



YES, NO AND MAYBE

1. I'm more patient than the people sitting beside me.
2. I don't like being part of a court case.
3. God encourages the devil to gather as many followers as he can to attack us.
4. One day, I'll get to judge God.
5. My name is listed in the Lamb's Book of Life right now.

THE THOUSAND YEARS

➤ READ Revelation 20 (NIV)

And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain. 2 He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. 3 He threw him into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him, to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended. After that, he must be set free for a short time.

4 I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony about Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years. 5 (The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.) This is the first resurrection. 6 Blessed and holy are those who share in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years.

7 When the thousand years are over, Satan will be released from his prison 8 and will go out to deceive the nations in the four corners of the earth—Gog and Magog—and to gather them for battle. In number they are like the sand on the seashore. 9 They marched across the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of God's people, the city he loves. But fire came down from heaven and devoured them. 10 And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

11 Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. The earth and the heavens fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. 12 And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. 13 The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what they had done. 14 Then death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. 15 Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire.

» **Vs. 1: The key** - This shows that Heaven has complete control of events. The dragon will be unable to avoid being cast into the pit.

• **The Abyss** - Greek: *abussos*. The same word used in Gen. 1:2 to describe the earth before creation. The earth will be utterly depopulated at the second coming of Christ. According to ch. 19:19–21 the wicked are all destroyed in connection with the 2nd coming. At the same time the righteous are “caught up ... in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air” (1 Thess. 4:17).

« **In what ways do you see this chapter connecting to the creation story in Genesis 1?**

» **Vs. 2: The dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan-** The dragon is the primeval beast who made war on the saints but was defeated by Michael and his angels in the great war in heaven (12:7–8). The serpent was the deceiver of Eden who poured water from his mouth

DIG DEEPER



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NOTES

DIG DEEPER...CONTINUED

to sweep away the woman who had given birth to the Messiah (12:15). The Devil was the accuser or slanderer of the saints who was intent on deceiving the faithful before the end (12:12). All these roles of the evil one are terminated here by the work Christ has already accomplished on the cross (Rom. 8:34; Rev. 12:9). In a sense, this is the reversal of the fall of Genesis 3.

« How is this a reversal of the fall of mankind in the Garden of Eden?

» **Vs. 3: After that, he must be set free for a short time** - How long this “short” time will be, we are not informed. It will be time enough for Satan to organize the resurrected wicked for an assault upon the New Jerusalem.

« What does it say about God that he would give the devil time to gather his reinforcements?

» **Vs. 4: Authority to judge** - Gr. krima “sentence,” “verdict,” “a decision rendered.” Here krima seems to mean the authority to pass sentence. The saints sit upon thrones, which fact indicates that they are the ones who will pronounce sentence. The passage is doubtless an allusion to Dan. 7:22, where the prophet notes that “judgment was given to the saints of the most High.” Paul said, “Or do you not know that the Lord’s people will judge the world?...Do you not know that we will judge angels?” (1 Cor. 6:2, 3). The work of judgment will doubtless involve a careful investigation of the records of evil men, so that every man will be convinced of the justice of God in the destruction of the wicked.

« Why do you think God gives us authority to judge at the ultimate case between good and evil?

» **Vs. 5: The rest of the dead** - This obviously refers to the wicked dead, those who from the beginning of time have gone into Christless graves and those who have perished at the second coming of Christ. This is clear from the fact that all the righteous dead arose in the first resurrection. Therefore “the rest of the dead” must refer to the wicked dead (see on v. 2).

» **Vs. 6: Second death** - This is, the death that comes to the wicked after their resurrection at the close of the 1000 years (v. 14; ch. 21:8). The first death is the death that comes to all (1 Cor. 15:22; Heb. 9:27). The “second death” is the exact opposite of an endless life under torture, which some teach will be the fate of the wicked (see on Matt. 25:41).

» **Vs. 8: Gog and Magog** - From Ezekiel 38:2. Gog and Magog most likely represent archetypical enemies, symbolic of all that is hostile to God’s faithful saints. This attack is not from specific nations to the north but innumerable hordes from all corners of the earth

» **Vs. 9: The city he loves** - This is the New Jerusalem (ch. 21:10). One of the significant events following the close of the 1000 years is the descent of Christ, the saints, and the Holy City. The narrative is told with extreme brevity, but the sequence of events is clear when the entire context is examined.

« Why do you think God allows all the wicked of all time to awaken and attack Him?

» **Vs. 11: The earth and the heavens fled from his presence, and there was no place for them** - A familiar (biblical) way of referring to the whole universe (see verse 21:1, which speaks of a new universe replacing the old one). The statement “no place for them” means that they disappeared. They were never seen again (see also 12:8).

« What are you looking forward to in the new heavens and earth?

» **Vs. 13: The sea gave up the dead that were in it** - Those who had died at sea were not thought of as going to Sheol, the world of the dead, but as remaining there in the depths of the water. In some Jewish circles resurrection was thought of as possible only for those buried on dry land.

» **Vs. 14: Death and Hades** - Their being cast into the lake of fire represents an end of death and of the abode of the dead. Never will they have part in the new earth; they are mortal phenomena that belong only to this world. Death is the final enemy to be destroyed (1 Cor. 15:26, 53–55).

« Why do you think people put limits on God?

» **Vs. 12, 15: Another book...The Book of Life** - There are books that are opened at the final judgment: the first book is believed to be the Book of Deeds. Note in verse 15 that the final verdict is not based on the Book of Deeds, or any other book other than The Book of Life.

« What does it say about God that his final judgment rests fully on whether your name is in the Lamb’s Book of Life? How do you get listed in that book?



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MY PRAYER...

1. How much do I risk my life with the understanding that God is more powerful than the devil?
2. What do I need to do to keep my name in the Book of Life?
3. What new aspect of God’s character does He want me to know?