

Study Notes – Revelation 20, part 1

The First Resurrection

20.1 Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key to the abyss and a great chain.

- ✓ Chain – (halusis): to restrain, a bond for binding the body (any part).
 - "Do not be afraid! I am the First and the Last, ¹⁸ and the One who lives. I was dead but look - I am alive forever and ever! Moreover, I hold the keys of death and Sheol. Revelation 1:17-18

20.2-3 He seized the dragon - the ancient serpent, who is the devil and satan - and bound him for a thousand years. ³ He also threw him into the abyss and locked and sealed it over him, so that he would not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed. After these things, he must be released for a short while.

- ✓ the abyss – first appears in Rev 9:1-3, the 5th Trumpet. A fallen angel was given the same key to unlock the Abyss and release the "locust" demons.
 - This is the sovereignty of God who uses all things to achieve His ultimate ends. Satan is a tool of God.
- ✓ so that he would not deceive the nations – Although satan is out of the way and his demons imprisoned in Babylon, remember that the human body still suffers from the disease of sin, people living in the flesh.
 - Let no one say when he is tempted, "I am being tempted by God" - for God cannot be tempted by evil, and He himself tempts no one. ¹⁴ But each one is tempted when he is dragged away and enticed by his own desire. ¹⁵ Then when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is full grown, it brings forth death. James 1:13-15

- ✚ The rightful King will reside and reign on the earth 1,000 years, restoring what was lost in the Garden of Eden.
 - A psalm of David. ADONAI declares to my Lord: "Sit at My right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for Your feet." ² ADONAI will extend your mighty rod from Zion: "Rule in the midst of your enemies." ³ Your people will be a freewill offering in a day of your power. In holy splendors, from dawn's womb, yours is the dew of your youth. ⁴ ADONAI has sworn, and will not change His mind: "You are a Kohen forever according to the order of Melchizedek." ⁵ My Lord is at your right hand. He will shatter kings in the day of His wrath. ⁶ He will judge among the nations, heaping up corpses. He will crush heads over the entire land. ⁷ He will drink from a stream along the way - so His head will be exalted. Psalms 110
 - "Let the nations rouse themselves and go up to the valley of Jehoshaphat. For there will I sit to judge all the surrounding nations." ¹³ Swing the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Come, tread, for the winepress is full - the vats overflow - for their wickedness is great! ¹⁴ Multitudes, multitudes, in the valley of decision! For the day of ADONAI is near in the valley of decision. Joel 4:12-14

20.4 Then I saw thrones, and people sat upon them - those to whom authority to judge was given. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony for Yeshua and because of the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or his image, nor had they received his mark on their forehead or on their hand. And they came to life and reigned with the Messiah for a thousand years. Revelation 20:4

- ✓ Thrones – Ruling and Judging. **Yeshua will reign immediately upon his return.**
 - Yeshua speaking to His disciples: And Yeshua said to them, "Amen, I tell you, when the Son of Man sits on His glorious throne in the new world, you who have followed Me shall also sit on twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel Matthew 19:28
 - that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and you shall sit upon thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Luke 22:30
 - "Now when the Son of Man comes in His glory, and all the angels with Him, then He will sit on His glorious throne."³² All the nations will be gathered before Him, and He will separate them from one another, just as the shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.³³ And He will put the sheep on His right, but the goats on His left.³⁴ Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, you who are blessed by My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.'³⁵ For I was hungry and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger and you invited Me in;³⁶ I was naked and you clothed Me; I was sick and you visited Me; I was in prison and you came to Me.'³⁷ Then the righteous will answer Him, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You? Or thirsty and give You something to drink?'³⁸ And when did we see You a stranger and invite You in? Or naked and clothe You?'³⁹ When did we see You sick, or in prison, and come to You?'⁴⁰ And answering, the King will say to them, 'Amen, I tell you, whatever you did to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'⁴¹ Then He will also say to those on the left, 'Go away from Me, you cursed ones, into the everlasting fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels.'⁴² For I was hungry and you gave Me nothing to eat; I was thirsty and you gave Me nothing to drink;⁴³ I was a stranger and you did not invite Me in; naked and you did not clothe Me; sick and in prison and you did not visit Me.'⁴⁴ Then they too will answer, saying, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not care for You?'⁴⁵ Then He will answer them, saying, 'Amen, I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for Me.'⁴⁶ These shall go off to everlasting punishment, but the righteous into everlasting life." Matthew 25:31-46
 - Spoken to the "Church"; To the one who overcomes I will grant the right to sit with Me on My throne, just as I myself overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne. Revelation 3:21
 - Trustworthy is the saying: If we died with Him, we will also live with Him;¹² if we endure, we will also reign with Him; if we deny Him, He will also deny us;¹³ if we are faithless, He remains faithful, for He cannot deny Himself. 2 Timothy 2:11-13
 - Don't you know that the kedoshim will judge the world? And if the world is to be judged by you, are you incompetent to judge trivial matters?³ Don't you know that we will judge angels? How much more the matters of this life! 1 Corinthians 6:2-3
- ✓ the souls of those who had been beheaded – The guillotine in revolutionary France was a revival of the mode of Capital punishment of pagan Rome. John the Baptizer & Paul were both beheaded. Mark 6:24-25 & Matt 14:8
 - The 1st half of the Tribulation: "When the Lamb opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those slaughtered for the sake of the word of God and for the witness they had." Revelation 6:9
 - The 2nd half of the Tribulation: "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives even in the face of death." Revelation 12:11
 - Countless Worshipers Before the Throne. Revelation 7:9

