

The Church of the Servant King

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PROPHECY SERIES

(Proph21X_Revelation_chp 20A_Satan Bound and Saints Judge)

Chapter 20

SATAN BOUND FOR 1000 YEARS (20:1-3)

And I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having 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 threw him into the abyss, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he should not deceive the nations any longer until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time.

As a creature, Satan is capable of being bound just as were some of his subordinates who are reserved for future judgment in "tartarus" (1 Pet 3:18-20; 2 Pet 2:4-5; Jude 6). (This particular group of demons are those who copulated with the "daughters of men" of the pre-Flood era as referenced in Genesis 6. "Tartarus" is distinct from the "Abyss" at least in terms of its function). The point is that just as there are chains that can bind flesh and blood, there are "chains" that can bind spirit creatures.

The "Abyss" is also referred to as the "bottomless pit" and is the place where Satan is chained throughout the Millennium and prevented from having access to the earth. It is also the temporary abode of demons until they are cast into the Lake of Fire with Satan at the end of human history (Rev. 9:1-2; 11:7; 17:8; 20:1, 3). At the end of the 1000 years, Satan will be cast into the Lake of Fire and join the beast (the Anti-Christ) and the false prophet who precede him there (Rev. 20:10).

THE SAINTS JUDGE & REIGN WITH CHRIST FOR 1000 YEARS (20:4-6)

4 And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshipped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark upon their forehead and upon 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.

The purpose of the thrones that John saw was twofold: ruling and judging (cf. Dan. 7:9-10, 22; Matt. 19:28). Those who sat upon the thrones could possibly be the faithful saints who have returned with Christ to the earth (19:7-8, 14, 19). They receive authority from God to take charge of the earth, the beast's domain, under Christ's rule.

We have seen previously, that Paul alludes to a ruling, reigning and judging set of duties that will be performed by resurrected believers of the Body of Christ (Rom 8:16-21; 1 Cor 6:1-3; 2 and 2 Tim 2:11-12 are examples).

*The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, heirs also of God and **fellow heirs with Christ**, if indeed we suffer with Him in order that we may also be glorified with Him. For I consider that the*

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sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the anxious longing of creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of glory of the children of God. (Rom 8:16-21 cf. Heb 1:1-2)

*Does any one of you, when he has a case against his neighbor, dare to go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints? Or do you not know that **the saints will judge the world**? And **if the world is judged by you**, are you not competent to constitute the smallest law courts? Do you not know that **we shall judge angels**? How much more, matters of this life? (1 Cor 6:1-3)*

It is a trustworthy statement: 'For if we died with Him, we shall also live with Him; if we endure, we shall also reign with Him; if we deny Him, He also will deny us; if we are faithless, He remains faithful; for He cannot deny Himself.' (2 Tim 2:11-12)

However, it is quite possible that when Jesus returns, the thrones are set up for judgment in view of the armies of the beast and those allied with him. Daniel 7:21-22 indicate that the "little horn" (a.k.a. the "Beast" and the Anti-Christ) will make war against the saints until Christ comes and renders a judgment in favor of the saints. We know that at the time of Jesus' 2nd Advent, there will be a judgment of nations as well as individuals. Jesus indicates in Matthew 25:31-46 that nations will be separated – sheep from goats. He also indicates that there will be an evaluation, a judgment of Tribulation people. Also, we know from Revelation 1:4 that there are "seven spirits" before the throne of God in heaven.

So, who is being referenced by the "they" of verse 4 – "And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them" – since the reference seems to be distinct from what follows – "the souls of those who had been beheaded...?" Apparently, the "they" refers to Jesus Christ and those who return with Him at His 2nd Advent – a group that may include believers of the Body of Christ in resurrection bodies although that conclusion can only be reached by assuming that Paul's references to our "judging the world" in passages such as 1 Corinthians 6:1-3 refer to the 2nd Advent. That connection is not entirely clear although possible.

Regardless, what is more clear is that the "they" of verse 4 are probably the ones who execute the judgment with Christ at His 2nd Advent that is referenced in Matthew 25:31-46. "They" will likely include the Twelve Apostles to Israel (see Matt 19:28-30 cf. Psa 122:5; Isa 32:1-4; Ezek 43:7; Zech 6:13).

Obviously, the remainder of Revelation 20:4 is referring to the Tribulation martyrs. It is also possible that the Tribulation martyrs are included in the "they" who sit on thrones and execute judgment as well; however, somehow, the Tribulation martyrs must undergo the judgment mentioned in Matthew 25:31-46 prior to sitting on thrones and having judgment committed to them.

Summary – The exact chronology of events associated with Jesus' 2nd Advent is not clear in Scripture. However, it is clear that saints of the present age, saints of the Age of Israel prior to the present age and saints of the Tribulation will have some ruling, reigning and judging responsibilities with Christ either at the 2nd Advent and/or during the period of the Millennial reign.