

Revelation Ch19v11-Ch20v15 - King of Kings

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- [0 : 00] Revelation chapter 20 So again, just a reminder, on Wednesday we'll be having a joint home group so everybody is invited.
- Bring your questions about Revelation or any side shoots off Revelation that you want to talk and chat about. I'm not saying the answers will be provided but hopefully we will have a good discussion as we look to God's word together.
- We're going to read all of Revelation 20 this morning. Let's hear God's word.
- And I saw an angel coming out of heaven, having the key to the abyss and holding in his hands a great chain. He seized the dragon, that ancient snake who is the devil or Satan and bound him for a thousand years.
- He threw him into the abyss and locked and sealed it over him to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended.
- [1 : 49] After that, he must be set free for a short time. I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge.
- And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony about Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshipped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or on their hands.
- They came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.
- This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy are those who share in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years.
- When the thousand years are over, Satan will be released from his prison and will go out to deceive the nations in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, and to gather them for battle.
- [3 : 11] In number they are like the sand on the seashore. They marched across the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of God's people, the city he loves.
- But fire came down from heaven and devoured them. And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown.
- They will be tormented day and night forever and ever. Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it.
- The earth and the heavens fled from his presence and there was no place for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne.
- And books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books.
- [4 : 18] The sea gave up the dead that were in it. And death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them. And each person was judged according to what they had done.

Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire.

Father, you are the giver of all life.

And your word itself is life. And so we pray that as we listen to your word, as we seek to understand this and apply it to our lives, we will be filled with a vision of God, his plan for this world, the future that is to come, and our part in it.

Help us, Father. Change us. And do your work amongst us. Amen. Amen. Well, it seems we have a fascination with Marvel movies.

[6 : 00] Any fans? Iron Man. Well, I hope I've got this right anyway. Iron Man, Thor, Captain America, Guardians of the Galaxy.

And we love spy thrillers too. Like James Bond and Jack Reacher. Ethan Hunt of Mission Impossible. Now the thing that they all have in common is they're all heroes.

They do what everyone else seems powerless to do. They confront criminals. They fight evil powers. And they ultimately bring justice.

They establish a new rule and a new order. The problem is, in the real world, the heroes don't win.

Criminals get away with murder. Evil triumphs over those who do good. And injustice rules with devastating effects. In the real world, from our experience, it's the bad guys who do as they please.

[7 : 10] And the good guys seem to suffer and struggle. You see, the reason why we have a fascination with these movies is because they achieve for us what we all long for.

Justice. Justice. Order. And rule. The end of all that is not right. But here's the good news.

What we long for doesn't have to be the stuff of Hollywood and movies. It all becomes a reality in Jesus, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Revelation gives to us a vision of the true and ultimate hero king. Let's read chapter 19, verse 11.

I saw heaven standing open. So, we have a perspective of earth and what is going on in the world. But here we are taken once again to heaven to get heaven's perspective, God's perspective.

[8 : 22] I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, a symbol of perfection and beauty, whose rider is called Faithful and True.

With justice, he judges and wages war. He's going to correct all wrongs and establish what is right and punish what is unjust.

He's not swayed by emotion or tainted by bribes. His verdict, his justice is always pure, fair, and right.

Verse 12. His eyes are like blazing fire. He sees all and he knows all. And on his head are many crowns.

He has supreme authority over all things and all people. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself.

[9 : 28] He's not controlled by anybody. He is answerable to himself. He is dressed in a robe dripped in blood and his name is the word of God.

He is a warrior king. Verse 14. The armies of heaven were following him riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen white and clean.

The saints and the angels that accompany him. coming out of his mouth is a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. His weapon of choice is the word of God.

It's the means by which he will establish his rule. What he commands takes place. What he decrees will happen. Verse 15.

He will rule them with an iron scepter. He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God almighty delivering his judgment and on his robe and on his thigh he has his name written King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

[10 : 53] Make no mistake this is God's ruling king who comes to confront all sin to triumph over all evil and to establish justice.

This is not fantasy this is reality. Jesus King of Kings Lord of Lords. Now as we go through our text looking at the rest of chapter 20 we'll see three things about this king.

We're going to see the king's rule has begun the king's rule will come and the king's rule over me. So rule has begun rule will come and then rule over me.

So first the king's rule has begun. does that say has come? Oh that's a typo.

That should be the king's rule has begun. So the king's rule is not just a future event it is a present and ongoing event.

[12 : 14] We can see this in two ways. First Satan has been bound. look at chapter 20 verse 1 and I saw an angel coming down out of heaven having the key to the abyss and holding in his hand a great chain.

Here we have the key holder the one with supreme authority and absolute power. The angel is representing the king's rule rule and he has the key to the abyss the realm of darkness the gathering place of evil hell itself.

