and Second resurrection.

First resurrection... Resurrection is when the soul is given a body and is whole and complete-- Resurrected. Two distinct resurrections are hinted at in the Old Testament, but this does not become clear till the book of Revelation. Job in fact was looking forward to the day of this first resurrection.

Job 19:25-27 ***²⁵ For I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: ²⁶ and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: ²⁷ whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me."***

Daniel hints at the distinction between the righteous and wicked in their resurrections, the righteous being rewarded and shining in that day, while the face lost face eternal rejection.

Daniel 12:2 ***² And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, Some to everlasting life, Some to shame and everlasting contempt.***

Jesus also talked about two distinct resurrections:

John 5:28-29 ***²⁸ Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice ²⁹and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.***

The time between these two resurrections will be 1000 years. At the rapture, both Old and New Testament saints will receive their new body. The body is nothing more than the clothing and vehicle for the soul, allowing the inner man to participate in reality. This is the reason fallen beings such as Satan enter a body. The body allows them to be part of the physical reality.

A saint with his/her resurrected and glorified body will be able to participate in the reality of Heaven. They will be able to see Jesus as he is.

I John 3:2: ***² Beloved, now are we the sons of God and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.***

The second part of the first resurrection deals with the saints who died during the tribulation. When will they be given their resurrected body? There is no universal agreement on the timing of each aspect of this resurrection. Some feel just before the wedding of the Lamb that these saints will receive their body and reward, while others feel it will be after the return of Christ. Those who argue the resurrection (Post-tribulation) will take place at the close of the tribulation see this verse as a proof text.

Second death... Resurrected to face God's judgment. This is the second death; those who are in hell will one day receive a new body. This body will be fitted for judgment in the lake of fire. Those who stand before the throne at this judgment will answer for their lives. (**Revelation 20:14**)

They shall be... The role of service of the saints in the Kingdom of Christ will have three aspects based on this chapter. They will be judges, kings and priests in the Millennial earth. Without war, famine, disease and pestilence the earth's population will explode. The saint's work will be to administer the Kingdom for their King the Messiah. From both the Old and New Testament we can draw a picture of life on earth during the Millennium.

Isaiah 65:17-25: ***“¹⁷For behold, I create new heavens and a new earth; And the former shall not be remembered or come to mind.¹⁸ But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; For behold, I create Jerusalem as a rejoicing, And her people a joy.¹⁹ I will rejoice in Jerusalem, And joy in My people; The voice of weeping shall no longer be heard in her, Nor the voice of crying.²⁰ “No more shall an infant from there live but a few days, Nor an old man who has not fulfilled his days; For the child shall die one hundred years old, But the sinner being one hundred years old shall be accursed.²¹ They shall build houses and inhabit them; They shall plant vineyards and eat their fruit.²² They shall not build and another inhabit; They shall not plant and another eat; For as the days of a tree, so shall be the days of My people, And My elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands.²³ They shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth children for trouble; For they shall be the descendants of the blessed of the LORD, And their offspring with them. ²⁴It shall come to pass That before they call, I will answer; And while they are still speaking, I will hear.²⁵ The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, the lion shall eat straw like the ox, and dust shall be the serpent’s food. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain,” Says the LORD. “***

From Isaiah, we can draw a picture of Millennium life. Death will be rare, homes will be lived in by the original builders, food will be plenteous, animals will live at peace with man and there will be no human violence.

All nations will send representatives to Jerusalem to worship before the King. Nations failing to send representatives to Jerusalem to worship at the “Feast of Tabernacles” will be punished with no rain. The government on the earth will be a benevolent theocracy, with Christ as King of the earth. In addition, Jerusalem is the capital city of the earth and center for worship.

Zechariah 14:16-21 ***“¹⁶ and it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which come against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles ¹⁷and it shall be, that whoso will not come up at all of the families of the earth unto Jerusalem to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, even upon them shall be no rain. ¹⁸ And if the family of Egypt go not up, and come not, that have no rain; there shall be plague, wherewith the LORD will smite the heathen that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles. ¹⁹ This shall be the punishment of Egypt, and the punishment of all nations that come not up to keep the feast of tabernacles. ²⁰ In that day shall there be upon the bells of the horses, HOLINESS UNTO THE LORD; and the pots in the LORD’s house shall be like the bowls before the altar. ²¹ Yea, every pot in Jerusalem and in Judah shall be holiness unto the LORD of hosts; and all they that sacrifice shall come and take of them, and there shall be no more the Canaanite in the house of the LORD of hosts.”***

During the Millennium, there will be a Temple on Mt. Moriah as well as sacrifice. The sacrifice will be a memorial sacrifice much like Passover and Lord's supper remembering the exodus from Egypt and the death of Christ. (Ezekiel 40-43) Israel will be chief amongst the nations and the 12 disciples will be judges over the 12 tribes of Israel. The division of the land for the priesthood and prince is described in Ezekiel 44-48.

