

The Millennium (Part 2)

Revelation 20:7-10

Sunday, March 5, 2017

As I was preparing for today's study, I was reading one article from the *Opinion* section of the Philippine Star, dated March 2, 2017. It was written by Jarius Bondoc. The title of his article is "**Phl third worst ASEAN country.**"

Bondoc writes:

Vigilantes and cops are killing for thrill. Communist and Islamist rebels kidnap at will. Life is cheapened, as thousands of murders stay unsolved and half-a-million firearms loose. Many more suffer hunger and homelessness, in recurrent natural and man-made disasters. State services are declining, most palpably in poor transportation, consumer price spikes, drug addiction, pollution, and overcrowded jails. Simple driver's license cards are in short supply; more so vaccines, vehicle registration plates, and passports. Bureaucrats are busy plundering. Citizens are left prey to official extortion and abuse. Court rulings are for sale. A supermajority controls Congress, yet has passed no law; the opposition is inept if not coopted. Only a hundred families control 40 percent of the national wealth. Ten million educated folk are forced to work abroad, mostly as house servants. Youths face bleak futures. It's been this way for years. The Philippines is lost.

It used to be the second briskest democracy in East Asia. Now it is third from bottom of the 10 ASEAN countries, in the Fragile States Index 2016. Only slightly better than Myanmar and Cambodia, it is in the same class as Laos. Is it even among the 67 most unstable in the world. Is there a way out of the sinkhole? ...

First step is to admit that the Philippines is in a mess not because of geography, climate, or culture—but politics. ...

After political reforms must come jobs, education, and justice.

When you're a Filipino and you read something like that you cannot help but wish for a better Philippines. My sentiment is the sentiment of many people in the world since time immemorial. People have longed for a utopia, a golden age where everything is perfect. I wondered what songs have been written about it and so I googled the phrase, "Songs for a better world." And Google returned 2 ½ trillion results in less than 1 second. Some of the results included: "Top 11 songs for a better world" and "18 Best songs of hope for humanity and a better world."

Of the songs found in many lists, the two which I found most striking were these:

- 1) "**ONE DAY,**" written by Matisyahu (gift of God), a Jewish American alternative rock musician. The song expresses a hope for an end to violence and a prayer for a new era of peace and understanding.

*Sometimes I lay
Under the moon
And thank God I'm breathing
Then I pray
Don't take me soon*

'Cause I am here for a reason

*Sometimes in my tears I drown
But I never let it get me down
So when negativity surrounds
I know some day it'll all turn around because...*

*All my life I've been waiting for
I've been praying for
For the people to say
That we don't wanna fight no more
There will be no more wars
And our children will play
One day [6x]*

.....

- 2) **"LAST NIGHT I HAD THE STRANGEST DREAM"** This well-known anti-war song was written in 1950 by Ed McCurdy, an American folk singer and songwriter. This song has been recorded in 76 languages and became the official theme song for the Peace Corps, a volunteer program sponsored by the US government that sends young people to work in developing countries to promote world peace and friendship. [{Show video.}](#)

*Last night I had the strangest dream
I ever dreamed before
I dreamed the world had all agreed
To put an end to war
I dreamed I saw a mighty room
The room was filled with men
And the paper they were signing said
They'd never fight again*

*And when the papers all were signed
And a million copies made
They all joined hands and bowed their heads
And grateful prayers were prayed
And the people in the streets below
Were dancing round and round
And guns and swords and uniforms
Were scattered on the ground*

*Last night I had the strangest dream
I ever dreamed before
I dreamed the world had all agreed
To put an end to war*

This deep longing for world peace, happiness, prosperity, and well being will find its fulfillment in our world when Christ returns and establishes an age called the Millennium. This is the 1000 years of peace, justice and righteousness. This is a time when oppression and war will cease. It will be a period of true blessedness. This will be the Lord's answer to the prayer of believers, "Thy kingdom come," and "Come, Lord Jesus, come!"

Before this happens, the world will first go through seven years of God pouring out His wrath against the world because of sin. He will allow plagues and calamities to come as He promised in His word. These years of suffering and trouble are described in detail in Revelation 6 to 19. When almost all of sin and evil are put away, then will come the Millennium.

What do we know about the millennium based on Revelation 19 and 20?

