

There would be no falling away at the end of the millennium. Matthew 24:37-41; First Corinthians 15:51-54; First Thessalonians 4:14-17; Revelation 20:3-15 & 21:1-26 & 22:1-5. The following seven events should then be expected –

(1) The raising of the bodies of the dead-in-Christ, and their meeting the Lord in the air. (2) The simultaneous raising of the bodies of the dead-in-Satan, but their remaining here on Earth while surrounding the then-empty camp of the saints then devoid even of still-living saints. (3) The immortalizing of all still-living saints, and their meeting the Lord in the air. (4) The immortalizing of the physically-undead wicked, who then remain on the Earth. (5) The final judgment here on Earth, involving the punishment of the wicked. (6) The thrusting of the wicked from off the Earth and into the Lake of Fire for ever. And (7) the descent of Christians with Christ through the air, together with Heaven, down onto the then-renewed Earth for ever.

Even the A.D. 185 Irenaeus, who knew Revelation's author the Apostle John personally, insisted that "the Son of man...fought and conquered" and "bound the strong man" Satan. For Christ did "bind the strong man, and despoiled his goods" and "tread upon the enemy's head" and "shall trample down...the dragon." He "bound [Satan] with...chains...in order that man, being set free, might return to his Lord.... The Word bound him securely...and made spoil of his goods." Indeed, even the Amillennialist Rev. Professor Dr. Anthony A. Hoekema states that "because of the binding of Satan during this present age..., the Church is conquering the nations."

Most Theologians place these "thousand years" not in Heaven but right here on Earth and before the time of Christ's Final Coming at the very end of the World. Thus Barnabas, Papias, Caius, Origen, Ambrose, Augustine, Jerome, Gregory the Great, Bede, Aquinas, Luther, Calvin, Knox, the Geneva Bible, Junius, Brightman, Cotton, the Dordt Dutch Bible, Goodwin, Poole, Vitringa, Cocceius, Matthew Henry, Jonathan Edwards, Wesley, Bengel, Newton, Brown of Haddington, Hopkins, Dwight, Faber, Thomas Scott, Adam Clarke, David Brown, Barnes, Fairbairn, Hengstenberg, the Hodges, Shedd, Warfield, Kik, Carroll, Boettner, Rushdoony, and many others.

The A.D. 300 Victorinus wrote the oldest extant commentary on Revelation. At Revelation 6:1f, he described how "preachers [were] sent forth...so that they might overcome unbelief." And on Revelation 20: "Those years in which Satan is bound, are at the first advent of Christ even to the end of the age.... He [Satan] may not keep on seducing the nations. 'The nations' signifies the Church - seeing that it [the Church] is itself being formed from them [the nations]."

Augustine declares: "The Church of Christ has everywhere increased.... Before His advent, He had not yet been desired by all nations.... He would by his grace collect, as now He does, a people so numerous that He thus fills up and repairs the blank made by the fallen angels."

James Durham comments that Revelation twenty holds out "a flourishing and good condition for...the Church Militant.... It consisteth in the...abundance of professors...embracing this Gospel, many nations...joining them[selves] to the Lord.... It continueth...a long time."

Jonathan Edwards comments there will be a "great spiritual resurrection...of the Church.... I would describe the prosperous state the Church shall be in.... The prophecies of the Old Testament...speak of the glorious times of the Gospel...in the latter days.... All countries and nations...shall be full of light.... It shall be a time of great holiness.... It will be a time of excellent order in the Church.... That will be a time of the greatest temporal prosperity.... The Scriptures everywhere represent it to be of long continuance."

Albert Barnes comments: "This chapter...pertains to the future.... Satan is to be arrested and bound for a thousand years.... This is properly the 'Millennium' - the long period when the principles of True Religion will have the ascendancy on the Earth.... Christianity would finally triumph..... The scene that is recorded here occurs after the destruction of the beast and the false-prophet...and...after the final destruction of the Papal and Mahometan powers.... The Earth would continue under a reign of righteousness through a vastly long period."

Already the A.D. 170-235 Hippolytus wrote about Revelation 20:7f as regards the loosening or unbinding of Satan at the very end of the millennium: "This unbinding of Satan does not mean that he will then enjoy a time of renewed activity. But that he and his followers will then be thrown into the fire."

Augustine wrote: "There are also two resurrections.... The first and spiritual resurrection...takes place in this life, and preserves us from coming into the second death.... Those who on the strength of this passage have suspected that 'the first resurrection' is future and bodily..., surpass the measure of credulity.... They who believe them, are called 'Chiliasts' - which we may literally reproduce by the name '[Pre-]Millennarians'...."

"We prefer proceeding to show how the passage of Scripture should be understood.... The devil is...restrained from seducing those nations which belong to Christ.... The words 'that he would not seduce the nations'...are not to be understood as indicating that afterwards he is to seduce."

Jonathan Edwards comments on the then-resurrected nations Gog and Magog: "There is nothing in the prophecy...as though the Church actually falls into their hands.... God will never suffer this." And Rev. Professor Dr. Moses Stuart commented: "The eye of hope...sees the thousand years of uninterrupted prosperity.... The setting sun of the Church on Earth is to

be as a Heaven of unclouded splendour. Peaceful and triumphant will be her latest age."

Albert Barnes comments on the way in which the millennium will end. Referring to Revelation 20:7f, he explains: "This overthrow of the enemies of God and of the Church, will be final. Satan will be 'cast into the lake of Fire and Brimstone, to be tormented day and night for ever.' The beast and the false-prophet are already there.... All the enemies that ever opposed the Church - in all forms of Paganism, Mahometanism, Popery, and delusion - will be destroyed for ever."

In the 1957 edition of his book *The Millennium*, Professor Dr. Loraine Boettner stated: "Warfield believed there will be no resurgence of evil at all at the end -- but rather that at the return of Christ, the present Kingdom...will be merged into the eternal Kingdom.... The views of such a distinguished Theologian must be given consideration.... Revelation 20:1-10 affords no real basis for believing that there is to be a final apostasy."

In his 1972 *The Future of the World*, Mathis Rissi states Revelation 30:3-7 "deals with the kingdom of demonic powers and of the dead.... Satan entices the ghostly nations of the dead.... But the Church is indestructible.... No fresh battle takes place. But rather a fire from Heaven consumes the whole ghostly array." Only this view is thoroughly consistent with the Westminster Confession 8:8 and the Westminster Larger Catechism 45f-r & 52b & 53g & 54pqr & 191c-m & 195w-a.

That will then be followed by the eighth 'millennium' (at the end of God's Great Seventh Day which has not yet terminated and which is co-extensive with the history of mankind itself, starting with man's first appearance here on Earth and enduring down to man's final judgment here on Earth). This eighth 'millennium' will never end, and its beginning will mark the end of God's Seventh Day and the commencement of God's Eighth Day or the Eternal Golden Jubilee. God's Eighth Day of eternity still to come, will bring in Heaven-on-Earth forever. For it will then be "ever morning, and never evening" - the 'Day of the Lord.'

'And the city had no need of the sun neither of the moon to shine in it. For the glory of God lightened it, and the Lamb is its light. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in its light. And the kings of the Earth bring their glory and honour into it. And its gates shall not be shut at all by day. For there shall be no night there.... They need no candle, nor sunlight. For the Lord gives them light. And they shall reign for ever and ever.'

-- Rev. Professor Emeritus Dr. Francis Nigel Lee