Revelation 20:7-9: ***⁷And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, ⁸And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog, and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. ⁹And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them."***

Satan will be released... At the close of the thousand years, Satan will be freed from the abyss. An uncertainty is whether it's just Satan or does it include the fallen angels as well is not stated. Why would Satan be released from his prison? At the end of the Millennium, the population of the earth has exploded and many alive have never been tested. Many people alive during the Millennium will be faithless regardless of how much peace and blessing they received. With Satan being released, those who do not believe will be given an opportunity to be tested. They will fall for Satan's lies like those who lived before the Millennium going back to Adam & Eve.

Deceive the nations... With literally hundreds of billions if not trillions alive during this period of time there will be many nations on earth. In addition, those in the nations will rebel against the Saints and the city of Jerusalem, the capital of the earth.

Gog and Magog... This is not the same situation as described in Ezekiel 38-39, which takes place prior to the tribulation period. These are descendants of these northern tribes, which will be a prominent group during the Millennium. These are cataloged tribes but are only part of the total invasion.

Surrounded the camp... With all the blessings of God that any could imagine, mankind has a fallen nature. These who surround Jerusalem, are the descendants of Adam & Eve born during the 1000-year reign of Christ. Their true character was not tested during the 1000 years.

Fire came down... This is the final test for man. After this, mankind will enter an eternal relationship with God. This is the final separation between those who trust God and those who reject God, those who listen to Satan will go to Jerusalem to make war with the saints. God will not tolerate this rebellion. When the number has reached it full a fire will devour them instantly. They will now stand before the great white throne. (Rev 20:11) Those who rejected Satan will enter eternity with the saints.

Revelation 20:10 *“¹⁰And 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 for ever and ever.”*

Lake of fire... Satan will be the third person to enter the lake of fire. The first two were the beast and false prophet. Eventually all mankind who dies without Christ will go to this place.

Tormented... The occupants here will never have peace or hope of relief from eternal torment. During the Millennium, the population of the earth has multiplied to an innumerable number. For one thousand years the earth was blessed in every way. There was no shortage of food, no human strife, animals lived in harmony with man, death was rare, and mankind experienced unprecedented blessing. Jesus reigned as king of the earth, and the saints in their resurrected bodies administer, judged.

The knowledge of God was not lacking in any capacity. Those born during this time, never experienced testing. There might be little distinction between those who put their trust in Jesus and those who rejected Jesus. The vocabulary and deeds of worship might be commonplace and second nature. Only God would know who the sincere are.

For this reason, Satan is released from his prison and chains. Satan, true to his nature, immediately begins to deceive the nations, the descendants of those who entered the Millennium, following the judgment of the nations. (Matthew 25:31-43) The insincere react to Satan’s message of rebellion. The nations gather against the city of saints, Jerusalem. Immediately fire consumes the gathering of lost souls deceived by Satan.

Following their consumption in the fire from heaven, Satan is cast eternally into the lake of fire. John then sees an amazing site, Earth and Heaven disappear as a great white throne appears. All who ever lived, apart from those who were part of the first resurrection and the saved of the Millennium are resurrected to appear before the throne. Each person receives an eternal body, a resurrected body able to suffer for eternity. Every person is judged by his works, and those whose names are not in the Book of Life are cast into the lake of fire for eternity. They join the first three occupants, the Antichrist, the False Prophet and Satan who were already there.

The Great White Throne

Revelation 20:11 *“¹¹And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.”*

Then I saw.... Following the 1000-year reign, the rebellion of the lost, and Satan being cast into the lake of fire, John records what he sees.

Great white throne.... A white throne is a picture of holiness and righteousness. The description of this throne differs from those described earlier in **Revelation 4 and 5**) There is no color, just whiteness, the holiness and purity of God.

