

REVELATION—UNVEILING THE END, ACT 3 THE FINAL CURTAIN

STUDY NINE

Turning the World Right-Side Up

Revelation 20:1–10

Sin spoils everything—everything around us, everything inside us, everything about us. Everything. Sin is what’s wrong with our world.

—Pastor Charles R. Swindoll

Do you ever look around at the brokenness of this world and say, “That’s just not how it’s supposed to be”?

A baby breathes his final breath in his mother’s arms. A tornado tears through a town, leaving a path of destruction in its wake. A woman is sold into slavery and is seen as nothing more than an object of her owner’s pleasure. A nation assaults another, killing and capturing innocent civilians standing in the way of its conquest. *That’s just not how it’s supposed to be . . .*

The underlying cause behind it all is sin. Sin brought the curse upon this world. Sin drives the evil atrocities in this world. In short, sin spoils *everything*.

Sin steals life. It rips apart loved ones. It robs our joy. It makes creation groan in pain. When the serpent persuaded Adam and Eve to turn their backs on God and His command, he introduced sin to God’s good creation. And at this moment, sin turned the world upside down.

Yet God has promised us that He would crush the serpent’s head. And defeat sin and death. And turn the world right-side up. In this *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study, we look to the time when Jesus Christ establishes His millennial kingdom on earth and makes His creation perfect as He intended it to be.



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PREPARE YOUR HEART

God feels pain like we do when He beholds the evils in the world. In His original design, creation was an idyllic environment—one that teemed with life and was free of natural disasters. As Christians, we look forward to the day when Jesus returns to restore creation to this pure and whole state. And so does God.

As you await that day, express your pain to God and ask for strength and endurance. Then thank Him for the remarkable hope He has offered us in Christ.



TURN TO THE SCRIPTURES

Everything in Revelation has been leading up to this—the moment when Jesus Christ makes His long-anticipated return to earth to conquer Satan, sin, and death. In the previous scene, Jesus marched from heaven to earth with His army of martyrs to defeat His earthly enemies: the beast, the false prophet, and rulers of all the world's most wicked nations.

With these earthly foes eliminated, the attention shifts to Jesus' final enemy. In this section, Jesus defeats Revelation's main antagonist: the dragon.



Observation: Jesus and Satan's Final Battle

Students of Scripture throughout time have offered a variety of interpretations of [Revelation 20:1–10](#), yet *all* agree that these verses sing a song of deliverance for the people of God. Focus on this key theme as you observe these verses.¹

Jesus' Millennial Reign—Revelation 20:1–6

This chapter opens with John's vision of an angel coming down from heaven with a key and a heavy chain ([Revelation 20:1](#)). Whom did this angel bind and lock away in [Revelation 20:2](#)? According to [20:3](#), where was the prison? How long was this figure trapped there?

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Next, John saw a group of thrones. According to *Revelation 20:4*, who sat upon these thrones, and what kind of authority did these individuals have? What qualified them to sit on these thrones? How long was their reign?

John described those who sat upon the thrones in *20:4* as having experienced “the first resurrection” (*20:5*). According to *20:6*, what kind of blessing did those who experienced this resurrection receive?

Satan’s Ultimate Defeat—Revelation 20:7–10

Earlier, John mentioned that Satan’s millennial prison was merely temporary (*Revelation 20:3*). Then, in *Revelation 20:7*, once the thousand years ended, Jesus released Satan. What did Satan do upon his release, according to *20:8–9a*?

In a final attempt to defeat Jesus, Satan resorted to his oldest trick: deceiving the nations. According to *20:9a*, what happened to the army that surrounded “God’s people and the beloved city”? What then happened to Satan in *20:10*?

This is the true golden age. Satan is bound. Jesus reigns. And the righteous rule under His authority. John saw a panorama of God’s resurrected saints ruling with Him. You and I will be reigning with Christ. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll

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Interpretation: The Meaning of the Millennium

The millennium marks a turning point in the narrative of Revelation. Though we don't find the word *millennium* in our Bibles, the term comes from the Latin translation of the expression, “a thousand years,” which we find several times in this passage. Use your Bible-study tools to research the meaning of the millennium. Feel free to use Pastor Chuck Swindoll's commentary, *Insights on Revelation*, or the article, “[What Is the Millennial Kingdom?](#)” at [gotquestions.org](#).

