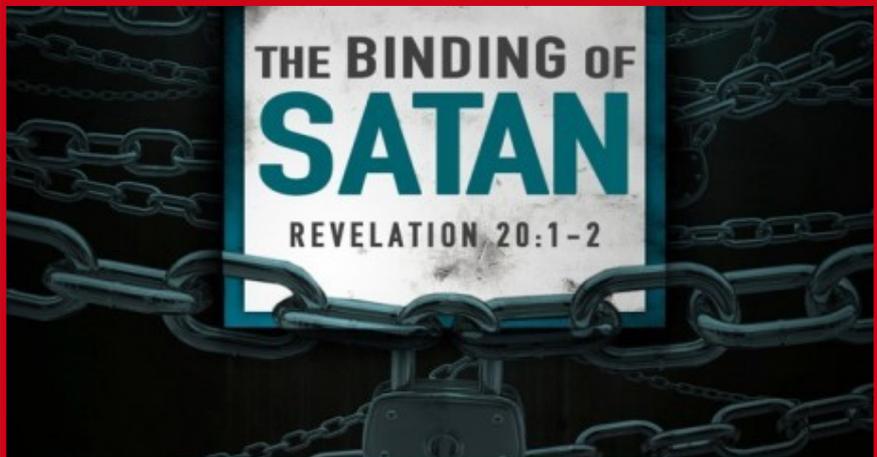


# The Christadelphian Advocate



## Special Study Issue

October 2019

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*A monthly magazine in defense of the “Things Concerning the Kingdom of God and the Name of Jesus Christ” as embraced in The Hope of Israel with a view to “Taking Out A People For Yahweh’s Name”*

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“It has been long understood that the book of Revelation is likened to or described as “Telescopic.” The first, or collapsed view, provides a general overview and, as the telescope is opened, more and more information is developed as more detail is revealed. Since much of Revelation is understood to be written this way, there is no reason to demand that the 20<sup>th</sup> chapter be interpreted as being in strict chronological order. Rather, as with the telescope concept, first there is a broad overview and then the account goes back and adds additional detail to fill in the complete picture.”

R. D. (Bob) Burns, Las Cruces, NM (see pages 250-251)

# The Christadelphian Advocate

*He that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully.*

Jeremiah 23:28

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## Introduction

### The Binding of Satan

Revelation 20

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

**There are two primary interpretations of the binding of Satan, contrary to one another as to the identification of the thousand-year period within which Satan is bound, and the rebellion that follows Satan's release for a "little season."** As a result, these two interpretations compete against one another. For some, this subject elicits great passion.

However, the "binding," the subsequent "loosening," as well as the rebellion that follows as presented in Revelation 20, is not a fundamental principle found in the Unamended Statement of Faith. It is instead a glimpse into those things given by our Lord Jesus to *show unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass* (Revelation 1:1), that we might more fully understand the plan and purpose of Deity: that we might watch and anticipate those things whereby we can be strengthened.

Our purpose in selecting this topic, controversial though it may be for some, is perhaps best expressed within the first article in this issue – "The Binding of the Devil" – originally printed in the *Advocate* in December 1998 in the Question Box section. In it Brother Jim Millay wrote:

When brethren attempt to discuss this issue, it often leads to confusion and strife rather than edification. It is worth our consideration, that this is a subject over which brethren have earnestly contended for years without making the interpretation a matter of fellowship... We are to "study to show ourselves approved," and that entails searching the Scripture as did the Berean brethren, who are presented to us for an example in that they "received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so." ...**We have consented to respond to this question in the hope that there may be some benefit in a review. This issue may demonstrate how we can weather disagreement on other matters...**

The brevity and symbolic language of the narrative in Revelation 20 accounts for the difficulty of asserting one interpretation over the other

**with absolute certainty.** The placement of the “thousand years binding” is not specific in the text, forcing one to interpret, while even the “Satan” entity (Gog and Magog) that “deceived the nations” (vs. 8) is open to interpretation as to which dispensation is being referenced.

**This Special Issue is focused on the “binding of Satan,”** though the topics of a post-millennial rebellion and the fiery destruction of those who “compass the camp of the saints and the beloved city” (vs. 8) are related topics that are touched upon in part within some of the articles.

**We have attempted to organize this Special Issue addressing both interpretations of the “binding of Satan” in a fair and balanced manner,** selecting articles that most comprehensively present both interpretations. (Though we find mention of this subject here and there in the *Advocate* throughout the years, there were very few articles that addressed the subject in a comprehensive manner.) In this issue, we have selected six articles presented by Unamended brethren: a Q&A addressing the subject as quoted from above; two articles supporting the “binding” concurrent with the Kingdom millennial age; two articles addressing the “binding” prior to the Kingdom age; and a short selection addressing factors relative to the “binding.” Readers of various persuasions will find statements within all four of the comprehensive articles that may appear to beg for reference, questions, and/or debate. (The specific challenge for premillennial binding interpreters is identifying the 1000-year binding period: the two articles addressing the binding prior to the Kingdom age present two different 1000 year periods for reader consideration.) Keep in mind that the two primary interpretations call for different considerations due to their suggested time frames. Following the **Introduction**, the articles are:

- **The Binding of the Devil** – *Advocate* December 1998, Question Box, pp. 291-293, Brother Jim Millay – fell asleep in February 2017.
- **A Revolt of the Nations at the Close of the 1000-Year Reign of Christ: Not an Impossibility, but An Absolute Necessity** – *Advocate*, July 1927, pp. 182-185, Brother J. Spencer – unknown when Brother Spencer fell asleep.
- **Does Scripture Support a Rebellion at the End of the Millennium?** – *Advocate*, April 2005, pp. 90-93, Brother Bob Burns – fell asleep in December 2014.
- **The Binding of the Devil and Satan** – not previously published, Brother C. O. Walker – fell asleep in September 1951.
- **The Binding of Satan: A Critical Examination of the Traditional Christadelphian View of Revelation 20:7-9** – not previously published in the *Advocate*, Brother Wayne Tanner.
- **Satan Bound (Sin in the Kingdom)** – *Advocate*, June 1990, pp. 141-144, Brother Edward W. Farrar – fell asleep in August 2002.

In that Revelation 20 was given *to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass* (Revelation 1:1), and considering that the subject is associated with controversy and contentions, many may not be aware of the scriptural support, arguments and competing viewpoints that have been advanced. We are publishing this **Special Study Issue** in an attempt to inform readers of the various arguments put forward in support of the views addressed, to broaden understanding of the competing interpretations and encourage study of the subject individually or in Bible classes. We invite reader response and comment on this Special Issue.