John on the mount of transfiguration saw the face of Jesus, become like the Sun and his clothes became as white as light. (**Matthew 17:2**) Here he sees the throne from the perspective of those gathered before it, there are no intimate details, just white holiness of God’s presence. No singing, rejoicing or praise just the righteous judgment of God.

There are three Judgment thrones mentioned in the scriptures, this is the third and final throne. The Judgment seat of Christ (Bema seat) is prior to the Wedding of the Lamb; saints receive and loose rewards for lives lived in their bodies. When Christ returns with the armies of Heaven, survivors of the tribulation gather before the throne of Christ. The righteous enter the Millennium, with Christ and His saints ruling and reigning, the wicked are sent to Hades to await judgment. At the completion of the 1000 years, the rebels of the millennium and all the dead in Hades stand before the throne of Christ, the Great White Throne.

	BEMA SEAT	MILLENNIUM THRONE	GREAT WHITE THRONE
SCRIPTURE	1 Corinthians 3:9-16, Romans 14:10, 2 Corinthians 5:10-11	Matthew 25:31-46, Matthew 19:28	Revelation 20:11-15
THE JUDGE	JESUS CHRIST	Jesus Christ	Jesus Christ John 5:22
WHO’S JUDGED	Believers, Old Testament, New Testament and Tribulation saints	Survivors of the tribulation	Those in Hades
PURPOSE	Gain and loss of rewards. Position during the Millennium.	To determine the righteous who enter the Millennium	To judge who enters the area in hell based on works.
TIME OF EVENT	BEFORE THE MILLENNIUM	Start of Millennium	End of the Millennium
PLACE OF EVENT	IN HEAVEN	On Earth	Before the throne of God in space, no heaven and no earth.

Him who sat... The person on the throne is Jesus Christ. From the Gospel of John and Paul’s epistle to the Philippians, we know Jesus Christ is the one sitting on the throne. All judgment has been committed to the Son and every person who ever lived will one day stand before Him.

John 5:22-23 ***²²For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son, ²³that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.***

Philippians 2:10-11 ***¹⁰that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, ¹¹and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.***

In the gospel of John, when the detachment of soldiers comes to take Jesus, the entire group falls to ground when He said, ***"I am He"*** (John 18:5). This and the transfiguration on the mountain were only a sampling of the glorious nature of Christ. Here sitting on his throne of glory, He is manifest before those of the second resurrection.

Earth and heaven... The glory of Christ is so overwhelming that the physical earth and universe melt away at his presence.

Jesus the Logos (Word) brought the physical heavens and earth into existence (John 1:3, Colossians 1:16, 17). His glory will cause it to disappear at the great white throne judgment. The melting away of the elements that compose the physical universe is foretold in II Peter.

The destruction of this present earth and heavens will make way for a new heavens and earth. (Isaiah 65:17,66:22, Revelation 21:1)

2 Peter 3:10-12 ***¹⁰But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in the which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. ¹¹Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, ¹²looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? ¹³Nevertheless we, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness.***

No place... There was area in which this present earth and heavens could be located. They literally disappeared from existence. This is Peter's point, since this world will one day not even exist, why should we put our hope and trust in what will one day will cease to be? Our view should be to look to a new heavens and new earth.

The resurrection of the Lost

Revelation 20:12-13 *“12And 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. 13And 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.”*

The dead... The dead included here are all those who have died since Adam till the end of the Millennium. All those who died lost will finally have their day to stand before the judge of the universe. Those not part of this group are those who are part of the First Resurrection (**Revelation 20:5**). In addition, those saved in the millennium are not part of this group. The method of salvation during the Millennium will be the same as it has been from the time of Adam. By faith, those saved put their faith in the King who rules at Jerusalem. Satan’s release only separates the saved from the lost.

Standing before the throne will be some of the greatest men the world has ever known. Generals who conquered the earth in their day, Business leaders who built empires and were the awe of all who lived standing alongside slaves and servants, they will all give an account of their life on this day.

Before God... Many standing before the throne will be those who mocked Jesus, and thought his life was of no account. Here they will see Jesus as both God and Judge of their eternity. The person on this throne is none other than God Himself, the 2nd person of the trinity, Jesus Christ.

Books were opened... What books are opened? There are several books mentioned in the scriptures. One book mentioned is the Book of Life (**Exodus 32:32,33, Psalm 69:28, Daniel 12:1, Philippians 4:3, Revelation 3:5,13:8,17:8, 20:12,15, 21:27,22:19**). There are also book(s) that record works, words and secret thoughts. (**Matthew 12; 36-37, Romans 2:15-16, Ecclesiastes 12:14**) The evidence presented for each living soul is contained in the books.