But he also has a chain what's the chain for? Well look at verse 2 he seized the dragon that ancient snake whom we first met right the way back in the garden of Eden who is the devil or Satan and bound him for a thousand years he threw him into the abyss and locked and sealed it over him.

Now the question that we need to ask here is when was Satan bound? When did this binding take place?

Well we know from the gospels that Satan already has been bound through the death of Jesus. So in Mark's gospel chapter 3 there's an account where Jesus is having a debate with the religious leaders and he explains to them what he came to do with Satan and Jesus uses like a little short parable to explain.

[14 : 02] We have them here on screen. Jesus says in fact no one can enter a strong man's house. The strong man being Satan's kingdom without first tying him up.

Then he can plunder the strong man's house. The imagery is clear there isn't it? Jesus has come to bind Satan through his death.

To tie him up. To make him powerless so that he can rescue people from Satan's kingdom. He can plunder the kingdom of darkness and bring people into the kingdom of light.

This is also made clear in John's gospel chapter 12 where Jesus explains what will happen to Satan when Jesus dies.

Jesus says this now is the time for judgment on this world. Now the prince of this world the prince of this world is Satan who will be driven out and when I am lifted up from the earth speaking of his death his crucifixion on the cross he will draw all people to myself.

[15 : 24] He said this to show the kind of death he was going to die. You see as Jesus dies Satan is driven out and people are drawn to Jesus.

The apostle Paul describes the effect of Jesus' death on Satan like this in military terms.

Christ he says has disarmed the powers and the authorities. Who are they? The realm of darkness and he made a public spectacle of them triumphing over them by the cross.

You see as Jesus dies Satan is overcome. He is bound up he is driven out and he is disarmed. His powers of deception have been defeated and been destroyed.

Back to verse 3. He threw him into the abyss and locked and sealed it over him to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended.

[16 : 49] So he's been bound. It's past tense. And if Satan's binding happened at Jesus' death, then the thousand years he is bound for reflects the length of time Satan remains bound.

As we'll see, it's not a literal thousand years but represents the time frame between the resurrection of Jesus and the return of Jesus. That's his prison sentence if you like.

So Satan remains bound from the resurrection to the return. Yes, he is still active but he has been restrained.

Yes, Satan still has an influence but it has been limited. He still is on the attack but he has been disarmed. Now the reason Satan has been bound is so that the church may now rule.

That the church might rule. Let's pick it up in verse 4. I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given the authority to judge.

[18 : 06] So we've talked about Christ's rule. Now there's these other thrones and there's people there who have authority to judge and to rule.

who were they? Well let's read on. I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony about Jesus and because of the word of God.

So here are believers who have been martyred, persecuted for their faith and they are now with Christ ruling.

people. But not just those who had died. I think here in the second part of verse 4 there's a transition from those who had died to those who are currently living.

They introduce those who are now alive as Christians. They had not worshipped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or on their hands.

[19 : 07] they came to life. That is speaking at their conversion when they heard the gospel truth when they came to life. They reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

The rest of the dead those who are unbelievers those who were not converted did not come to life until a thousand years were ended.

this is the first resurrection. You see if we are Christians if we're people here today who are trusting in Jesus we have two resurrections.

Maybe you thought oh no there's only one isn't there no there's two. The first resurrection occurs when we trust in Jesus Christ and so begins our new life.

The second resurrection is when Jesus returns again and we receive our new physical bodies and we live in the new creation. We have a new life.

[20 : 17] So verse 6 blessed and holy are those who share in the first resurrection. For those who've trusted in Christ what a glory what a great joy it is what a blessing to be able to say that yes I have a first resurrection I've come to life in Christ.

The second death when Christ returns has no power over them but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him or rule with him for a thousand years.

years. You see the church will rule we're told for a thousand years from the resurrection of Jesus to the return of Jesus.

As we trust in him so we begin to reign with him we rule with him now. There are those who have passed on from this life and they're ruling with Christ but also Christians today we are currently ruling with him.

So what does it look like for us to reign with Christ? What does it mean for us to exercise Christ's rule here on earth right now? Well as the church preaches the gospel of Jesus so people are released from Satan's kingdom and they are raised to new life to reign with Christ.

[21 : 49] Isn't that amazing? if you're a Christian there was a time where you can look back in your past life where you were held in Satan's kingdom by his lies and deception.

But when you heard the gospel you came to see that Satan has no hold on you that through Jesus your sins are forgiven and you've been set free.

And now look at the end of verse 6 they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years.

We will be priests that's our calling right now today. We serve him as we go into all the world to share the gospel with others.

As we do people are set free from darkness and Satan can do nothing about it. Satan cannot stop people believing in Christ.

[22 : 56] Now think about this with me. This is what is happening right now when you teach your Sunday school class. It's happening when you teach at Rock, when you teach at Rooted, when you share the gospel with your friends.