1. Before the Millennium (19:11-20:3)

a) The return of Christ (Rev 19:11-16)

b) The ruin of the enemies (Rev 19:17-21). *19 And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth with their armies gathered to make war against him who was sitting on the horse and against his army. 20 And the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet who in its presence had done the signs by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped its image. These two were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur. 21 And the rest were slain by the sword that came from the mouth of him who was sitting on the horse, and all the birds were gorged with their flesh.*

c) The removal of Satan (Rev 20:1-3) *1 Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain. 2 And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, 3 and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he might not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were ended. After that he must be released for a little while.*

2. During the Millennium (Rev 20:4-6)

a) The saints will judge (Rev 20:4a) *Then I saw thrones, and seated on them were those to whom the authority to judge was committed.*

b) The saints will resurrect (Rev 20:4b-6a) *Also I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for the testimony of Jesus and for the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. 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 ended. This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power. (*

Now we need to understand that this is not the first resurrection that happened since Christ rose from the grave. According to Mt 27:52-53, when Christ rose from the dead *many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised and came out of the tombs and went into the holy city and appeared to many.* Then there was another resurrection that happened when Christ returned in Rev 19. It says in 19:14 that *the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses.* I mentioned before that this army includes both angels and resurrected believers. I take this to be the fulfillment of 1Th 4:13-18. And then here in Rev 20:4 another resurrection, the resurrection of martyrs from the Tribulation period.

All these resurrections tell us that there are stages or phases in the resurrection. All of the saints are not resurrected at the same time. But all of these resurrections may be placed under one category. They may be called the "resurrection of the just." Or they may all be under the "first resurrection."

- c) **The saints will worship (Rev 20:6b) but they will be priests of God and of Christ,**
- d) **The saints will reign (Rev 20:6c) and they will reign with him for a thousand years.**

Perhaps, like me, some of you have many questions regarding the millennium. You may be wondering what will happen during the millennium.

- How animals will relate to each other and to humans (Isa 11:6-9)
- How long will people live? Will they live hundreds of years as those who lived before the flood? (Isa 65:20)
- Will they rebuild the temple and restore temple service? (Ezekiel 40-48).

Revelation chapters 19 and 20 do not give us the answers to those questions. We will need to turn to the OT, especially to Isaiah and Ezekiel, to find out.

But there are other questions that are not answered even by the OT:

- How will the government be set up? How will conflicts be resolved if there are any? (Isaiah 2:4)
- It does not tell us if human beings will be vegetarians or will they also eat meat.
- How will things be set up? Will there be cities? Will there be transportation? Will there be technology? Will there be cell phones, internet, television, radio, etc.
- It does not give us details what kind of nations will exist during this period. Will Filipinos retain their native tongue? Where will they live? Etc.

God did not give us the answers to those questions. Dt 29:29 says, "The secret things belong to the Lord our God..." We will never know the answers to those questions until we get to the millennium.

All we have is general information. And here in Revelation 19 and 20 we are just given a general idea of what will happen *before the Millennium, During the millennium* and *after the Millennium*. Today we are going to look at the last part that will haven't seen yet. What will happen immediately *after the millennium?*

To guide us in our study, we will look at this outline:

After the Millennium (Rev 20:7-10)

- *The release of Satan*
- *The deception of Satan*
- *The destruction of Satan's followers*
- *The defeat of Satan*

1. The release of Satan (20:7)

And when the thousand years are ended, Satan will be released from his prison

In Rev 20:1-3 we read about what happens to Satan when Jesus returns. That section tells us about the binding of Satan and removal from the earth. *[An angel seized Satan] and bound him for a thousand years, and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he might not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were ended.*

Now verse 3 tells us that after 1000 years, Satan "must be released for a little while." But why "must" Satan once again be released? If human writers wrote the story of what will happen to the world after Jesus came for the second time, they would not bring Satan again into the picture. But God's thoughts and ways are not ours (Isa 55:8).

The final answer to that question "Why must Satan once again be released?" is hidden in the counsels of God. Although perhaps we can give two reasons why and this seems to be implied in the following verses: to demonstrate that Satan's wickedness is beyond any solution and that human depravity can only be changed by the grace and miracle of God. A perfect environment cannot change people's hearts.

2. The deception of Satan (20:8)

8 and will come out to deceive the nations that are at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle; their number is like the sand of the sea.

Robert Thomas: "Deception is the Devil's special purpose, especially so after his having been cast from heaven:

- *Rev 12:9 And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world.*
- *Rev 20:3 and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he might not deceive the nations any longer,*
- *Rev 20:10 and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire*

Satan's release from prison will produce a worldwide rebellion against the millennial reign of Christ. The armies will be so great so that their number is said to be *like the sand on the sea*.

Who are these who will be deceived by Satan?

Bible Knowledge Commentary: Those who survive the Tribulation will enter the Millennium in their natural bodies, and they will bear children and repopulate the earth.