*The Christadelphian Advocate Publishing Committee*

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## Question Box

### The Binding of the Devil

**Question:** We read in Revelation 20 that *the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan* is bound for a thousand years and then loosed. There are at least two opinions on how these words should be interpreted. How would you recommend dealing with the lack of agreement?

**Answer:** We would normally avoid this subject. It is one that is very controversial. When brethren attempt to discuss this issue, it often leads to confusion and strife, rather than edification. It is worth our consideration that this is a subject over which brethren have earnestly contended for years, without making the interpretation a matter of fellowship. **We have consented to respond to this question in the hope that there may be some benefit in a review. This issue may demonstrate how we can weather disagreement on other matters, without further division.**

**Two Opinions:** There are two main opinions on this subject. The traditional opinion was introduced by the pioneers, including John Thomas and Robert Roberts. Their opinion was that these verses refer to the binding of “sin in the flesh” during the 1000-year reign of Christ, and that afterward, there will be a rebellion. This view is widely accepted and is the easier of the two concepts to support, at least on the surface. The other opinion is that there are two one-thousand year periods in the chapter, and that the dragon is bound and then loosed to deceive the nations, including Gog and Magog, prior to the 1000 year reign of Christ. An effective defense of this opposing view requires more in-depth study.

We hope that in this very brief description of the two opinions, we have represented each approach fairly. It is not our intention to exhibit partiality for either opinion in this article. We might wonder if it really matters which belief we hold. We suspect that support for either belief would still allow the

potential for the grace of God, that is, if our opinions are honest and our attitude in dealing with our brethren is acceptable. We must admit questioning our own attitude on this issue, having said on occasion that we could successfully contend for either opinion. We admit to having enjoyed playing the proverbial “devil’s advocate” on occasion, but now recognize that this is not commendable behavior.

**Is Anyone Correct?** It might also be asked whether or not either view is completely correct. In too many of these matters of controversy and human pride, the final analysis will ultimately demonstrate that the Lord alone will be exalted. It is our present opinion that we all need to do a little more studying before we become too confident about our own position on this subject.

**The Challenge:** This challenge is not for everyone. Many are more than satisfied to leave this issue as one that will be settled by the Lord. This is probably the most commendable approach. **But for those who have the time and the interest in pursuing such matters, this subject is one that may provide stimulation and edification.** (Remember, *Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy* – Revelation 1:3). The challenge for those who are so inclined is to find a solution to this issue that does not leave us all just a little bit wanting. Is there an answer out there that really addresses the problem areas in either of the current views? Conversely, would we be willing to give fair consideration to a scriptural presentation on this question that differs from our current opinion?

**Questions to be Answered:** The following are examples of questions that ought to be completely addressed before either position can truly rest its case:

1. When exactly was “Satan” bound for 1000 years, if it does not refer to the Kingdom?
2. Does “the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan” refer exclusively to “sin in the flesh”?
3. Did Christ bind “Satan” in himself as a type of the binding of sin in his kingdom?
4. What or where is the “bottomless pit”? How does this definition fit your current opinion?
5. Christ must reign until all enemies are under his feet and then deliver the Kingdom up to his Father. Is there a transition problem at the end of the 1000 years?
6. Do the signs and symbols in the book of Revelation have different interpretations in different chapters? (Example: What or whom was “that old serpent” in Revelation 12?)
7. What and when is the lake of fire? (Why is it referred to as the “second

death”?) How long does it last?

8. When will the “devil” be cast into the lake of fire with the beast and the false prophet?
9. What does the term “tormented day and night forever and ever” mean? (Revelation 20:10).
10. How many times are the nations deceived and gathered to battle? (See Revelation 16:14.)
11. When and why will the saints be in camp? (Are there other Scriptures in this regard?)
12. Why are Gog and Magog still a factor at the end of the 1000-year reign?

**Other Questions:** There are other questions that could be asked, but the above list should be enough to illustrate the point. Can any of us answer all of these questions independently, and then have each of those answers consistently support our own current opinion on the binding of Satan? Are we confident that we have all of the pieces of the puzzle in place? Would we stake our life on our conclusion?

**Conclusions:** Fortunately, our salvation does not need to be dependent on our ability to solve all of these difficult questions. Experience has demonstrated that we can live together in peace with varying opinions on matters that are not first principle issues. Whenever we are inclined to feel good about our own abilities to discern the meat of the word, we do well to remember that there are a lot of other fine brethren who are also skilled in Bible study. Their conclusions are not always the same as ours. Therefore, when we become involved in discussions on non-essential matters such as this, *Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves* (Philippians 2:3).

*Jim Millay*

*Advocate, December 1998, pp. 291-293*



## **A Revolt of the Nations at the Close of the 1000-Year Reign of Christ: Not an Impossibility, but An Absolute Necessity**

**In a pamphlet entitled “The Binding of Satan,” the writer evidently holds a high opinion of human nature,** and believes that the nations having been taught the way of righteousness will surely remain loyal to it; and therefore, holds the idea that a revolt against the saints after 1000 years’ instruction in the way of righteousness to be an impossibility. Looking at the matter from a human standpoint, it may appear to many very plausible, but it

is not based on the Scriptures nor experience with human nature. Take, for instance, the twelve tribes of Israel: that God-selected nation, estimated at two million people, who witnessed God's awful majesty at Sinai to such an extent that Moses said, "I exceedingly fear and quake." Who would think they could ever forget, or would not remain loyal to the Divine commands given on that occasion? Yet think of the awful fact of that vast assembly who were twenty years of age or older when they left Egypt, only two of them entered the land of promise: of the remainder, it is stated "their carcasses fell in the wilderness" within a period of forty years. This is a demonstration never to be forgotten of the unreliability of human nature. Again, take the case of Balaam, who after three times meeting with the Lord God, was forbidden to curse Israel at the request of Balak, yet, before he returned to his own place, privately taught Balak how to accomplish his purpose by inviting God's people to their idolatrous feasts. (The effect of Balaam's advice is seen in chapter 25; see also Revelation 2:14; Jude 11; Peter 2:15-16.) The fall and captivity of Israel are typical of the rebellion and destruction of the nations at the end of mortal probation at the close of the 1000 years' reign of Christ and the saints.

**But further along, the time will arrive for the fulfillment of 1 Corinthians 15:26, ...that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life.** During the previous 6000 years, God has, within certain limits, allowed all nations to follow their own ways, and execute their own devices sufficiently to demonstrate to the whole world the truth of Jeremiah 10:23, *It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.* So now the Lord Jesus Christ with his saints is ready to direct them, and man's devious ways will be under restraint (Isaiah 30:20-21), showing that during the 1000 years the leaders and teachers will be right among the people, and when they incline to go wrong will be reminded and shewn the right way. *Because sentence is not executed speedily, therefore the hearts of the sons of men is set in them to do evil* (Ecclesiastes 8:11). But under the watchful eye of Christ and the saints, sentence will be executed speedily, and persistent offenders will be cut off; so that it is becoming evident that obedience will be compulsory if they are to avoid punishment.

