

## Behold | Sermons through the Revelation

Sermon #42 | Revelation 20:4-7 | Let the Kingdom Begin

### Revelation 20:4-6 | The Beginning of the Kingdom

- Verse 4 – Two Groups:
  - A group of judges on thrones. These judges are two groups of people:
    - The Apostles will judge the tribes of Israel. See Matthew 19:28 (note only 12 thrones).
    - The faithful Jews will judge the nations.
      - 1 Corinthians 6:2. Though the **saints** are often confused to be “all believers,” one should note that the *church* is distinct from Israel and has a *heavenly* not *earthly* role. One should also note that the Corinthian church was comprised chiefly of Jews, and this affects its interpretation throughout the book.
      - If we let scripture interpret itself, Daniel 7:22 and 27 solidify that the Jewish faithful will have judgment Kingdom days.
  - A group of martyrs living again.
    - These resurrected martyrs do not *judge* but they *reign*. To reign is to *be in the place of the King*. In some manner they must hold the authority of the King.
    - As above, in this category also, those who reign with Him are most often taken to be “all Christians.” For example, Strong’s Enhanced Lexicon says, “of the reign of Christians in the millennium” (Strong’s Greek #936).
    - This verse is clear that it is *martyrs* that are given this privilege.
    - Compare Revelation 2:26, 3:21, and 2 Timothy 2:12.
  - Luke 12:16-31 is a parable, and thus is about the Kingdom of God. Verse 20 gives insight into the future judgment of the nations by the faithful Jews.
- Verse 5 – The First Resurrection.
  - Note that after verse 4, two groups of people have been resurrected: the saints who will judge and the martyrs who will reign.

- So **the rest of the dead** are all those not included in these two groups.
- However, prior to *any* of this taking place, the **dead in Christ** will have been raised at the rapture (1 Thess. 4:13-18). This rapture resurrection is out of the subject matter of the book of Revelation and so not included here. All of the book of Revelation (100%) is post-rapture.
- This **first resurrection** was called by Jesus the **resurrection of the just** (Luke 14:14).
- Verse 6 – The Blessing of the first resurrection.
  - Those in this resurrection are **blessed and holy** (i.e.: *set apart*).
  - Those in this resurrection avoid the **second death**, which is the Lake of Fire (see Rev. 21:8).
  - They **shall be priests** and they **shall reign with him a thousand years**. It is unclear whether this is broken into the previously discussed two groups of judges and rulers of verse 4, but the grammar fits that context. Revelation 1:6 has Kings and priests, in reverse order.

### How to Miss Both the First Resurrection and the Second Death

- The way to miss the first resurrection:
  - The bad way: worship the beast and his image.
  - The good way: during the age of grace, accept the free-grace offer of God through Jesus Christ. Become a believer today! Those who receive this gift bypass both the first resurrection and the second death.
- The way to miss the second death if you don’t take the free-grace offer of salvation before the offer ends:
  - Don’t take the mark of the beast nor worship his image.
  - Place yourself under the obligations of Israel and be faithful to the end.
- Note: being faithful to the obligations of Israel and not worshiping the beast would do nothing today, because there is only one way of salvation being offered today, and that is the free-grace offer.
- We rejoice that we have an offer of salvation. We rejoice that *whatever* our role will be in the coming Kingdom, we will be with the Lord. We rejoice that we live in the best time ever to find salvation.