

# CHAPTER 20

## INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION 20

This chapter contains the binding of Satan, the saints' thousand years' reign with Christ, the loosing of Satan again, the destruction of him, and the Gog and Magog army, and the last judgment: the angel that is to bind Satan is described by his descent from heaven; by his having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand; and by the use he made of them, laying hold on Satan, binding him, casting him into the bottomless pit, and then shutting it up, and setting a seal on him; by all which he will be prevented from deceiving the nations for the space of a thousand years, ([Revelation 20:1-3](#)). After this thrones are seen, with persons on them, to whom judgment is given; who are said to be such as had been martyrs for Jesus, and had not worshipped the beast, or professed his religion; whose happiness is represented by living and reigning with Christ a thousand years, when others will not; the second death will have no power on them; they will be the priests of God, and Christ, and reign with him during the said term, having a part in the first resurrection, ([Revelation 20:4-6](#)). At the expiration of which term Satan will be loosed, and go out of prison, deceive the nations, and gather Gog and Magog to battle; who, being exceeding numerous, will cover the breadth of the earth, encompass the camp and city of the saints, when fire will come down from heaven and destroy them, and Satan will be cast into the lake of fire, where the beast and false prophet are, and be tormented for ever and ever, ([Revelation 20:7-10](#)). And next an account is given of the general Judgment; and the judge is described by the throne he sat on, a white cloud, and by his majesty, which is such, that the heavens and the earth flee from before him, ([Revelation 20:11](#)). And next the persons judged are described by their common state, the dead; by their age or condition, great and small, and by their position, standing before God; and then an account of the procedure, or rule of judgment; the books are opened, and the execution of judgment according to what is found in the books, ([Revelation 20:12](#)) in order to which the sea, death, and the grave, give up the dead in them, and the two last are cast into the lake, and with them those who are not in the book of life, ([Revelation 20:13,14](#)).

**Ver. 1.** *And I saw an angel come down from heaven*, etc.] All Christ's enemies, and Satan's instruments being removed, the devil is left alone, and only stands in the way of Christ's kingdom; and what will be done to him, and how he will be in the issue disposed of, this vision gives an account: by the "angel" John saw, is not to be understood Constantine the great; for though he is the man child that was taken up to God, and his throne, being advanced to the empire, yet he cannot, with that propriety, be said to come down from heaven; and though he vanquished the Heathen emperors, in which the dragon presided, and cast Paganism out of the empire, by which the devil ruled in it, yet the binding of Satan is another kind of work, and seems too great for him; and besides, did not take place in his time, as will be seen hereafter: nor is an apostle, or a minister of the Gospel intended; such are indeed called angels in this book, and may be said to come down from heaven, because they have their commission from thence; and particularly the apostles had the keys of the kingdom of heaven, but not the key of the bottomless pit; and a chain and system of Gospel truths, which they made good use of for the establishing of Christ's kingdom, and weakening of Satan's, but not such a chain as is here meant; and they had the power of binding and loosing, or of declaring things lawful or unlawful, but not of binding and loosing of Satan; nor was he bound in the apostolic age: nor is one of the ministering spirits, or a deputation of angels designed; for though Christ will be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, and will make use of them, both to gather together his elect, and to cast the wicked into the lake of fire, yet not to bind Satan; but the Lord Jesus Christ himself is this angel, who is the angel of God's presence, and of the covenant; and who is in this book called an angel, (<sup>6612</sup> Revelation 7:2 10:1) to whom all the characters here well agree, and to whom the work of binding Satan most properly belongs; for who so fit to do it, or so capable of it, as the seed of the woman, that has bruised serpent's head, or as the Son of God, who was manifested to destroy the works of the devil, yea, to destroy him himself; and who dispossessed multitudes of devils from the bodies of men, and is the strong man armed that dislodges Satan from the souls of men, and is the same with Michael, who drove him from heaven, and cast him out from thence before, (<sup>6613</sup> Revelation 12:7,8). And his coming down from heaven is not to be understood of his incarnation, or of his coming from thence by the assumption of human nature; for Satan was not bound by him then, as will be seen hereafter; but of his second coming, which will be from heaven, where he now is, and will be local, visible, and personal: of no other coming of his does this book speak, as seen by John,

or as future; nor will the order of this vision, after the ruin of the beast and false prophet, admit of any other.