**Under such rulers, the people will learn righteousness,** and outwardly will be righteous, showing the blessed effect of the rule of Christ in the earth. During their administration, there will be no war, nation will not lift up the sword against nation, military drills and tactics of war will no longer be practiced, munitions of war and costly fortifications will no longer be needed; and all the earth will be at peace, such as was never known since man was upon the earth.

**But as the 1000-year reign is drawing to a close, mortality and death – the last enemy, are to be destroyed.** Here are millions of mortals, all righteous under restraint, but will they all be immortalized? If so, then God's plan of salvation must be changed, for it is testified *that it is through much*

*tribulation we must enter the kingdom* (Acts 14:22.) There is no testimony saying God's plan is to be changed, but rather we are to *earnestly contend for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints* (Jude 3 RSV). It therefore becomes an absolute necessity that these millions, all righteous under restraint, must be put to the test to prove that the Truth is not only in their head, but also in their heart; for if it is not in their heart they will lapse back into the thinking of the flesh which is enmity with God.

**In order to determine this very important point, the saints are withdrawn and for a little season cease to exercise any restraint upon the nations,** who during that time are free agents and allowed full liberty to think and act for themselves, or as expressed in Revelation 20:7, *Satan is loosed out of his prison and goes forth to deceive the nations in the four quarters of the earth*. In other words, the diabolos is now unrestrained, or let loose in human nature. The length of the little season is not definitely stated, but may be a period of one to possibly five years. Judging by our present experience with human nature, it is not difficult to see how the politician takes advantage of his newly acquired liberty, and may argue and even praise the rulership of the saints, and thank God that He has granted them liberty after so many years of Divine instruction, now permitting them to rule themselves. The prospect of ruling themselves will be very pleasing to the flesh, and become very popular with the masses, many of whom have the Truth only in their head and not in their heart.

**After a time, at the close of the little season, the saints return and find the situation very similar to what Moses found when he came down from his forty-days' sojourn on Mount Sinai with the two tables of stone in his hands.** The exhortation of the saints to forsake their evil ways will not meet with a welcome response from the rebellious portion of the people, who will set themselves in antagonism to the saints, even to oppose them by force, and will organize themselves into an army to fight. Guns and swords will have all been destroyed and converted to other and more practical use after the commencement of the Millennial reign, and in the interval the art of war has not been learned nor practiced; military science and tactics having become obsolete.

**But Satan has been loosed, and angry men that feel their liberty is being taken away by the returning saints, will hastily try to organize themselves to oppose the new order,** and will resist with whatever weapons they can muster, and in this fighting attitude they *compass the camp of the saints and the beloved city* (20:9). Then God's anger is poured out by fire from heaven, destroying the whole rebellious company.

**Those who have the Truth in their hearts as a living motive principle, will separate from the rebellious element. During the "little season," they will have their faith sorely tried by the importunities and ridicule of their rebellious neighbors,** who, failing to get their co-operation in rebellion, will commence to persecute them. So their faith will be put to the

proof, and they consequently will be rewarded for holding fast the beginning of their confidence steadfast without wavering.

**Only One Passage Cited to Prove a Post-Millennial Rebellion:** Much stress is laid upon the fact that Revelation 20 is the only passage cited to prove a rebellion of the nations after the close of the 1000 years; and although Moses and the prophets have been diligently searched to find confirmation of Revelation 20, yet none is found; nor in the teaching of Jesus and his apostles, or in the writings of the Apostle Paul, and therefore it must be of doubtful value. On page 3 of “The Binding of Satan” we read, “It is expecting too much of one passage, and that a symbolic one, whose meaning does not appear upon the surface, and requires to be interpreted in order to determine its import and/or to rest an important doctrine upon it.”

In reply to the above quotation, Revelation 20:7-9, with the exception of the word “Satan” meaning adversary, there is not a symbolical word in the three verses, but every word in those verses can be strictly and literally rendered, practically covering the argument; there is no ambiguity in the words unless it is desired to make some.

Additionally, it is a fact that Moses knew nothing about the Book of Revelation, nor did the prophets or the apostles or the Apostle Paul. Neither did our Lord Jesus Christ while upon earth. After Jesus ascended to the right hand of the Father, he was worthy to open the book and loose the seals thereof; but up to that moment, the subject of the apocalypse had been a secret hidden in the mind of the Father and, as shown in the scroll, was sealed with seven seals.

*Brother J. Spencer, Chicago, IL*

*(Advocate, July 1927, pp. 182-185)*



## **Prophetic Viewpoint**

### **Does Scripture Support a Rebellion at the End of the Millennium?**

(Revelation 20:1-3, 7-9)

**I would like to offer an alternative to what many consider a traditional view, that there will be a rebellion against Christ and the saints at the end of the thousand years.** It has been long understood that the book of Revelation is likened to or described as “Telescopic.” The first, or collapsed view, provides a general overview and, as the telescope is opened, more and more information is developed as more detail is revealed.

**Since much of Revelation is understood to be written this way, there is**

**no reason to demand that the 20<sup>th</sup> chapter be interpreted as being in strict chronological order. Rather, as with the telescope concept, first there is a broad overview and then the account goes back and adds additional detail to fill in the complete picture.**

We must remember that Scripture was written without punctuation or designated chapter and verse; each book was one long paragraph. If we compare Revelation chapter 19 with chapter 20, we find that in chapter 19 the Marriage Supper of the Lamb is described, which, in a chronological account, would indicate that the resurrection must have already occurred. The Beast and False prophet are also destroyed in chapter 19, both of which are again reiterated in the 20th chapter. We also note that chapter 20's sequence of the resurrection and judgment is not presented in chronological order, for in verses 4-6 only the righteous are shown to be resurrected, whereas the judgment and destruction of the wicked are not addressed until verses 12 through 15.

We read of the binding of Satan in chapter 20 (which expands on events already introduced in the 19th chapter.) *And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, And 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... And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, And 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. And 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* (Revelation 20:1-9).

**Assumptions:** The traditional interpretation of these verses is that this binding will occur at the beginning of the thousand-year reign of Christ and the Saints, Satan being identified as Sin in the Flesh. This view makes several assumptions:

**It assumes** that the period of 1000 years that Satan is bound in the bottomless pit begins with and is co-existent with the 1000-year reign of Christ and the Saints.

**It assumes** that this power, spoken of as "Satan," is human nature or Sin in the Flesh, which is to be held in check until the end of the 1000 years at which time it will be released. However, the correct rendering of Satan is "Adversary." Also, note that Rome is identified as the Devil in Revelation 2:10, so the identity of the Devil and Satan can be a nation or an entity.