We go into that knowing that Satan has been bound and as the gospel word goes out people are released.

People are set free. This is God's rule on earth through his church. This is where it's happening. So the king's rule has begun.

It's not just a future event. His rule is exercised now through the church as we preach the gospel in the knowledge that Satan has been bound and people will be set free.

So we can celebrate that the king's rule has begun. second, the king's rule will come, future tense.

[24 : 17] The rule of the king has begun and one day we will see it in all its fullness. Two things are going to help us see this. First, Satan released.

Look at the end of verse 3, chapter 20. After that, after his binding, he, Satan, must be set free for a short time.

Down to verse 7. When the thousand years are over, Satan will be released from his prison and will go out to deceive the nations in the four corners of the earth.

So we have seen that Satan was bound up, driven out, disarmed. His powers of deception were broken, but now, future, at the dawn of the king's return, Satan is going to be released.

God, who locked him up, is going to turn the key and open the abyss and let him loose. And, verse 8, he will go out and deceive the nations in the four corners of the earth.

[25 : 31] Satan will return to do what he has been doing before his binding. He will deceive the nations in such a way that they do not believe Jesus.

And he will lead them astray so that they turn against God's people. In that time, as this happens, the day of forgiveness will come to a close.

The time of grace will end. The age of repentance will no longer be possible. Instead of salvation, there will be the coming of condemnation.

Those who have rejected Jesus will only grow in their rebellion of Jesus. And those who have hardened their hearts to Jesus will only deepen in their hardness.

It's not that they cry for mercy. They don't want mercy. It's not that they long for grace. They don't want grace.

- [26 : 37] Satan's final deception only affirms what they want. They don't want Jesus.
- One day the church will complete its great commission of going to the nations and releasing people from captivity.
- One day that will be finished and the opportunity for salvation will end. You see, Satan's release is all part of God's just and right judgment.
- God is exercising his sovereign rule as he does because as he releases Satan. He does it so that he might be condemned.
- This great deception is going to lead to a gathering of war. Verse eight, we've already come past this in earlier chapters called the war of Armageddon.
- [27 : 45] It's the same thing here, it's nothing different. Verse eight, he will go out to deceive the nations in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog.
- They represent the enemies of God who are opposed to Christ and seek to destroy his church. To gather them for battle, in number they will be like the sand on the seashore.
- The opposition is going to come from every direction, from the four corners of the earth. Having believed Satan's lie, they now believe they can destroy the church once and for all.
- Verse nine, they marched across the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of God's people, the city he loves. We can see them there being hemmed in.
- It seems like there's an intense opposition and persecution, the forces of darkness and evil gathering around and surrounding the church and pressing in.
- [28 : 46] And when we think everything is lost, look at the rest of verse nine, but fire came down from heaven and devoured them. And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown.
- You see, Satan is so full of deception that he has come to deceive himself. He senses a victory as he wages his war.
- He's about to crush the church, but the gathering is all part of God's rule. God has merely released Satan so that he might gather his minions and his enemies for destruction.
- destruction. The victory was never in doubt. It was just a matter of when. When the king returns, he comes, we were told in chapter 19, with the armies of heaven and he destroys his enemies.
- You see, there is no fight. There is no war. Satan is finally and ultimately crushed, judged, removed and condemned.
- [30 : 11] Look at the end of verse 10. They will be tormented day and night forever and ever. God's rule will end the opposition to the church.
- Stop the powers of evil in the world and break the enemies of God and peace will reign. So the king's rule will come.
- God will establish his rule fully and finally and he will restore order and justice. So the king's rule has begun.
- The king's rule has or will come. And then last, I'm not getting along very well with the button today. the king's rule over me.
- Look at verse 11. The king's rule over me. Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it.
- [31 : 24] So here we are invited to enter into the courtroom of heaven and God is on the throne and he is about to pronounce his judgment.
- As we enter the courtroom, look who is there. Verse 12. And I saw the dead, great and small.

Well, who are the dead who've been gathered? Well, they're not the physically dead, they are the spiritually dead. Look back at verse 5 again with me.

The rest of the dead, that is those who are unbelievers, did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.

The dead are unbelievers, those who have rejected Jesus and have now been raised to physical life to face the final judgment.

[32 : 31] Verse 12. So I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne. And books were opened. Everyone who stood opposed to Christ and his church will be gathered, the powerful and the weak, the rich and the poor.

This is where history is headed. This is unavoidable. This is God's full and final judgment. And as they are gathered, books are opened.

The record of history, the account of everyone's life. And it's as if the evidence is now being read out to God who is on the throne.

every thought, every word and every deed will be disclosed. Nothing will be hidden. All will be revealed.

Nobody can hide, verse 13, because the sea, remember the symbolism of the sea of chaos and evil, the sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them.