According to their works.... Each soul will hear the evidence for their eternal judgment. Each idle word spoken, secret thoughts and works are before the judge of the universe. Deeds done during each person’s life are recorded in these books. Those who base their salvation on works will see just how short their lives fall from what is required. On this day, the worst sinners the world has ever known might be standing next to someone considered one of the most honest persons in a city.

Two questions rise at this point.

1. Is it fair for bad sinners and not so bad sinners to be judged equally?

Based on our individual standard for sin, God's judgment seems harsh. However, our standard of righteousness is not his standard. If one man kills 10,000 people and another one person both are murderers. If one person robs 10,000 people and one man robs one person both are robbers. If one man tells 10,000,000 lies and another 10 lies, they both are liars. So based on works, where is the line to be drawn?

If the line for sin was 10,000 sins, and anyone with more than 10,000 was "bad enough" and anyone with less than 10,000 was "good enough", then only one sin would separate the bad from the good. The one with one more sin could ask God, "For one sin am I judged eternally, for just one sin?" If the line moved on the account of one sin, then eventually all would be "good enough". Based on works either all should go to heaven or all should go to the lake of fire.

Romans 6:23 tells us, ***"For the wages of sin is death"***. This death is the eternal separation from God. One sin is all it takes, for ***"all have sinned and come short of the glory of God"***. (Romans 3:23).

The Problem: Based upon works, at what amount of sin should God draw the line that separates the bad from the good? Once the line is established the person behind it will only be one sin away from salvation. So, either everybody is good enough or not good enough. All go to heaven based on works or all don't go there.

2. Can a person who has never heard the Gospel be judged fairly?

A person does not need to see a law saying stealing is a sin to sin. If you don't like someone taking your "Things" and you take someone else's "Things", then you are a law unto yourself. Your conscience bears witness to your knowledge of stealing being wrong. The same goes with all types of sin. Those who die without having the law are judged apart from the law. Their works and thoughts will testify against them on this day.

Roman 2:12-15 ***"¹²For as many as have sinned without law will also perish without law, and as many as have sinned in the law will be judged by the law ¹³(for not the hearers of the law are just in the sight of God, but the doers of the law will be justified; ¹⁴for when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do the things in the law, these, although not having the law, are a law to themselves, ¹⁵who show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and between themselves their thoughts accusing or else excusing them)."***

The sea ... No one will be able to escape this day of resurrection. Not even if the bodies have disintegrated into the sea or earth. The purpose of mentioning the sea is to bear out this point. All the dead are resurrected and stand before the throne. All those dwelling in Hades, removed for the purpose of this judgment, stand before the throne. The rich man written about in **Luke 16:19**, will be finally resurrected from Hades and to stand for his sin and give an account.

They were judged... Works bear witness to sin, including thoughts and idle talk. The only hope any soul has is to come to Jesus Christ in their lifetime.

Matthew 12:36-37 ***“³⁶But I say to you that for every idle word men may speak, they will give account of it in the day of judgment. ³⁷For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned.”***

The Lake of Fire

Revelation 20:14-15 ***¹⁴And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. ¹⁵And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.***

Death and Hades... Death is for all those who ever died apart from redemption. Hades is the abode of those waiting judgment. Hades was the holding cell prior to this day. After standing trial all who died, and all in Hades will receive the sentence which is being cast into the lake of fire for all of eternity. They will pay for their own sin. Just as those who are part of the “First resurrection” have a body to dwell in Heaven for the rest of eternity, those that are a part of the “Second resurrection” will also have an eternal body to dwell in. The bodies in the lake of fire will burn but not be consumed. They will burn and be tormented for eternity for rejection of Jesus Christ.

Revelation 14:10-11 ***¹⁰He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. ¹¹And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.”***

Second death... The second birth is when we are “Born again”; those in this resurrection receive a physical body for the second time in their life.

Cast into the lake of fire This is a second death to those that were not born again. The resurrected in this resurrection is one of condemnation.

There is no condemnation for those that are born again if they walk after the Spirit and not after the flesh. **Romans 8:1** *“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”*

There is an old saying: *“**Born once, die twice. Born twice, die once.**”* Let us make sure we are born twice (the physical birth and the spiritual birth) to escape the second death.