

Sent: Wednesday, April 27, 2022 5:35 PM
Subject: Last Nite's MOB Study on Revelation 20

"Blessed and holy is the one who has 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!" (Revelation 20:6)

Remember last week's lesson on Revelation 19:11-21? When John "saw (in a vision) the heavens opened and, "behold a white horse, and He who sat upon it called Faithful and True"! In righteousness coming (to the earth) as "King of Kings and Lord of Lords," to judge the world! With "eyes of fire" and many diadems (regal crowns) on His head, "clothed in a robe dipped in blood" (symbolizing His war with sin, Satan, and death), declared to be "The Word of God"! Followed by armies of saints in "fine white linen" who carried no weapons and wore no armor because they didn't need any, as Christ would strike down the "enemies" with nothing more than "a word," (as symbolized by the "sharp sword that came from His mouth"! The same "Word" that brought the world into existence, in an instance; the Word that "was with God...and was God...and was made flesh...and dwelt among us"! The "Word" that the apostle Paul wrote (in Hebrews 4:12) is "quick and powerful, and sharper than a two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart!"

Remember too the angel, "standing in the sun, crying out in a loud voice for the birds (flying in the mid-heavens over Israel) to come and feast on the flesh of kings and of men, great and small" who would perish quickly in the battle of Armageddon! John, then "seeing the beast (the Antichrist) and the kings of the earth and their armies assembled to make war against Him who sat on the horse and His armies," and the false prophet, "who had deceived those who received the mark of the beast and worshiped his image;" both being seized and "thrown into the Lake of Fire which burns with brimstone"! And the rest to Satan's followers "killed with the sword which came from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse"! Whew!

All this taking place as part of the "grand finale" on the "day of the Lord"! Setting the scene for last night's lesson on Revelation 20!

The day that the prophets had long predicted that Christ promised, and that heaven had long awaited! The return of Christ to the earth to establish His Millennial Kingdom! The climax of all that's gone on before in the Revelation! God's redemptive purpose since the fall of man now culminating in the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ! The interim phase of the eternal reign of God in preparation for a "new heaven and new earth"! ("Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven...!")

Beginning with another "then," the chronology of the revelation of "things to come" seems to move forward in an orderly way! "Then he (John) saw an angel coming down from heaven holding the key to the abyss and a great chain in his hand, laying hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and binding him...and throwing him into the abyss for a thousand years"! So that he "would not be able to deceive the nations any longer until the thousand years were completed"! (But, interestingly and somewhat surprisingly, Satan was not thrown directly into the Lake of Fire, as were the Antichrist and the False Prophet! But, instead,

bound and held in the "abyss" (a temporary place of incarceration) "until the end of the thousand-year period" when, John was told, he "must be released for a short time"! (Must be?) When he will again be allowed to deceive the nations" and gather forces together "as the sands of the sea" to dare making war against the saints and even "surrounding the beloved city" (Jerusalem) before being "devoured by fire coming down from heaven and, finally, thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and false prophet are, and where they'll be tormented forever and ever"! God's ways are not our ways! And this done, perhaps to demonstrate again not only that Satan is incurably wicked but that people even after witnessing the amazing wonders of Christ in an almost perfect environment can be seduced by the "serpent of old"!)

We're not told much about the millennium in Scripture but Constable assures us that it will be a "reign of peace and righteousness on the earth" following Christ's return! Like "paradise regained"! John writes (in verse 4) that he "saw thrones, and judgment given to those who sat on them;" then he saw the "souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony..." and then "those who had not worshiped the beast...or received the mark of the beast...and they came to life (i.e., were resurrected!) and reigned with Christ for a thousand years"! And, in verse 5, he calls it the "first resurrection"! And, in verse 6, he notes "how blessed is the one who has a part in the first resurrection," and that "over these the second death has no power..." and then adds that "they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years"! Jesus said to His disciples (in Matthew 19:28) that "those who followed Him, in the 'regeneration' when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne (apparently referring to the earthly kingdom to come) would also sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel..."! The apostle Paul, in II Corinthians 6:2, seemed to broaden this to include all the saints of all the ages! "Do you not know that the saints (all the saints?) will judge the world?"

And in order to reign, they had to be resurrected from the dead! Jesus said, in John 5:28-29, "Do not marvel at this; for an hour is coming, in which all who are in the tombs will hear His voice (the voice of the Son of God), and will come forth; those who did the good deed to a resurrection of life; and those who committed the evil deeds to the resurrection of judgment"! And this seems to be the time for the "saints" to experience the "first resurrection" in order to reign with Christ during the Millennium! But not for the "rest of the dead," who, according to Revelation 20:5, "will not come to life until the thousand years are completed"!

John writes, in verse 11, that "Then John saw a great white throne...and the dead, great and small, standing before the throne (apparently with resurrected bodies), and the books opened, and another book opened, which is the 'book of life;' and the dead judged from the things which were written in the books...and if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire!" This is the "second death"!

Die once? O that will be glory! To die twice? Well, that's a different story!

(By the way, John Neal has put together an excellent chart of "What Happens to a Person After He or She Dies" available with his slide presentation on our IBCmob.net website!)

How blessed is the one who has a part in the first resurrection!

Lowell