**It assumes** that the nations, which encompass the camp of the Saints and Jerusalem, are rebelling against Christ's rule at the end of the Millennium.

**NOTE:** The words rebel or rebellion are not in the relevant texts above, or even in the book of Revelation!

**It assumes** that there will be a large mortal population in the earth at the end of the thousand years, who, after one thousand years of “peace” and the “knowledge of the glory of the Lord,” will be incited to rebel against Christ and the Saints.

**It assumes** that Christ and the Saints will be encamped in such an area that they could be encompassed by these rebels.

If “Sin in the Flesh” (or human nature) is suppressed during the Millennium, how then will the faith of those living mortals be tried? Paul says in Romans 1:18, *For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh), dwelleth no good thing.* James adds: *But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death* (James 1:14-15).

Revelation 20:8 identifies these nations as “Gog and Magog,” the very nations identified in the 38th chapter of Ezekiel, where their destruction is shown to occur at the beginning of Christ’s reign, yet verse 9 says that when they encompassed the camp of the saints, fire came down from God and destroyed them. (Compare with Ezekiel 38:22-23 and 39:1) If Gog and Magog are destroyed at the beginning of the Kingdom, how do they reappear at the end, and, if the Kingdom encompasses the entire earth, how would the “camp of the saints” be encompassed?

**Alternative Interpretation:** We have the ability to look back at history and perhaps identify another period of one thousand years that fulfills all the requirements of this account, and perhaps shows that all of these prophecies can be fulfilled at the beginning of the kingdom instead of at the end. There is just such a thousand-year period to consider.

Our first encounter with an angel having the key to the bottomless pit or Abyss is found in Revelation 9, *And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit* (vss. 1-2).

The accounts in Revelation chapter 9 and chapter 20 both present angels identified by their association with the bottomless pit, or Abyss. If we can identify the power that was released from the Abyss in Revelation 9, it may give us a clue to the Satan power of the 20th chapter. In chapter 9, the Angel who has the key to the Abyss gives it to someone called the Star, who in turn, opens the pit, or Abyss.

**This chapter has long been recognized as dealing with the Mohammedans who came out of the Abyss and conquered Europe beginning in AD 632 for a period of 300 years. In 932 they were**

**defeated and driven back (into the abyss) where they remained for a thousand years.**

The major problem in determining the time in which Satan was to be loosed for a little season is identifying whom Satan represents and the year in which he was (or will be) bound. Until this century, history did not provide a reasonable 1000-year period other than the Millennium for the binding of Satan. If we have properly identified the power which was represented in Revelation 9 as the Mohammedans (Islam), then we can examine their dominion which extended over the territory of the Dragon or Roman empire from AD 632 until AD 932-3, when they were defeated and figuratively forced back into the Abyss.

By adding 1000 years to AD 932, we arrive at a time prior to the establishment of the Kingdom, which is the present time. According to verse 3, the Adversary must be loosed a "little season." If the identification was correct, then the Satan power (or Adversary) is still the Mohammedan, or Islamic states, which are an ever-present Adversary or Satan to Israel, and have been since the rebirth of Israel in 1948.

It must be remembered that prior to the period after WW1, the Arab Islamic nations were insignificant in world affairs, powerless since their fall in AD 933. But with the discovery of vast oil reserves and the demand for oil by the nations of the world, they quickly became a world power. It was Great Britain's need for oil to fuel their navy that caused them to side with the Arabs and abandon their commitments to Israel after WW1. Also, are not the nations mentioned in the 83rd Psalm prophetically identified with these present-day manifestations?

*For, lo, thine enemies make a tumult: and they that hate thee have lifted up the head. They have taken crafty counsel against thy people, and consulted against thy hidden ones. They have said, Come, and let us cut them off from being a nation; that the name of Israel may be no more in remembrance. For they have consulted together with one consent: they are confederate against thee: The tabernacles of Edom, and the Ishmaelites; of Moab, and the Hagarenes; Gebal, and Ammon, and Amalek; the Philistines with the inhabitants of Tyre; Assur also is joined with them: they have holpen the children of Lot. Selah (Psalm 83:2-8).*

Working on the premise that the binding of this Satanic Power occurred in AD 932, that binding lasted for a thousand years. Satan being "loosed a little season" coincides with the rise to power of these nations of the Abyss, and, seems to agree with the events and prophecies described in Revelation.

**Summary:** All the relative Scriptures prophesy the destruction of the Gentile nations at the beginning of the establishment of the Kingdom (see Daniel 12, Ezekiel 38, Zechariah 14, and the Battle of Armageddon in Revelation 16). Scripture also proclaims the never-ending glory, peace, and prosperity of the Kingdom after Christ establishes it (see Psalm 37:9-11;

72:7-11, 17-19; 149:1-9; Micah 4:3; Isaiah 2:4-5; 9:6-7; 11:9; 55:10-12; 60:8-12, 18-21; Daniel 2:44; Ezekiel 37:25-26; Zechariah 6:12-13; 14:16; Habakkuk 2:14; Matthew 6:9-10; Luke 1:31-33; Revelation 5:13; 19:15-20).

The only support for a rebellion at the end of the millennium is based upon interpretation of Revelation 20:7-9. If such were to occur at the end of Christ's reign, we must believe that Gog and Magog are not destroyed at the beginning of the Millennium, but managed to survive 1000 years, and again constitute a force capable of encompassing and threatening the saints.

I suggest that a rebellion at the end of the millennium, which must be put down by the intervention of the Father with fire from heaven, is in contrast with other prophetic descriptions of the peaceful and successful reign of Christ and his Saints. I have always envisioned a successful and peaceful Kingdom being turned over to God, when Christ *...shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet* (1 Corinthians 15:24-25).

R. D. (Bob) Burns, Las Cruces, NM

(Advocate, April 2005, pp. 90-93)



## The Binding of the Devil and Satan

Revelation 20:1-7

**This subject is introduced in Revelation 20:1-2, *And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years.*** Having the subject of our review identified as the Devil and Satan, all other names such as the *dragon* and *that old serpent* will come under the heading of the Devil and Satan. If we can find out what the Devil and Satan means in a Biblical sense, then we will understand what it is that is to be bound a thousand years.

**It is generally conceded among Christadelphians that the Devil means sin in the flesh and that Satan means adversary, false accuser, tempter, etc.** We read in Matthew 4:1-12, *Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungered. And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.* So Jesus, knowing that he had received the Spirit of God without measure at his

baptism, and knowing that he had the power to convert stones into bread, was tempted to use God's power to satisfy his hunger. Had he done so, he would have given way to the weakness of the flesh and would have been overcome of evil, and the "devil" would have gotten the upper hand of him in his first temptation. But instead, Jesus overcame evil with good, and in like manner, prevailed over the second and third temptations. Thus Jesus overcame, as it is expressed, *all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father but is of the world* (1 John 2:16). By resisting the temptation of the flesh, Jesus bound Satan within himself. Still, his work was all before him. He had just begun and had to learn obedience by the things which he suffered, being tempted in all points like unto his brethren, *Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil* (Hebrews 2:14).

