

Rev. 20:7-21:8, End of the Chiasm
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Overview

19:1-21:8 is chiastic. The ends and middle summarize the blessings declared earlier in the book (19:9 <-- 16:15, rapture; 20:6 <-- 14:13 death; 21:7 <-- 1:3 obedience)

1. "I Heard" (rest: "saw")	19:1-5, 6-10	21:3-8
2. Entry of Groom...	19:11-16	
3. ... and Bride		21:1-2
4. Lake for the Beast...	19:17-18, 19-21	
5. ...and his Armies		20:11, 12-15
6. Satan Imprisoned...	20:1-3	
7. ...and put in Lake		20:7-10
8. Millennium	20:4-6	

A. 20:7-10, Satan to the Lake of Fire

Corresponds chiastically to 20:1-3 in which he is imprisoned.

1. What will happen?

- a) Satan is released. (Does not escape. His return is with the full permission of God.)
- b) He leads Gog and Magog in battle against Jerusalem
 - 1) Reference is to Ezek. 38-39
 - 2) Just as this follows the Millennium, that follows the restoration of Israel (Ezek. 37), in keeping with the identification of the two.
- c) Defeat by fire from heaven (cf. Ezek. 38:22; 39:6).
- d) Satan is cast into the lake of fire with his emissaries.

2. What does it mean?

- a) The inherent sinfulness of humanity. Even after 1000 years of perfect rule by Jesus Christ, people are still willing to follow Satan at the drop of a hat. Provides the final answer to those who seek to blame their behavior on their environment. (Rom. 3:19, process of stopping every mouth in preparation for the judgment of the GWT)
- b) The compatibility of apparent danger with God's full protection for his saints. Satan sometimes deceives us into thinking that any difficulty or threat of danger in our lives means that God has abandoned us. God may permit Satan to move against his people--sometimes for their correction and instruction, sometimes to demonstrate his power to a watching universe. That appears to be the motive here (Ezek. 38:16, 23; 39:21). Note--he will not suffer our foot to be moved. No weapon formed against us shall prosper.
- c) His complete control over Satan. Satan is NOT a rival God. The end of history is NOT in question. Eastern religions sometimes

posit equally balanced Ying and Yang; the dark and light sides of the force; a great dualism between good and evil. Note here:

- 1) Satan must be released before he can do anything.
 - 2) When he does act, it is only as God's deputy. With v.8 (Satan "shall go out to deceive the nations"), cf. Ezek. 38:4, where God says to Gog and Magog, "I will bring thee forth."
 - 3) His final doom is sure: consigned to the lake of fire with the beast and the false prophet.
3. [Not in sermon] Two other portions confirm the order here, that Satan's last offensive against the Lord's people FOLLOWS the Millennium.
- a) Payne compares 11:17-18, the song of the 24 elders at the 7th trumpet:
 - 1) 17 We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because
 - a> thou hast taken to thee thy great power, *perfect; summary of what follows?*
 - b> and hast reigned. *Millennium*
 - c> 18 And the nations were angry, *rebellion of 20:7-9a*
 - d> and thy wrath is come, *final victory, 20:9b*
 - e> and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, *GWT summary; chronological order seems to be reversed here*
 - 1> and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; *New Jerusalem*
 - 2> and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth. *lake of fire at GWT?*
 - 2) Technical note: This use of the perfect to introduce a chain of aorists has other antecedents: see file perfaor.out, and in particular:
 - a> Mk 9:13 ALLA LEGW UMIN OTI
 - 1> perf: KAI JLIAS *ELJLUQEN,
 - 2> aor: KAI *EPOIJSAN AUTW OSA JQELON, ...
 - b> Jn 3:19 9 AUTJ DE ESTIN J KRISIS OTI
 - 1> perf: TO FWS *ELJLUQEN EIS TON KOSMON
 - 2> aor: KAI *JGAPJSAN OI ANQRWPOI MALLON TO SKOTOS J TO FWS:
 - c> Jn 17:8 OTI
 - 1> perf: TA RJMATA A EDWKAS MOI *DEDWKA AUTOIS,
 - 2> aor: KAI AUTOI *ELABON
 - 3> aor: KAI *EGNWSAN ALJQWS OTI PARA SOU EXJLQON,
 - 4> aor: KAI *EPISTEUSAN OTI SU ME APESTEILAS.
 - d> Jn 17:14
 - 1> perf: EGW *DEDWKA AUTOIS TON LOGON SOU
 - 2> aor: KAI O KOSMOS *EMISJSEN AUTOUS, OTI OUK EISIN EK TOU KOSMOU KAQWS EGW OUK EIMI EK TOU KOSMOU.
 - e> Summary: Jn 18:20

