

Satan bound for a thousand years.

1. (1) A nameless angel comes to bind Satan with a great chain.

Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.

An angel coming down from heaven: The angel that will subdue Satan is anonymous. It is not Jesus Himself, nor is believed to be Michael or Gabriel or any other high-ranking angel.

"The final importance of Satan is perhaps indicated in the fact that it is not the Father who deals with him, nor the Christ, but only an unnamed angel." (L. Morris)

An angel coming down from heaven: This is a dramatic declaration that Satan is *not* God's opposite or equal; and that God could easily stop Satan's activity at any time. Yet God allows Satan to continue, because even in his evil, he indirectly serves the purposes of God.

2. (2-3) Satan is imprisoned for 1,000 years.

He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is *the* Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while.

Laid hold... bound him... cast him... shut him up... set a seal on him: Satan tried to imprison Jesus in a tomb, but couldn't. Here, God has no problem restraining Satan, and this incarceration is not for punishment, but restraint. By implication, Satan's demonic armies are also restrained and imprisoned.

Some people ask, "What kind of chain can hold the devil?" We don't know, but God can fashion a chain for that exact purpose. We know that right now there are demonic spirits who are imprisoned and chained (**Jude 6**). If God can chain them now, He can chain Satan for 1,000 years.

"One very important detail is to notice that the conquest of Satan and his powers does not come by any human effort." (Barnhouse)

That he should deceive the nations no more: This shows us Satan's main mode of attack is revealed. Satan is a deceiver, so the most potent defense and weapon against Satan is the truth of God's Word.

Since Satan's work of deception continues today, we know that he is not bound in the way that this passage describes. We know that Satan was not bound at the finished work of Jesus on the cross, at the resurrection, or at the founding of the church. We know this because Peter said that Satan was free to walk about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour ([1 Peter 5:8](#)).

Till the thousand years were finished: This thousand-year period is often known as the *Millennium*. Through church history, there has been many different ways of understanding the Millennium.

A. The Bible speaks powerfully to other aspects of the millennial earth. Tragically, the Church through history has often ignored or denied the promise of the millennial reign of Jesus Christ. The early church until Augustine almost universally believed in an earthly, historical reign of Jesus, initiated by His return. Tyconius (in the late 300's) was the first to influentially champion a spiritualized interpretation, saying that this Millennium is *now* (*amillennialism*) and must be understood as a *spiritual* reign of Jesus, not a literal reign. His view was adopted by Augustine, the Roman Catholic Church and most Reformation theologians.

B. Growing out of amillennialism is the doctrine of postmillennialism, saying the millennium will happen in this age, before Jesus' return – but that the church will bring it to pass. Yet the clear teaching of the Bible isn't amillennialism or postmillennialism, but what is called premillennialism – the teaching that Jesus Christ will return to this earth before the millennial earth, and He will establish and govern it directly.

C. There is no need to say that Satan is only bound in a spiritual sense, and Jesus only rules in a spiritual sense. When we consider the rest of the Scriptures, the earthly reign of Christ and His people on this earth is plainly taught in the Old and New Testaments. In the Old Testament, we see it in [Psalm 72](#), [Isaiah 2:2-4](#), [Isaiah 11:4-9](#), [Jeremiah 23:5-6](#), and in many, many more passages. In the New Testament we see it in [Luke 1:32-33](#), [Matthew 5:18](#), [Luke 19:12-27](#), among other passages. All in all, there are more than 400 verses in more than 20 different passages in the Old Testament which deal with this time when Jesus Christ will rule and reign personally over planet earth.

D. Who will be on the earth in the Millennium? Even after the rapture and the vast judgments of the Great Tribulation, there will be many people left on earth. After Jesus returns in glory, He will judge those who survive the Great Tribulation in the judgment of the nations ([Matthew 25:31-46](#)). This is not a judgment unto salvation, but a judgment of moral worthiness, and entrance into the Millennial Kingdom of Jesus. The unworthy will be sent into eternal damnation, and the worthy will be allowed in Jesus' Millennial Kingdom.

Till the thousand years were finished: Some of what we know of the Millennium from other passages of Scripture.

-During the Millennium, Israel will be the superpower of the world, the leading nation in all the earth, and the center of Israel will be *the mountain of the LORD's house* – the temple mount, which will be the "capital" of the government of the

Messiah. *All nations shall flow* to the “capital” of Jesus’ government ([Isaiah 2:1-3](#), [Ezekiel 17:22-24](#)).

-During the Millennium, the citizens of earth will acknowledge and submit to the Lordship of Jesus. It will be a time of perfectly administrated enforced righteousness on this earth ([Isaiah 2:1-5](#)).

-During the Millennium, there will be no more war. There will still be conflicts between nations and individuals, but they will be justly and decisively resolved by the Messiah and those who reign with Him ([Isaiah 2:1-5](#)). It isn’t the reign of the Messiah itself that will change the heart of man. Citizens of earth will still need to trust in Jesus and in His work on their behalf for their personal salvation during the millennium. But war and armed conflict will not be tolerated.

-During the Millennium, the way animals relate to each other and to humans will be transformed. A little child will be safe and able to lead a wolf or a leopard or a young lion or a bear. Even the danger of predators like cobras and vipers will be gone. In [Genesis 9:2-3](#), the LORD gave Noah, and all mankind after him, the permission to eat meat. At the same time, the LORD put the *dread* of man in animals so they would not be effortless prey for humans. Now, in the reign of the Messiah, that is reversed. For this reason, many think that in the reign of the Messiah (the Millennium) humans will return to being vegetarians, as it seems they were before [Genesis 9:2-3](#) ([Isaiah 11:6-9](#)).

-During the Millennium, King David will have a prominent place in the millennial earth, ruling over Israel ([Isaiah 55:3-5](#), [Jeremiah 30:4-11](#), [Ezekiel 34:23-31](#), [Ezekiel 37:21-28](#), [Hosea 3:5](#)).

-During the Millennium, there will be blessing and security for national Israel ([Amos 9:11-15](#)).

-The Millennium will be a time of purity and devotion to God ([Zechariah 13:1-9](#)).

-During the Millennium, there will be a rebuilt temple and restored temple service on the earth as a memorial of God’s work in the past. ([Ezekiel 40-48](#), [Ezekiel 37:26-28](#), [Amos 9:11](#), [Ezekiel 20:39-44](#)).

-During the Millennium, saints in their resurrected state will be given responsibility in the Millennial Earth according to their faithful service ([Luke 19:11-27](#), [Revelation 20:4-6](#), [Revelation 2:26-28](#); [3:12,22](#), [1 Corinthians 6:2-3](#)).

Thousand years: Is it a literal 1,000 years? We should take a number literally *unless* there is clear reason or evidence to do otherwise. We should take

this **thousand years** literally, because God has an important work to accomplish during the Millennium.

-The Millennium is important because it will demonstrate Jesus' victory and worthiness to rule the nations.

-The Millennium is important because it will reveal the depths of man's rebellious nature in a perfect environment. Some people seem to believe that man is basically good, and deep down he really *wants* God's righteous rule. Many believe that man is really innocent, and corrupted only by a bad environment. The Millennium will answer these questions *before* the great judgment ([Revelation 20:11-15](#)).

-The Millennium is important because it will display the eternal depravity of Satan, who continues his evil as soon as he is released from his incarceration.

-The Millennium is important because it will show the invulnerability of the city of God and God's new order.