

Pulling Back the Curtain on the Millennium, Judgment Day, & Heaven

Message 5 of 5 in the series: "Pulling Back the Curtain"

A. About 60 years after He ascended into heaven, Jesus pulled back the curtain on himself, heaven, and the end times for his disciple John.

"This is a **revelation** from Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants the events that must soon take place. He sent an angel to present this revelation to his servant John, who faithfully reported everything he saw. This is his report of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. God **blesses** the one who reads the words of this prophecy to the church, and he blesses all who **listen** to its message and **obey** what it says, for the **time is near**." Revelation 1:1-3 (NLT)

B. Jesus pulled back the curtain on the Millennium.

"Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven with the key to the bottomless pit and a heavy chain in his hand. He seized the dragon—that old serpent, who is the devil, Satan—and bound him in chains for a thousand years. The angel threw him into the bottomless pit, which he then shut and locked so Satan could not deceive the nations anymore until the thousand years were finished. **Afterward he must be released for a little while**. Then I saw thrones, **and the people sitting on them had been given the authority to judge**. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their testimony about Jesus and for proclaiming the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or his statue, nor accepted his mark on their foreheads or their hands. They all came to life again, and they reigned with Christ for a thousand years. This is the first resurrection. (The rest of the dead did not come back to life until the thousand years had ended.) Blessed and holy are those who share in the first resurrection. For them the second death holds no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him a thousand years. When the thousand years come to an end, **Satan will be let out of his prison. He will go out to deceive the nations**—called Gog and Magog—in every corner of the earth. He will gather them together for battle—a mighty army, as numberless as sand along the seashore. And I saw them as they went up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded God's people and the beloved city. But fire from heaven came down on the attacking armies and consumed them. Then **the devil, who had deceived them, was thrown into the fiery lake of burning sulfur**, joining the beast and the false prophet. There they will be tormented day and night forever and ever." Revelation 20:1-10 (NLT)

1. Jesus will come back to reign as King of all the earth for 1,000 years, and we will reign with Him.

- "...Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven." Matthew 6:9-10 (NIV)
- "This is a trustworthy saying: 'If we die with him, we will also live with him. If we endure hardship, we will reign with him...'" 2 Timothy 2:11-12a (NLT)

2. The Millennium will be an unparalleled time of righteousness, health, and peace on earth.

- "No longer will babies die when only a few days old... No longer will people be considered old at one hundred! ...For my people will live as long as trees..." Isaiah 65:20 & 22 (NLT)
- "The Lord will mediate between nations and will settle international disputes. They will hammer their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will no longer fight against nation, nor train for war anymore." Isaiah 2:4 (NLT)
- "...the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea."
Isaiah 11:9b (NIV)

3. Millions of people will turn away from Jesus to follow Satan at the end of the Millennium proving how deliberate and determined our sin nature can be in seeking independence from God. "The human heart is the most deceitful of all things, and desperately wicked. Who really knows how bad it is?"

Jeremiah 17:9 (NLT)

C. Jesus pulled back the curtain on Judgment Day.

"And I saw a great white throne and the one sitting on it. The earth and sky fled from his presence, but they found no place to hide. I saw the dead, both great and small, standing before God's throne. And the books were opened, including the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to what they had done, as recorded in the books. The sea gave up its dead, and death and the grave gave up their dead. And all were judged according to their deeds. Then death and the grave were thrown into the lake of fire. This lake of fire is the second death. And anyone whose name was not found recorded in the Book of Life was thrown into the lake of fire." Revelation 20:11-15 (NLT)

1. Jesus will be the judge on the great white throne. "...the Father judges no one. Instead, he has given the Son absolute authority to judge, so that everyone will honor the Son, just as they honor the Father." John 5:22-23a (NLT)
2. All who have placed their faith in Jesus as their Savior and Lord will never be condemned because they already have their names written in the Book of Life.
 - "For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him. **Whoever believes in him is not condemned**, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son." John 3:16-18 (NIV)
 - "...he said, **'It is finished!'** Then he bowed his head and gave up his spirit." John 19:30 (NLT)
 - "...there is now **no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus...**" Romans 8:1 (NIV)
3. Hell is real. "Then the King will turn to those on the left and say, 'Away with you, you cursed ones, into the **eternal fire prepared for the devil and his demons**. For I was hungry, and you didn't feed me. I was thirsty, and you didn't give me a drink. I was a stranger, and you didn't invite me into your home. I was naked, and you didn't give me clothing. I was sick and in prison, and you didn't visit me.' Then they will reply, 'Lord, when did we ever see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and not help you?' And he will answer, 'I tell you the truth, when you refused to help the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were refusing to help me.' And **they will go away into eternal punishment**, but the righteous will go into eternal life." Matthew 25:41-46 (NLT)