*And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand* (Revelation 20:1). Now Jesus is the one that holds the keys. He purchased that right with his own blood as we read in Revelation 1:18, *I am he that liveth and was dead: and, behold, I am alive for evermore, and have the keys of hell and of death* (1:18); and, *These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; shutteth and no man openeth* (3:7). Jesus overcame the temptation of the Devil and bound Satan within himself, and thus destroyed the Devil. By virtue of his obedience and sacrificial death, he purchased the right to the keys, therewith to bind Satan for a thousand years, after which, *he must be loosed a little season* (20:3).

**Never has there been a time in the history of the world that Satan's kingdom has not been in power.** Anything that opposes God's will is satanic and a deceiver. When Satan is bound every man shall sit under his own vine and under his fig tree and none shall make him afraid. Let those who claim that Satan has already been bound a thousand years and is now loosed a little season, point back in the past to a time when the nations have not been deceived. All they could do is refer to events where certain powers overcame other powers, in effect binding the weaker power. The truth of the matter is, both powers were satanic and Satan was stronger in the victorious power. It's the Devil (*sin in the flesh*) that is in people that causes them to want to rule and dominate (the very thing that Jesus had to overcome in his temptations). Even when wicked ones are overcome and rendered powerless; if given the chance – the "devil" still being in them – they are ready to rebel.

**With this introduction, let's look closer at the "binding of the Devil and Satan":**

*And I saw an angel come down from heaven having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old*

*serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, And 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* (Revelation 20:1-3).

We note **first** – the Devil / Satan is bound a thousand years; **second** – that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years should be fulfilled; and **third** – after that he must be loosed a little season. In verse 7 we read, *And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison*, which confirms what is written in verses 2 and 3 – Satan is bound a thousand years and should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years should be fulfilled, and after that, he must be loosed a little season. In verses 4-6 we are told, *Blessed 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* (those that hath part in the first resurrection are those that are accepted, which does not nullify the fact that those resurrected and judged unworthy do not have a part).

It's plainly taught in Acts that *there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust* (24:15). Both classes will stand together when the Son of man comes and the separation takes place – the dividing of the sheep from the goats. In verse 5 we read, *But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection*. So at the first resurrection, the two classes will stand together to be rewarded according to the deeds done in their bodies, whether good or bad. Verse 4 teaches very plainly that there will be thrones, which calls our attention to what Jesus told Peter in Matthew 19:28, *That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel*.

### The Millennium

**Those resurrected and found to be “just” lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.** If the thousand years spoken of in Revelation 20 is not the Millennial reign of Christ, then there will be no thousand-year reign of Christ according to the Scriptures, because Revelation 20 is the only place in the Bible where it says, *And they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years*; and it's the only place in the Bible where it says the Devil and Satan is bound a thousand years. So there is one thing certain according to history and according to the Bible: the Devil and Satan have never been bound pre-Millennium, and if he is not bound during the Millennium, we have no Scripture to prove that he ever will be bound. Do we not read God's declaration that *His word shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it*? So, we know that the Devil and Satan is destined to be bound a thousand years, which is the Millennial reign of Christ on earth, and during

that time the Lord shall be King over all the earth, and *Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited* (Zechariah 14:11).

**The question would naturally arise: what will become of those Kingdom age residents that will not be saved?** Revelation 20 supplies the answer, *And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison* (vs. 7). Notice what follows, *And 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. And 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. And 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. And 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. And 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. And 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* (vss. 8-13). For the benefit of all who are concerned, and to expose the theory of some who claim that this is pre-millennial, let's take these verses and place them pre-millennium and see what a conglomerate we have muddled together for intelligent people to believe. What kind of a picture would we have? We would have all Israel destroyed before the thousand-year reign of Christ began. There would be no mortal people for Christ to reign over. The last enemy would be destroyed before Christ began to reign. But we read, *For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death* (1 Corinthians 15:25-26). So if we have Revelation 20:7 to end all pre-Millennium, it leaves nothing for Christ and the saints to do; for it would rob God of His glory, Christ of his power, and the saints of their honor, and death and hell would be cast into the lake of fire before Satan was ever bound. But to place the loosening of Satan post-Millennium, where it belongs, it makes sense.

**Some people might say: Will the people rebel after Christ has reigned a thousand years during which time they have been blessed in basket and store and peace and righteousness?** My answer to such is: If your foresight is half as good as your hindsight, all you have to do is look at Israel after they came out of Egypt. They had witnessed the miracles which God did – too many to mention here. Moses was barely out of sight when he went up into the mount to receive the oracles of God, and they said to Aaron, *Up, make us gods, which shall go before us; as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him* (Exodus 32:1). Aaron made them the golden calf and they worshipped an idol that could not see, hear, smell, taste, nor feel. Also,

when God had ruled them about 480 years, they clamored for a king. God told Samuel they had not rejected him, but had rejected Him. God gave them kings by which they were ruled for about 800 years, most of which did evil continually until the kingdom was overturned to be no more until Christ should come whose right it is. God does not force people to believe; it is voluntary on the part of those that come to God and diligently seek Him.

**The words Gog and Magog seem to bother some folk, but why?** *For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory forever* (Romans 11:34-36). And so we read, *To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven* (Ecclesiastes 3:1). There is a time to bind Satan and there is a time to loose Satan, and there is a time to do away with mortality, which is after Christ has reigned on earth a thousand years, when God will test and deal with those who lived during the Millennium. So, just as there is a pre-Millennium Gog and Magog in Ezekiel 38 that led the rebellion at Christ's return, there is a post-Millennium Gog and Magog in Revelation 20 that will do the same.

Last, but not least, it is stated that Gog and Magog *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* (Revelation 20:8-9). Anyone that knows the Bible knows that the saints are not camped around the beloved city and will not be until and during the thousand-year reign of Christ. So it's bound to be post-Millennium, after Christ and the saints have reigned on earth a thousand years, and after Satan is loosed a little season.

**If anyone wants to know when the saints will be camped around the beloved city, I refer them to Revelation 21.** The city will have *twelve gates and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel... And the wall of the city had twelve foundations and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb*. And I have mentioned above that Jesus said the twelve apostles shall sit upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. So it will not do to place Revelation 20:7 pre-Millennium because it would unhinge the whole plan of Christ reigning on the earth a thousand years.