In Isaiah 65, we have a prediction of the Millennial age that will come in the future. Jerusalem will be its capital and people will be rejoicing. They will also be living in homes and bearing children. Let me read Isaiah 65:18-23

*18 But be glad and rejoice forever
in that which I create;
for behold, I create Jerusalem to be a joy,
and her people to be a gladness.
19 I will rejoice in Jerusalem
and be glad in my people;
no more shall be heard in it the sound of weeping
and the cry of distress.
20 No more shall there be in it
an infant who lives but a few days,
or an old man who does not fill out his days,
for the young man shall die a hundred years old,
and the sinner a 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 like the days of a tree shall the days of my people be,
and my chosen shall long enjoy the work of their hands.
23 They shall not labor in vain
or bear children for calamity,
for they shall be the offspring of the blessed of the Lord,
and their descendants with them.*

Under ideal circumstances many will outwardly profess faith in Christ without actually placing faith in Him for salvation. The shallowness of their professions will become apparent when Satan is released. The multitudes who follow Satan are evidently those who have never been born again in the millennial kingdom.

But who are the survivors of the Tribulation?

When Christ returns all of those who have the mark of the beast will be destroyed and all who are believers will be raptured or resurrected. So who will enter the Millennium.

Here is my theory:

Those who will enter the millennium in their natural bodies will include all of the babies and the kids who did not have the mark of the beast in their right hands and foreheads and who did not worship the beast. Remember that according to Rev 13:17, those who did not have the mark of the beast on their right hand or forehead could not buy or sell. And so it was not necessary for babies and little children of unbelievers to have the mark of the beast in their hands or foreheads. Their parents could buy stuff for them.

Also, these babies and little kids could include the children who were left behind by the believers who who were raptured. These babies and little children have not yet placed their trust in Christ and the Bible is silent regarding what would happen to babies during the rapture. So my guess is this.

If the elect babies are raptured, then maybe, the non-elect babies and kids who still could not put their trust or reject Christ will not be raptured and will not be destroyed by Christ. They will be the one who will be allowed to enter the millennium.

How many children there will be in the world when Christ returns, we do not know. These babies or little children are the ones who will enter the millennium in their physical bodies and then grow up, multiply and fill the earth.

If Jesus reigns during the millennium, then why will many on earth rebel?

Thomas Constable: The people who follow Satan in this rebellion will evidently be those who have not trusted Jesus Christ as their Savior during the Millennium. Even though everyone will know who Jesus Christ is during the Millennium, not everyone will trust in Him as Savior.

John uses the expression "Gog and Magog" to refer to the nations that will be deceived by Satan and will attack the people of God. Is this the same battle mentioned in Ezekiel 38-39?

No. These are two different battles. Here are the reasons why I think they are talking about two different things:

- In Ezekiel, the invasion is before the millennial kingdom; the invasion in Revelation 20:7-10 takes place after the millennial kingdom.
- In Ezekiel, Israel's attackers come from "the uttermost parts of the north" (Ezek. 38:6), while in Revelation Gog and Magog come from "nations that are at the four corners of the earth" (Rev 20:8).
- In Ezekiel God gathers Gog (38:1-4; 39:1-2); in Revelation Satan gathers Gog and Magog (20:7-10).
- In Ezekiel God causes men to fight one another with swords (38:21); in Rev. 20:7-10 the rebels will be destroyed by fire from heaven (20:9b).
- In Ezekiel certain events occur after the battle such as the burning of weapons for seven years (39:9), burying the dead (39:12-16), and other nations witnessing God's triumph (39:21-24). In Revelation what we see is the climactic end-time wrath of God (20:9c), which is followed by the resurrection of all unbelievers, the final judgment, and then the New Heavens and the new earth (20:11-20:1).

Why then is the expression "Gog and Magog" used by John?

NIV Cultural Backgrounds: Jewish writers typically used the invasion of Gog to predict the gathering of all nations against Israel, and Revelation likely employs this image in a similar way.

Bible Knowledge Commentary: The Scriptures do not explain the expression. In fact it can be dropped out of the sentence without changing the meaning. In Ezekiel 38 Gog was the ruler and Magog was the people, and both were in rebellion against God and were enemies of Israel. It may be that the terms have taken on a symbolic meaning much as one speaks of a person's "Waterloo," which historically refers to the defeat of Napoleon at Waterloo, Belgium, but has come to represent any great disaster. Certainly the armies here come in the same spirit of antagonism against God that is found in Ezekiel 38.