- 1> perf: EGW PARRJSIA *LELALJKA TW KOSMW,
- 2> aor: EGW PANTOTE *EDIDAXA EN SUNAGWGJ KAI EN TW IERW,
OPOU PANTES OI IOUDAIOI SUNERCONTAI,
- 3> aor: KAI EN KRUPTW ELALJSA OUDEN.
- f> Jn 20:18 ERCETAI MARIAM J MAGDALJNJ AGGELLOUSA TOIS
MAQJTAIS OTI
 - 1> perf: *EWRKA TON KURION,
 - 2> aor: KAI TAUTA *EIPEN AUTJ.
- g> Acts 22:15 ESJ MARTUS AUTW PROS PANTAS ANQRWPOUS WN
*EWRKAS KAI *JKOUSAS.
- h> 1Cor 15:4,5 PAREDWKA GAR UMIN EN PRWTOIS, O KAI
PARELABON,
 - 1> aor: OTI CRISTOS APEQANEN UPER TWN AMARTIWN JMW N KATA
TAS GRAFAS
 - 2> aor: KAI OTI ETAFJ
 - 3> perf: KAI OTI *EGJGERTAI TJ JMERA TJ TRITJ KATA TAS
GRAFAS
 - 4> aor: KAI OTI *WFQJ KJFA EITA TOIS DWDEKA:
- i> Jas 1:24
 - 1> aor: KATENOJSEN GAR EAUTON
 - 2> perf: KAI *APELJLUQEN
 - 3> aor: KAI EUQEWS *EPELAQETO OPOIOS JN.
- j> 1Jn 1:1 O JN AP ARCJS,
 - 1> perf: O AKJKOAMEN,
 - 2> perf: O *EWRKAMEN TOIS OFQALMOIS JMW N,
 - 3> aor: O *EQEASAMEQA
 - 4> aor: KAI AI CEIRES JMW N *EYJLAFJSAN PERI TOU LOGOU
TJS ZWJS-
- k> Rev 3:3 MNJMONEUE OUN PWS *EILJFAS KAI *JKOUSAS KAI
TJREI KAI METANOJSON.
 - l> Rev 8:5
 - 1> perf: KAI *EILJFEN O AGGELOS TON LIBANWTON
 - 2> aor: KAI *EGEMISEN AUTON EK TOU PUROS TOU
QUSIASTJRIOU
 - 3> aor: KAI *EBALEN EIS TJN GJN,
 - 4> aor: KAI *EGENONTO BRONTAI KAI FWNAI KAI ASTRAPAI KAI
SEISMOS.
- m> Rev 11:17-18 EUCARISTOUMEN SOI, KURIE O QEOS O
PANTOKRATWR, O WN KAI O JN, OTI
 - 1> perf: *EILJFAS TJN DUNAMIN SOU TJN MEGALJN
 - 2> aor: KAI *EBASILEUSAS.
 - 3> aor: kai ta eqnh *wrgisqhsan
 - 4> aor: kai *hlqen h orgh sou
- n> Rev 18:3
 - 1> perf: OTI EK TOU OINOY TOU QUMOU TJS PORNEIAS AUTJS
*PEPWKASI PANTA TA EQNJ
 - 2> aor: KAI OI BASILEIS TJS GJS MET AUTJS *EPORNEUSAN
 - 3> aor: KAI OI EMPOROI TJS GJS EK TJS DUNAMEWS TOU
STRJNOUS AUTJS EPLOUTJSAN.

b) Drawn from Ezek 38-39

- 1) Evidence (following Payne, p. 619)
 - a> Names Gog and Magog: Ezek. 38:2

Elsewhere, these names never appear together.

- 1> Gog is elsewhere only at 1 Chron. 5:4, as a descendant of Reuben.
- 2> Magog appears twice, Gen 10:2 // 1 Chr 1:5, as descendant of Japheth.
- b> "Four quarters": 38:4-6 identify four groups of nations
- c> "number ... as ... sand": 38:4,15, "great company," "mighty army"
- d> attack "the beloved city": 38:12, "the navel of the land" (see Feinberg for rabbinic quotations)
- e> judgment by fire from heaven: 38:22; 39:6
- f> The ascription of the army to Satan in Rev. and to God in Ezek is on a par with the two accounts of how David numbered the people (2 Sam. 24:1; 1 Chron 21:1).

- 2) Implications: Ezek 38-39 FOLLOW the description of Israel's millennial restoration in ch. 37, and are much more closely linked with it than they are with ch. 40-48 (which as one of the three "Visions of God" are a distinct unit). (The birds in 39:17 appeared BEFORE the Millennium in Rev. 19:17ff, but similar invitations in Isa. 56:9 and Jer. 12:9 suggest this may be used as a common motif rather than a direct pointer to a specific incident.)

B. 20:11-15, Beast's Armies to the Lake of Fire (2x)

Corresponds to 29:17-21, the defeat of the beast and his armies. There, the beast was sent into the lake and his armies into the grave; here the graves are emptied into the lake of fire.

Finishes off the rebels. Ch. 12 started with Satan, followed in 13 by the two beasts and their followers. The beasts go first into the lake in 19:20, followed by Satan in 20:10 and now their followers.

Encompasses two visions (John twice says, "I saw").