### Sin in the Flesh

**Now in conclusion,** the world is Satan's kingdom, a universal kingdom that has always been ruled by mortal man prompted by the propensity of the flesh (sin in the flesh – the devil), *For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world* (1 John 2:16). So it's the works of the flesh – the carnal mind that is by nature in man, that causes him to usurp authority to dictate to the subjects of his kingdom, to rule them which has always been the custom of

the rulers of the world. The only way to keep Satan down is to keep him bound, because if you loose him, we are by nature children of wrath, and when nature is allowed to rule, it manifests the carnal mind dictated by the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life. It's worldwide because it is *all that is in the world*. It was the Devil and Satan that tempted Christ, but Christ prevailed. After Satan is bound, then *the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever* (Revelation 11:15). So when Satan is loosed a little season, the Gog and Magog of Revelation 20 go out to deceive the nations. But he shall not prosper in that *fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them*. God is no respecter of persons, but in every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness shall be accepted. *God hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation* (Acts 17:26).

**Now one thing is certain, during the thousand-year reign there will be just one government, one kingdom,** and that will be Christ's Kingdom wherein *all people, nations and languages should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed* (Daniel 7:14). As are the Gentiles, the Jews have always been a rebellious people, *I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people, which walketh in a way that was not good, after their own thoughts* (Isaiah 65:2). **And so it will be after Satan is loosed out of his prison and they are allowed to walk after their own thoughts, because the devil is in them as long as mortality exists, and when given the chance, they will rebel.**

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*The above article was written by Brother C. O. Walker sometime in the mid-1930's, but to our knowledge never published [a copy was recently made available to the Advocate]. Brother Walker served 65 years in the Truth, serving as a speaker, writer, and secretary of the La Luz Ecclesia.*



## Prophetic Viewpoint

### The Binding of Satan

*A Critical Examination of the Traditional Christadelphian View of Revelation 20:7-9*

**The traditional view held by many regarding Revelation 20:7-9 would seem to contradict much of what is prophetically set forth in regard to**

**Christ's millennial reign.** The traditional view holds that the thousand years of the Kingdom, and the thousand years of the binding of Satan, are synonymous periods. In that this view appears to contradict other Bible prophecy, we want to offer an alternate interpretation for consideration.

The traditional view espouses the position that throughout the period of the Kingdom of God sin is restrained. However, it holds that at or after the end of the thousand years of the Kingdom, that restraint is released resulting in *the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth* compassing the *camp of the saints about, and the beloved city*, ending with *fire coming down from God out of heaven, and devouring them* (20:9). The problem with the traditional view of these verses is that it would seem to contradict some beautiful prophecies regarding the Kingdom Age and what is to follow after. Let us begin this review by examining a few of those prophecies of the peace and righteousness associated with the establishment and the intended purpose of the Kingdom of God:

**Isaiah 9:6-7 – Of the increase** (Hebrew *marbeh* – meaning “abundance”) **of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever.**

**Comment:** If there is any time after Jesus has subdued the nations and ascended to the throne of David, that there is war and turmoil, this prophecy comes into question, for the prophecy declares ***no end*** of peace ***even for ever***. Also, the reader should take particular notice that Revelation 20:7 says that *when the thousand years are expired* (Diaglott – *completed*), *Satan shall be released out of his prison*. Thus, a rebellion after the thousand-year reign of Jesus would presumably be after his victorious reign has ended, a time when *he shall have put down all rule and all authority and all power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death* (1 Corinthians 15:24-26). Do we believe this prophecy that there will be *no end* to *his peace, even for ever*?

**Isaiah 60:18 – *Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise.***

**Comment:** If there is a rebellion against Jesus and the saints involving enemies numbering “as the sand of the sea;” encompassing “the breadth of the earth” and “the camp of the saints / the beloved city” (Revelation 20:8-9); ending with “fire from God” raining down upon those rebels and “devouring them” (vss. 8-9); can Isaiah 60:18 be fulfilled as the passage states? Would not a rebellion represent a manifest failure to deliver what Isaiah 60:18 promises will be accomplished?

**Psalms 72:3, 5** – *The mountains shall bring peace to the people, and the little hills, by righteousness. ...They shall fear thee as long as the sun and moon endure, throughout all generations.*

**Comment:** If the time comes when people “throughout all generations,” living in “peace” and “righteousness,” cease to fear (reverential awe) Christ, will not the promise which emphasizes “as long as the sun and moon endure” have failed?

**Isaiah 2:2-4; Micah 4:1-3** – *And it shall come to pass in the last days... many people shall go and say, Come ye, let us go up to the mountain of the Lord... He shall judge among the nations... and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks, nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.*

**Comment:** The traditional view appears to be contradicting this important prophecy addressing the impact of the Kingdom. These truths declare that once the Kingdom is fully established, violence and war will no longer occur, yet the traditional view contends that the Kingdom Age will end and/or set the stage for one of the greatest instances of war and violence throughout the history of mankind.

**Revelation 20:7** – *And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison.*

**Comment:** The Greek word *teleo* (translated “expired” in verse 7) speaks only of something that has completely come to an end; something that is then in the past. If the thousand-year binding period of Satan is synonymous with the thousand-year Kingdom of God, we have an insurmountable problem, for the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:24-28 wrote, *Then cometh the end when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. ...And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.* Are we to believe that the rebellion, which verse 7 indicates has its roots in the release of Satan *when the thousand years are expired*, would not be against Jesus and the saints, but against God, who we are told will at that time have received the Kingdom unto Himself? Will Jesus have failed to “put down all rule and all authority and power,” and end his reign without having “put all enemies under his feet”?

Brethren, what have we here with the traditional view? At a time when Scripture tells us the Kingdom has ended; that there is not an enemy left on earth and death is no more; how can it be that Satan is then released to begin his rebellion, and how can rebels be killed at a time when death is said to have been destroyed?

## A Treatise Consistent with all of God's Revelation

Revelation chapter 20 opens with, *And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, And 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* (vss. 1-3). That which was to be shut up for “a thousand years” is here identified as **“the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan.”** Nowhere in the Bible is this description used to specifically identify sin or “sin in the flesh,” and yet all Christadelphians should immediately recognize that pagan Rome is identified by that exact description in Revelation 12:7-9 – *And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.* Should it not be understood when the same identifying phrase is encountered in chapter 20 that we are dealing with the same entity, not with something entirely different? Revelation 12 is dealing with the time of Constantine, around AD 312 to 324 as pagan Rome and pseudo-Christianity fought for control of the Roman empire. Might we suggest that Revelation 20:2 references Revelation 12:7-9, dealing with events regarding the same two entities some two hundred years later around AD 500?