20.5 The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection.

Who are the rest of the dead?

1. These are the dead unrighteous in hades awaiting their judgement at the Great White Throne judgement. These are both Jew & Gentiles.
 - a. "At that time Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people (Jews), will arise. There will be a time of distress such as has never occurred since the beginning of the nation until then. But at that time your people - **everyone who is found written in the book** - will be delivered.² Multitudes who sleep in the dust of the earth will awake - some to everlasting life (those that awake), and others to shame and everlasting contempt (do not awake).³ Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavenly expanse. And those who turn many to righteousness will be like the stars forever and ever. Daniel 12:1-3
 - i. and you will be blessed, since they cannot repay you. You will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous." Luke 14:14
 - ii. "Do not be amazed at this, for an hour is coming when all who are in their graves will hear His voice²⁹ and come out! Those who have done good will come to a resurrection of life, and those who have done evil will come to a resurrection of judgment. John 5:28-29
 - iii. "But this I confess to you, that according to the Way (which they call a sect), I worship the God of our fathers, believing everything written in the Torah and the Prophets.¹⁵ In God I have a hope—which these men also wait for—that there will surely be a resurrection of both the righteous and the unrighteous. Acts 24:14-15
2. Hades / Sheol – the temporary place of the unrighteous dead. Kept until the 2nd resurrection at the Great White Throne judgement. "It never denotes the grave nor is it the permanent region of the lost; in point of time it is, for such, intermediate between decease and the doom of Gehenna." *Vines Expository Dictionary*
 - a. The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Sheol gave up the dead in them. Then they were each judged, each one of them, according to their deeds.¹⁴ Then death and Sheol were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death - the lake of fire.¹⁵ And if anyone was not found written in the Book of Life, he was thrown into the lake of fire. Revelation 20:13-15
 - b. Luke 16:23-31

Who is in the First Resurrection?

1. Old Testament Saints, the "Faithful" who died before Shavuot (Pentecost). Dan 12:2, Isa 26:19
2. The Church Age Saints: Yeshua's Bride (Pentecost to Rapture). John 14:3, 1Cor 15:51, 1Th 4:13-18
 - a. The First Fruits of more to come.
 - i. But now Messiah has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep.²¹ For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead also has come through a Man.²² For as in Adam all die, so also in Messiah will all be made alive.²³ But each in its own order: Messiah the firstfruits; then, at His coming, those who belong to Messiah; 1 Corinthians 15:20-23
 - ii. He is not here, but He is risen! Remember what He told you when He was still in the Galilee,⁷ saying that the Son of Man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be executed, and on the third day rise up." Luke 24:6-7

- b. At Rapture we receive our resurrected bodies. Rev 19:14
 - i. For the Lord Himself shall come down from heaven with a commanding shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the blast of God's shofar, and the dead in Messiah shall rise first. ¹⁷ Then we who are alive, who are left behind, will be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air - and so we shall always be with the Lord.
1 Thessalonians 4:16-17

3. The Two Witnesses. Rev 11:11

4. The Martyrs from Daniel's 70th week.

20.6 How fortunate and holy is the one who has a share in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no authority, but they shall be kohanim of God and the Messiah, and they shall reign with Him for a thousand years.

- ✓ the second death – a warning to unbelievers to seek salvation in Yeshua today.
 - He who has an ear, let him hear what the Ruach is saying to Messiah's communities. The one who overcomes shall never be harmed by the second death." Revelation 2:11
 - Destiny of those not written in the (Lamb's) Book of Life.
 - The penal consequences of sin – exclusive for those who rejected the sacrificial blood atonement and forgiveness of sin by Yeshua.
 - Permanent eternal separation from God.
- ✓ they shall reign with Him for a thousand years – the Millennial Kingdom

Who enters the Millennial Kingdom?

1. The surviving Hebrew remnant who cried out for Yeshua's return in their physical human bodies.
2. The "sheep", those gentiles who are still alive in their physical bodies.
3. Tribulation martyrs in their resurrected bodies.
4. Old Testament Saints in resurrected bodies.
5. The Two Witnesses, identity unknown probably members of #4.
6. The Bride of Yeshua in resurrected bodies.