In what ways does the millennium anticipate the future everlasting reign of Christ when He introduces the new creation? How does it foreshadow the *final* defeat of Satan, sin, and death? In what ways are these realities still yet to be fully realized during the millennium?

How does the present rule of Satan on earth and the pervasive power of sin and death help us make sense of the horrible things this world and its inhabitants experience every day? How do we know that God is still good and sovereign even when we see Satan, sin, and death seeming always to have their way? How does the millennium offer hope in the present?

When Satan is bound, he will no longer have influence over the earth as he has had throughout our lifetime, and the lifetimes of our parents, and ever since Adam and Eve fell in the garden. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Correlation: Gog and Magog

In *Revelation 20:8*, John notes that Satan deceived the nations of Gog and Magog, alluding to a key prophecy from *Ezekiel 38–39*. In this passage, God condemned “Gog of the land of Magog” (*Ezekiel 38:2*). It's unlikely that this oracle was directed at a specific person or nation. Instead, it's a message against *anyone* who would stand against the one true God—past, present, or future. The message is simple . . .

Stand against God, and He will stand against you (38:3).

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According to [Ezekiel 38:8–12](#), what did God say would happen in the future between Gog and Magog and His chosen people Israel? Why will Gog and Magog attack Israel?

How will God respond to this act of defiance according to [38:18–23](#)? What will God reveal about Himself in this process?

According to [39:25–29](#), what does God’s decisive defeat of Gog and Magog mean for His people Israel?

“I will leave none of my people behind. And I will never again turn my face from them” ([39:28–29](#)). *What an amazing promise!* In Jesus’ millennial kingdom, this promise will become a reality. As we wait for His return, we can trust that He will keep His promise . . . even when this world feels so broken and messy.



Application: How It’s Supposed to Be

Because we know that things in this world won’t be perfect until Jesus returns to deal with Satan, sin, and death for good, what should we do in the meantime? Pastor Chuck offers two suggestions.

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First, *live consistently and realistically*. Pain is an unavoidable part of the human experience. Don't assume that Jesus will shield you from all harm. What does it look like to trust God in those dark seasons of suffering? How can you rely on Him when the storm is calm?

Second, *witness faithfully and fervently*. Satan is strong, attractive, and deceptive. Without intervention from the Holy Spirit, every person will naturally follow the way of the dragon. How do you sense the Holy Spirit wanting to use you to point people to the Lamb?

Is anything in your life or in the life of a loved one making you think, *That's just not how it's supposed to be*? How has this study of Jesus' millennial reign assured you of God's sovereignty and His goodness? In what ways can you share this hope with a fellow believer who might be wrestling with God about the evils that fill this world?

Anyone—even a non-Christian—will notice that this world is upside-down. There is just too much evil, injustice, pain, and death swirling around us. Yet only a Christian has the hope that it will not be this way forever. One day, Jesus will return to introduce His followers to a perfect creation—one that is good and beautiful and whole and right.

And in that day, we will look around and exclaim, “This is *exactly* how it's supposed to be!”

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A FINAL PRAYER

Father, I confess that I sometimes fall for Satan's schemes and choose to follow his way rather than Yours. When I'm tempted to turn away from You, help me yield to the Holy Spirit so that I can follow You instead. Continue to transform me so I can look and act like Your Son Jesus Christ. I ask these things in His great name. Amen.

ENDNOTES

1. To learn more about Pastor Chuck Swindoll's *Searching the Scriptures* Bible-study method, go to the article, "[How Does Pastor Chuck Swindoll Study the Bible?](#)"
2. Charles R. Swindoll, *Insights on Revelation*, Swindoll's Living Insights New Testament Commentary (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House, 2014).

For the 2024 broadcasts, this *Searching the Scriptures* study was developed by Brad Smith, writer and content strategist, *Searching the Scriptures* Ministries, based upon the original outlines, charts, and transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll's messages. Copyright © 2004, 2024 by Charles R. Swindoll, Inc. All rights are reserved worldwide. Duplication of copyrighted material for commercial use is strictly prohibited.