Life Application: We need to repent. "The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead, he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but **everyone to come to repentance**." 2 Peter 3:9 (NIV)

D. Jesus pulled back the curtain on Heaven.

"Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the old heaven and the old earth had disappeared. And the sea was also gone. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven like a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. I heard a loud shout from the throne, saying, 'Look, **God's home is now among his people!** He will live with them, and they will be his people. God himself will be with them. He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be **no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever.**' And the one sitting on the throne said, 'Look, I am making everything new!' And then he said to me, 'Write this down, for what I tell you is trustworthy and true.' And he also said, '**It is finished!** I am the Alpha and the Omega—the Beginning and the End. To all who are thirsty I will give freely from the springs of the water of life. All who are victorious will inherit all these blessings, and I will be their God, and they will be my children.'" Revelation 21:1-7 (NLT)

1. Heaven will be a place where we will always be together with Jesus. "There is more than enough room in my Father's home. If this were not so, would I have told you that I am going to prepare a place for you? When everything is ready, I will come and get you, so that you will always be with me where I am." John 14:2-3 (NLT)
2. Heaven will be a place that is free from the curse. "No longer will there be a curse upon anything. For the throne of God and of the Lamb will be there, and his servants will worship him. And they will see his face, and his name will be written on their foreheads. And there will be no night there—no need for lamps or sun—for the Lord God will shine on them. And they will reign forever and ever." Revelation 22:3-5 (NLT)
3. Heaven is the Garden of Eden restored. "Then the angel showed me a river with the water of life, clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb. It flowed down the center of the main street. On each side of the river grew a **tree of life**, bearing twelve crops of fruit, with a fresh crop each month. The leaves were used for medicine to heal the nations." Revelation 22:1-2 (NLT)

Life Application: Everyone needs Jesus. "The Spirit and the bride say, 'Come.' Let anyone who hears this say, 'Come.' Let anyone who is thirsty come. Let anyone who desires drink freely from the water of life." Revelation 22:17 (NLT)

Life Application: Jesus is coming soon! "He who testifies to these things says, 'Surely I am coming quickly.' Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus!" Revelation 22:20 (NKJV)

Connect Group Questions:

1. What do the following passages say about life during the Millennium?

- Isaiah 2:4
- Isaiah 11:6-9
- Isaiah 65:20-25
- Revelation 20:1-10

After 1,000 years under Jesus' perfect rule on earth, why will so many people rebel when tempted by Satan? (Jeremiah 17:9, Isaiah 53:6, Romans 7:21-25) Couldn't Jesus just have kept Satan locked up?

2. Read Revelation 20:11-15 & Matthew 24:31-46. What comes to mind when you hear the words "Judgment Day"?

3. Many people don't believe hell is a real place. What do you believe? Why does it matter?

4. What comfort and assurance can Christians find in the following verses regarding God's judgment?

- John 3:16-17
- John 5:24
- 1 John 5:11-13
- Romans 5:6-11

5. Read Revelation 20:1-7 & 22:1-5. What excites you most about heaven?

6. Spend some time as a group praying for people you know (Friends, Relatives, Acquaintances, & Neighbors) who don't have a personal relationship with Jesus. Ask God to send someone to tell them the Good News about Jesus. Ask God to show you what you need to say and/or do.

7. Discuss the following quotations:

"If sinners be damned, at least let them leap to Hell over our dead bodies. And if they perish, let them perish with our arms wrapped about their knees, imploring them to stay. If Hell must be filled, let it be filled in the teeth of our exertions, and let not one go unwarned and unprayed for." Charles Spurgeon

"My home is in Heaven. I'm just traveling through this world." Billy Graham

"I tell you, on the day of judgment people will give account for every careless word they speak..."

Matthew 12:36

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