**The term “dragon”** has been understood to reference a military power. It is known that the Roman army carried at its front a large banner containing the image of a “dragon,” and when we encounter the term “dragon” in Revelation, a military entity is in view (note *Eureka*, p. 234; and *The Apocalypse Epitomized*, p. 155). Both paganism and pseudo Christianity sent their militaries against the other as the battles raged (*Eureka*, pp. 60, 75, 84). **The term “serpent”** defines the lying feature of pagan doctrines, as God's truth was thereby challenged just as it had been by the serpent in the garden. **The term “Devil”** (Greek – *dia-bolos* – meaning “to strike through”) is a term used here to define the destructive ability of paganism as it sought to destroy opposing beliefs including the Truth.

The same entity is in view in Revelation 12 and Revelation 20, though at two different time periods. In Ephesians 6:12 the Apostle Paul remarked to the ecclesia that *we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.* The greatest enemies they had to fear at that time were rulers opposed to God's Truth and governments that had dominion over them which sought to extinguish the Truth. The book *The Story of the Christian Church* by Jesse Lyman Hurlbut (Zondervan Publishing House – 1967 edition), is helpful in following the

history of this matter, and has been used for years by this writer to verify historical events that fulfill prophecy.

**Revelation 20:2-3 – *And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him a thousand years. That he should deceive the nations no more...*** (which Pagan Rome was doing until dethroned as referenced in Revelation 12:7-9).

In The Story of the Christian Church (pp. 73-75), Mr. Hurlbut relates the history of the victory of Constantine as he dethroned Paganism and set up Christianity as the state religion. On page 73, it is said that the pagan forces were overcome and Christianity was enthroned in AD 324. However, Mr. Hurlbut relates that “Constantine was tolerant” and allowed pagan worship to continue (p. 75). Therefore, paganism was not bound at that point and pagan worship continued within the empire. However, as Mr. Hurlbut states, the successors of Constantine were not as tolerant as he had been:

“Not long after Constantine’s reign, his son ordered all worshippers of idols the penalty of death and confiscation of their property. ...The enforcement of these repressive laws varied greatly in different portions of the empire; but their effect was that heathenism (paganism) entirely passed away in the course of three or four generations.” (The Story of the Christian Church, pp. 84-86)

A generation is about fifty years (speaking of the duration of the ability to bear children), and four generations would amount to approximately two hundred years. Constantine dethroned paganism in AD 312 and it was later outlawed. Somewhere around AD 500 pagan worship was bound completely. Revelation 20:2-3 declares that it was to be bound for 1000 years; therefore, we must look for something around AD 1500 in order to discover if there is a loosing of “the dragon, that old serpent called the devil and Satan” (paganism). We do find a loosing event in AD 1517:

“The exact date fixed by historians as the beginning of the Great Reformation is October 31, 1517. On the morning of that day Martin Luther nailed to the oaken door of the Wittenberg Cathedral a parchment containing ninety-five theses or statements, nearly all relating to the sale of indulgences, but in their application striking at the authority of the pope and the priesthood. The rulers of the church vainly endeavored to cajole Luther, but he stood firm, and the storm only made him more resolute in his opposition to doctrines and practices not countenanced by Holy Scripture.” (The Story of the Christian Church, p. 152)

**The end result of Martin Luther’s efforts was that Catholicism would no longer be able to prevent the existence of any form of religious opposition.** Thus, paganism was allowed to recover and become a reality again. In addition, many other forms of anti-Christ beliefs and practices came into existence.

**In review:** Catholicism dethroned and finally bound paganism. For sometime around one thousand years Catholicism kept it bound. Martin Luther's Reformation broke down the ability of the Catholic Church to prevent any other religion than itself from becoming influential, and as a result, every form of "isms" began to come forth over the following generations, which today have filled the earth. The nations are now made ready for *the battle of that great day of God Almighty* (Revelation 16:14).

**Revelation 20:7 – *And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison ... and shall go forth to deceive the nations...***

The Greek term (*teleo*) is rendered "expired" in Revelation 20:7 (the word is also translated *finished, fulfilled*). The term always refers to something that has run its full course and is a thing of the past.

**Considering the contradictions to other millennial prophecies that the traditional interpretation of the one-thousand-year binding of Satan represents, we propose for consideration that there are two separate one thousand-year periods referenced in Revelation chapter 20.** One is the thousand years of the binding of the dragon / Satan (paganism) from around AD 500 to 1517; and the other is the thousand-year reign of Jesus and the saints. Martin Luther's Reformation resulted in the awakening of paganism which the church of Rome had outlawed on pain of death a thousand years earlier. Paganism and its offshoot "isms" have gone forth and grown exponentially since the year 1517 and have again filled the earth; playing its role in deceiving the nations and preparing them to gather together for battle against Christ and the saints.

Some may see a problem in the suggested dates of AD 500 to 1517 as neither are firmly established as reflective of the binding and loosening of Satan; but keep in mind that these dates are merely representative of historical events. It is not possible to establish historically the date or the year of the binding or the loosening of paganism. Constantine died in AD 337, and the determination that the intolerance enacted thereafter toward paganism, causing it to entirely pass away within three or four generations, merely suggests AD 500 as a reasonable guess based upon historical events. The selection of Luther having posted his ninety-five theses on October 31, 1517 is a date selected by historians representing the beginning of the renunciation of the Catholic power and the authority of the Pope. Yet, the historical events do tell their story allowing a reasonable understanding of the time frames involved; just as history reveals the establishment of Christianity as the religion of the empire in AD 324 when Constantine became emperor, having dethroned pagan Rome.

**Revelation 20:11 – *And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat upon it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away.***

The last five verses of chapter 20 (11-15), though thought by some as a description of events that occur at or after the end of Christ's millennial

reign, have been long held in Unamended understanding to have reference to Christ's advent (note Eureka references to 20:11 in Volume 2A, pp. 74, 92, 204; and in Volume 3B, pp. 189, 207). These verses address the present heavens and earth (the kingdoms of men) that disappear upon the coming of Jesus. To place all of these events at the end of the thousand years of the Kingdom of God would constitute a repetition of what is to occur at Jesus' return just prior to the setting up of the Kingdom.

**Consider:** If verse 11 (the earth and the heaven fleeing away) is at the end of the Kingdom Age, Jesus and his Kingdom have already been the new "earth and heavens" for a thousand years! How would they "flee away" from Jesus sitting upon the "great white throne" at the end of the Kingdom Age? It is the *heavens and the earth which are now* (2 Peter 3:7) that flee away as Jesus returns and subdues the nations, after which, he and his saints "shall reign on the earth" (Revelation 5:8-10). In that day and forever, *the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one* (Zechariah 14:9).