1. 11, The Judge

- a) His fearfulness depicted by the inability even of the inanimate creation to stand before him. Recall the common image of fear in nightmares: the desire to run away from the pursuing horror. Here God is so dreadful that even the elements flee before him. (How woefully we understate the fearfulness of God!)

Why do they flee? Because they are contaminated with the sin of our race. Cf. Rom. 8:18-22. The creation is now in "the bondage of corruption" (8:21).

- b) Other references to this event, both of which show the implication for humans: if the elements cannot stand before him, much less can sinful people hope to defend themselves at such a time?
 - 1) Rev. 6:14-17
 - 2) 2 Pet. 3:10,11

2. 12, The Judgment

- a) The subjects: "the dead." May be only unbelievers here, since this is "the second resurrection," reserved for the unfaithful (vv. 4-6). But if only martyrs are raised in 4, may be the same as Matt. 25:31ff. Not distinctly stated. Without question, includes the armies of the beast who were slain in 19:21.
- b) The standard: "the books ... the book of life."
 - 1) The books contain the record of their works (12b).
 - 2) The book of life is the book of election (3:5; 13:8; 17:8; 21:27; cf. Php. 4:3). Does not prove that there are believers here--only as an assurance that the book of life stands guard between God's elect and his judgment.
- c) The outcome: death and hell emptied into the lake of fire. Appears to imply that their entire contents are thus disposed of.

C. 21:1-2, Entry of the Bride

Corresponds to 19:11-16, the appearance of the Groom.

1. Replacement of the old heaven and earth, which had fled at the appearance of the Lord God. Anticipated by Isaiah (65:17; 66:22).
2. The Bride, New Jerusalem, makes her entry. We shall see her in more detail in the next section, after the conclusion of this chiasm.

D. 21:3-8, Closing Announcement (v.7, "Blessed")

Corresponds to 19:1-10, the two "I heard" paragraphs with which this overall section begins. Here (as there) the first is "from heaven", speaking about God, but the second is from the throne, the voice of God himself.

1. 3-4, Voice from Heaven:

- a) 3, God's tabernacle with them and the relation of people to God is drawn from Ezek. 37:27, which in turn goes back to Lev. 26:11-12, the climax of the blessings if Israel would keep God's laws (26:3). (The counterpart, if they would not, yields the four plagues around which Jeremiah and Ezekiel build their oracles.)
- b) 4, wiping away of tears from eyes is necessary because before God's people did obey, they had to pass through disobedience and chastisement. That is all past now.

2. 5-8, Voice of God from the throne.

John distinguishes three sayings.

- a) 5a, "Behold, I make all things new." How simple, yet all-encompassing. True now in microcosm w.r.t. salvation; one day it will be true of the entire world.
 - 1) "I make"--his sovereignty
 - 2) "all things"--nothing left out.
 - 3) "new"--the surpassing quality of his work.

- b) 5b, "Write, for these words are faithful and true." He is not a God who hides himself, but wants his people to know of his power.

- c) 6-8 itself encompasses three sentences.
 - 1) 6a, MT reads, "The Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, is accomplished." Not a title for Christ, but God's statement that the entire project is completed, the show is done. What he started "in the beginning" has come to a close. He has executed his plan, and now rests in his work.

 - 2) 6b, his compassion for his suffering creatures. He is not like a child setting up a train set, who does not cry if the train falls onto a model house, and in a perverse moment might even put a figure on the tracks and run over it. In the midst of his great project he cares for those who will acknowledge their thirst. He doesn't have to be this way---but he is.

 - 3) 7-8, rounds out the letters to the seven churches. Each of those offered a promise to those who "overcome." Here is the final such promise, balanced with the alternative.
 - a> Promise to the overcomer: an even closer relation than 21:3. That promised the relation of God and people; this promises the relation of God and son!

 - b> Threat to the others: the lake of fire. No room for a middle ground. You are either a victor or damned. The characteristics he spells out roughly follow the ten commandments, and also reflect the choices of professed Christians who fell away under persecution.
 - 1> The first two reflect the first table of the law, our attitude toward God.
 - a: "fearful," used in the NT elsewhere only of the disciples' fear while the Lord slept in the back of the boat (Matt. 8:26; Mark 4:40).
 - b: "unbelieving," the root cause of fear, as with the disciples.

 - 2> MT adds "sinners," which would be a pivot term between the two, much more general than the other words.

 - 3> The last go through the second table of the law:

- a: "Abominable," LXX reflex *t(b)*, prominent in Lev. 18 of forbidden degrees of marriage; also of infant sacrifice (Lev. 18:21; 2 Kings 16:3). Perhaps reflects V, distortion of family values. Or pollution through idolatry such as emperor worship, Hos. 9:10.
- b: "Murderers," VI
- c: "Whoremongers," VII
- d: "Sorcerers," lit. "pharmacists." Close association between drugs and demonism in the first century (as now!). Position in this list suggests it be linked with stealing (VIII), as in fact drug dealing is today! Reference to the use of magic to enrich oneself?
- e: "Idolaters," II, or (via Col. 3:5) covetousness, X
- f: Liars, IX