[33 : 49] So all were raised up and each person was judged according to what they had done. every government that stood against Christ, every leader that opposed the church, those who had imprisoned pastors, beat up new believers, murdered Christians, all who had slandered God's people, rejected God's word, all who had ignored Christ and rejected Christ, they will be judged according to what they had done.

The earthly powers who ruled Christians harshly will now be ruled justly by God. And the verdict is fair.

Anyone, verse 15, anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life, was thrown into the lake of fire.

Not a, literal fire, but a place of agony. Their destiny will be like that of Satan. Look back at the end of verse 10.

It's not an annihilation or the end of something. They will be tormented day and night, forever and ever. Hell is not a place of joyful rebellion.

[35 : 24] It's a place of eternal sorrow. Sin will be an endless torment. People will thirst for mercy and forgiveness, but it will never be quenched.

It will be a desire for grace and hope, but it will never ever be realized. beast. This will be the destiny of those who have refused the Lord Jesus.

But it doesn't have to end this way, does it? Because there is another ending. There is a greater destiny, not one of darkness and death, but of light and life.

Instead of chaos and evil, it can be beauty and glory. You see, in the midst of all of this, there is another book. Did you see it? Look at the middle of verse 12.

Another book was opened, which is the book of life. Verse 15, anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire.

[36 : 40] You see, if your name, is in this book, then it means judgment passes over you. No harm will come to you.

So how do I make sure that my name is written in this book of life? That when the judgment comes, my name, Johnny Grant, is going to be in that book?

book. Well, turn with me, please, back to Revelation chapter 3. Revelation chapter 3. Revelation chapter 3. I want you with me to imagine that this book that I have here is a record of your life or my life.

book. It's all contained in here from beginning to end. And as you flick through the pages, you'll see aspects of your life, maybe your birth, your first toddler steps, maybe some achievement when you were at school, a wedding day, children.

children. You flick through it all and it's all there. Everything you've said and done and thought is also in here.

[38 : 22] And as I look at this evidence, this book of my life, there's lots of things that I would love you to read and see, but there's lots of things I would be terribly ashamed and embarrassed if you saw them.

because in this book of evidence, there is a history of my life that has opposed Christ, where I have rejected and turned against Christ and not loved him as I should.

And there's a record in here too of how I've hurt the church, how I've hurt God's people from things that I've said and things that I've done.

And it's all here. I can't make it go away. And God sees this evidence. And it's very clear that without Christ, I will be judged according to what I have done.

I'm not going to stand in that judgment because it is not enough. But I want you to think with me of another book, the book of life.

[39 : 55] And this book of life is the life of Christ. And again, you can read through and see all that Christ has done. how he loved and obeyed his father perfectly.

How he never said anything wrong. How he loved those whom other people didn't love. And how he gave his life ultimately to death on the cross for people like me.

this is the book of life. This is the book of evidence. And the wonderful thing is that there's been a great exchange, hasn't there?

For Christ has taken my book of evidence, the story of my life, life, with all its mess and all its brokenness.

And he has taken the judgment for me and for you. And it's all dealt with.

[41 : 12] He suffers judgment. He suffers hell for you and for me. And not only that, he not only takes that judgment, but he gives to me the book of life, the life of Christ, the perfect life.

So when God now looks at me, he sees Christ in all his beauty and in all his goodness. And in that book, you could flick through the pages and he'll be full of names.

Names of people who have trusted Christ. And my name, my name is going to be there because of Christ.

And your name can be there because of Christ. one day a judgment is going to come and it's either the book of evidence or the book of life.

Let's read Revelation 3 verse 5. The one who is victorious, the one who has trusted Christ, will like them be dressed in white, a symbol of their new perfection and purity in Christ.

[42 : 55] And he says, I will never blot out the name of that person from the book of life, but will acknowledge that name before my Father and his angels.

No matter what sin, no matter what has happened, it can never erase your name from the book of life. Nothing can erase your name from the book of life, but he will acknowledge your name before the Father and before his angels.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Where is your name written? Where is your name written?

Where is the name of your friends and family? Where are their names written? Satan has been bound.

We have the gospel that can release people so that they might have eternal life. Let's pray together.

[44 : 16] Amen. Amen. Amen. Let's pray together. Let's pray together. Amen. Let's pray together. Amen. Amen. Father God, we thank you.

we thank you for your rule over all things and all people. And we thank you that because of the Lord Jesus, he is reigning even now.

And that we as your people can reign with him. help us to go with the encouragement and the knowledge of bringing the good news to a world in great need.

We pray that your gospel will go forth and that people will be released so that their names are written in the book of life.

We pray, Father, that you will do that work amongst us, in our community, and amongst our friends, we pray. In Jesus' name.

[45 : 28] Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. We're going to sing a couple of songs. The first one reminding us of what has been achieved on the cross.