**Do not all of these conflicts and contradictions disappear when we understand that the "end" of the thousand years of "the binding of Satan" is substantially different from the end of the thousand years of the millennial Kingdom of God?** Following the end of the one thousand years of the binding of Satan, the earth's inhabitants are "deceived," accounting for their rebellious actions (Revelation 20:7-10). After the end of the one thousand years of the millennial Kingdom of God, death is destroyed, all left alive on the earth will be immortal, and God will be "all in all" (1 Corinthians 15:24-28).

**The only way around this dilemma is to add additional time beyond the specified one thousand-year period of the Kingdom / the reign of Christ,** to provide an interim between the Kingdom and "the end" when God will be "all in all" (1 Corinthians 15:28) within which "the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan" can be "loosed a little season" (20:3). Of course, in considering such a proposal, one must take into consideration: 1) the identity of "the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan;" 2) the peaceful and prosperous millennial nations established with "judgment and with justice" *even for ever*, and the righteous rulers thereof; 3) and the proposed length of time it would take to turn what would seem to be a great majority of the mortal inhabitants of the millennial Kingdom to rebellion and outright "battle" against Divine rule.

**As to the time period "a little season,"** consider those described as righteous under the fifth seal (Christadelphian expositors have generally placed them in the early fourth century – approximately AD 303-311). We're told that they must rest "a little season" until all "should be fulfilled" (Revelation 6:9-11). This is 2019 and that fulfillment has not yet arrived. (However, note how the date assigned to the fifth seal closely

corresponds to the date that paganism was dethroned by Constantine, i.e., AD 312).

**Perhaps the most significant factor in whether or not someone is even willing to consider this interpretation is their concept of the purpose and efficacy of Christ's reign in the Kingdom Age.** Are “judgment and justice from henceforth even for ever,” “no more violence nor destruction within thy borders,” “peace and righteousness throughout all generations,” “fear thee as long as the sun and moon endure,” and “neither shall they learn war anymore,” viewed only as a pre-determined temporary manifestation of Divine restraint, in their end failing to produce lasting peace and righteousness? Do we view the righteous at the end of Christ's reign granted immortality at that point or moving on to one last test? Would this likewise apply to the Jews to whom God has promised, *A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh* (Ezekiel 36:26).

Isaiah prophesied, *The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them... And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea. And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious* (Isaiah 11:6-10). If the inhabitants of the Kingdom Age, as here described, are at the end to be made free of the “restraint” of the Kingdom resulting in their rebellion, might we expect the animals likewise to be returned to their instinctual ways? And in that *there shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed* (Isaiah 65:20); should we not consider that the righteous might be granted their “long life” in the land while the unrighteous throughout the Kingdom age will have died or been cut off?

Truly, how have we envisioned the working out of Isaiah 9:7? *Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this.*

We propose for consideration that the alternate interpretation set forth herein allows for a full one thousand years of the binding of *the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan*, and a full thousand years for the Millennial Kingdom as is specified in prophecy, while avoiding apparent contradiction one with the other.

## Satan Bound (Sin in the Kingdom)

*This abbreviated / edited selection addresses the binding of Satan through the restraints the author proposes will contribute to the blessings described in Isaiah 65:17-25, which he proposes as a “factor in the binding of Satan during the millennium.”*

**Will men still commit sin in the Kingdom Age?** Let the Scriptures answer, *The child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed* (Isaiah 65:20)... While there will be mortal sinners in the Kingdom Age, it is specifically noted in Revelation 20:2 that sin will be greatly restrained during the millennium. Wars shall cease; weeping and crying shall no more be heard; hurting and destruction will be greatly reduced...

But it would seem that there are other factors that will be operative in the “binding of Satan” during the millennial reign of Jesus Christ. We are going to call this the prevailing spiritual climate / environment, which will appertain during the 1000-year reign:

- **First** – The government will be carried on the shoulder of one who is King of kings and Lord of lords. It will be free of corruption, graft and waste. It will dispense justice with perfect equity. The laws will be universal in application.
- **Second** – The governors will be immortal. They will be proof against bribery, corruption and partisanship. In addition, they will know by the spirit of God what is going on at all times, in every city, town and country. No sin or evil practices will even get under way without the immortal governors dealing with them immediately.
- **Third** – In the present dispensation the vast majority of people either have no knowledge of the God of Israel, or they deny His existence, living their lives as if God does not exist... How different it will be in the age to come! Under those idyllic conditions, *The earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea* (Isaiah 11:9). Men will rejoice in, worship, honor, and respect the Almighty and His Son.

These three items alone would suffice to bring about a whole new prevailing spiritual environment... The predisposition of humans to sin would automatically be lessened under such conditions. New political heavens and a new society upon Earth will be established. The basis of that society will be the commandments, justice, and righteousness of God Almighty: *the former shall not be remembered nor come into mind* (Isaiah 65:17). The new prevailing spiritual climate that will exist will have a profound effect upon the charitable and spiritual mindedness of the mortal inhabitants of the Kingdom... This will be a factor in the binding of Satan during the millennium. (*Advocate*, June, 1990, “Satan Bound” – subtitle “Sin in the Kingdom,” pp. 141-144)

*Edward W. Farrar*

## Which Interpretation?

Such a variety of ideas have been under review, that a brief survey is needed. The starting point, indeed the guiding principle, is given in Amos 3:7, *Surely the Lord God will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets.*

We should therefore expect to have been given a prophetic record covering the time the Master is away in heaven. That such a record should have been provided is the more to be expected, because in this time of his absence there has been no living voice of “Holy men of God” speaking as they were moved by the Holy Spirit. Without such a prophetic record, believers through long centuries would have been without a guiding light. Therefore, when the last book of the Bible outlines, in symbol, events leading to the setting up of the Kingdom under Christ, we should expect it to be an unfolding prophecy of events from John’s day to the coming of the Lord. And this is its opening claim. It is concerned with “things which are, and [the] things which shall be hereafter” (vs. 19). It claims therefore, to be a prophetic record which would soon start to be fulfilled. And for each subsequent generation they would find in this record “things which must shortly come to pass” (vs. 1) in their own day. When the various symbols are studied in the light of past history it becomes apparent that the symbols did, wonderfully, in a condensed way, outline that history. Down through the centuries there is a remarkable fit between the symbolic events in the Seals, the Trumpets, and the Vials, and the history they foreshadowed. This fit is on too vast a scale to be ignored. The fit between history and the symbols cannot be a matter of chance. It must be by the foreknowledge of God... (The Revelation – Which Interpretation? Graham Pearce, Chapter 11, p. 115)

*The introduction above was written to apply to the diverse interpretations of Revelation as a whole (i.e., preterist, futurist, and continuous historical), yet, it has application to our study of Revelation 20. Though Revelation 20 is not yet fulfilled, still we have the “signified” outline of those “things which must shortly come to pass,” things which should engage our interest and strengthen us in joyful anticipation.*