3. The destruction of Satan's followers (20:9)

9 And they marched up over the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, but fire came down from heaven and consumed them,

The forces of Satan march up over the broad plain. In the seventh bowl judgment something happened to the mountains so that they are no more (Rev 16:18-20).

18 And there were flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, and a great earthquake such as there had never been since man was on the earth, so great was that earthquake. 19 The great city was split into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell, and God remembered Babylon the great, to make her drain the cup of the wine of the fury of his wrath. 20 And every island fled away, and no mountains were to be found.

So the topography of the earth is changed. Most of it is a broad plain. Zech 14:9-10:

9 And the Lord will be king over all the earth. On that day there will be one Lord—his name alone will be worshiped. 10 All the land from Geba, north of Judah, to Rimmon, south of Jerusalem, will become one vast plain. But Jerusalem will be raised up in its original place...

The rebels will surround the *camp of the saints and the beloved city*. This refers to Jerusalem. This city will be Christ's capital during the Millennium (Jeremiah 3:17)

17 At that time Jerusalem shall be called the throne of the Lord, and all nations shall gather to it, to the presence of the Lord in Jerusalem, and they shall no more stubbornly follow their own evil heart.

The rebels will experience immediate judgment. *"And fire came down from heaven and devoured them."* We shouldn't even call this a final battle, because there is no battle. The fight is over before it begins (David Guzik). "Fire" is frequently associated in Scripture with divine judgment of wicked men (Gen. 19:24-25; 2Ki 1:10, 12, 14). The whole army deceived by Satan surrounding Jerusalem will face destruction like the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah.

4. The defeat of Satan (20:10)

10 and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

Here is the defeat or the final overthrow of Satan.

After Satan's followers will be destroyed, he will be thrown into the lake of burning sulfur. Being cast into the lake that was prepared for him and his angels is the final judgment on Satan (cf. Matt. 25:41).

The most significant support of the doctrine of eternal punishment is the concluding statement, *"They will be tormented day and night forever and ever."* This refers to continuous, unrelieved torment. The word "they" includes the devil, the beast, and

the false prophet. The fact that the beast and the false prophet are still there, shows that this is a place of conscious torment, not annihilation.

Note: Satan doesn't rule hell, he's a victim there. It is God who destroys in hell according to Matthew 10:28, "*fear him who can destroy both soul and body in hell.*" Satan is not in charge of hell at all. He will suffer with the rest who are thrown there. (MacArthur)

Robert Thomas:

"It is hard for humans to conceive of how literal fire can bring torture to nonphysical beings, but the reality of unbearable pain inflicted on Satan is unquestionable. However the Bible may speak of that future punishment—whether as the lake of fire, outer darkness (Mt 8:12; 22:13; 25:30), wailing and gnashing of teeth (Mt 8:12; 13:42; 13:50; 22:13; 24:51; 25:30; Lk 13:28), a never-dying worm and unquenchable fire (Mk 9:48), or fire and brimstone—it presents a picture of mental agony and corporeal suffering combined in proportion to the guilt of those who have sinned (Lk 12:47-48) ..."

The lessons we learn from this study:

- 1) Yes, a better world is coming. The deep longing for a better world is not a futile longing. It will come as Scripture says. It will come after the seven years of Tribulation. Then Christ will return and set it up.
- 2) Not all will enter the Millennium. Again, I must remind you that only those who trust in Christ will enter into that blessed age. If you reject Christ or if you are indifferent to His claims and His teachings, if you just don't care about these things that we are talking about, not only will you not enter the millennium, you will be thrown to hell. And it will be a never-ending, conscious suffering there.
- 3) Our real problem is not politics. And the solution is not political reforms, not the creation of more jobs, better education, and justice. The real problem is sin. People have this wrong view that that the reason they are not able to live a good or moral life is because of an imperfect environment. They blame the family they were raised in, their poor education, their parents who left them when they were kids, they were bullied in school or in the internet, the community they live in is filled with drug problems or social problems, they are physical too short or too tall, they were busted by their girl they were courting, etc. etc., etc. Rebellion in the Millennium proves all of those ideas are a lie.

David Guzik: With the Millennial Kingdom of Jesus, God will give mankind a thousand years of a perfect environment - with no Satan, no crime, violence, evil, or other social pathology. But at the end of the 1,000 years, man will still rebel against God at his first opportunity. This will powerfully demonstrate that the problem is in us, not only in our environment.

This is why we need to be born again. 2Co 5:17 [NLT] *This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!* This is why we need Christ. Those who trust in Him will receive eternal life, will be forgiven of all his or her sins, and will have a place in the millennial kingdom

and in the new heaven and the new earth, together with all of the saints, enjoying the company of God the Father and His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.