*Having the key of the bottomless pit:* the abyss or deep, the same out of which the beast ascended, (<sup>610B</sup>Revelation 11:7 17:8). And the key of this becomes no hand so well as his who has the keys of hell and death, (<sup>610B</sup>Revelation 1:18) who has all power in heaven and in earth, and has the power of hell, of opening and shutting it at his pleasure, which is signified by this phrase; (see <sup>610B</sup>Revelation 9:1). The Ethiopic version reads, “the key of the sun”, where some have thought hell to be; and yet the same version renders the word, the deep, in (<sup>610B</sup>Revelation 20:3).

*And a great chain in his hand;* the key in one hand, and the chain in another; by which last is meant, not any material chain, with which spirits cannot be bound, nor indeed sometimes bodies possessed by evil spirits, (<sup>610B</sup>Mark 5:3,4) but the almighty power of Christ, which he will now display in binding Satan faster and closer than ever.

Ver. 2 *And he laid hold on the dragon*, etc.] By whom is meant not Paganism, for that was destroyed in the Roman empire under the sixth seal, and was the consequence of the war between Michael and his angels, and the dragon and his; and before this time it will be destroyed in other parts under the sixth and seventh vials, when the kings of the earth, being gathered together at Armageddon, will be slain, and the cities of the nations will fall, not only Papal, but Pagan, and Mahometan; and what will not will be converted, for before this time the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of Christ: but the devil himself is intended, so called, partly because of his great power, authority, and cruelty he has exercised in the world; and because of the venom and poison of idolatry, superstition, false doctrine, and worship, with which he has infected the inhabitants of it.

*That old serpent;* so called with respect to his cunning and subtlety, as well as his antiquity, being from the beginning of the creation, and having as early beguiled our first parents;

*which is the devil and Satan;* the accuser of God and men, and the adversary of them both. The Complutensian edition and Syriac version add, “which deceiveth the whole world”; and the Arabic version, “the deceiver of the whole world”; which seems to be taken out of (<sup>610B</sup>Revelation 12:9), (see Gill on “<sup>610B</sup>Revelation 12:9”). Him Christ “laid hold on”, and whom he held fast, as the word signifies: Christ will now take him, apprehend

him, and detain him, as his prisoner; in the wilderness, Satan only felt the dint of his sword, the written word of God, and was obliged to leave him: but now he will feel the weight of his hand, and the lighting down of his arm, with the indignation of his anger; in the agony or conflict with him in the garden, he was conquered by prayer; and on the cross Christ destroyed him through death, but now he will be seized by his power, and crushed under his hand.

*And bound him a thousand years*, with the great chain he had in his hand: the devil is in chains now, is under the power of divine Providence, and can do nothing without divine permission; but this chain is long, and he appears oftentimes to have great liberty, and ranges about the air and earth, and does much mischief; but now he will be so bound by the power of Christ over him, that he will not be able to stir hand or foot, to disturb the saints, or deceive the nations, whether with false worship, and false doctrine, or by stirring them up to persecute the saints. So of the devil, Asmodeus, it is said in the Apocrypha,

“And Raphael was sent to heal them both, that is, to scale away the whiteness of Tobit's eyes, and to give Sara the daughter of Raguel for a wife to Tobias the son of Tobit; and to bind Asmodeus the evil spirit; because she belonged to Tobias by right of inheritance. The selfsame time came Tobit home, and entered into his house, and Sara the daughter of Raguel came down from her upper chamber.” (Tobit 3:17)

that the angel Raphael, *whrsa* “bound him”. The space of a thousand years is not a certain number for an uncertain, or a large and indeterminate space of time, as in (~~490B~~ Psalm 90:4 105:8) these years are to be taken, not indefinitely, but definitely, for just this number of years exactly, as appears from their having the article prefixed to them; and are called afterwards, no less than four times, *τα χιλια ετη*, “the thousand years”, or these thousand years, (~~490B~~ Revelation 20:3-5,7) and from the things which are attributed to the beginning and ending of these years, which fix the epoch, and period of them; as the binding of Satan, when they begin, and the loosing of him when they end, as well as the reign of the saints with Christ during the whole time; to which may be added, the resurrection of the saints at the commencement of them, and the resurrection of the wicked at the close: but the great question is, whether they are begun or not? if they are begun, when they began; and if not, when they will. Some think that

they began either at the birth of Christ, or at his resurrection, or at the destruction of Jerusalem. I put these together, because they were all in one century, within the compass of seventy years, or thereabout; so that if the thousand years began at either of them, they must end in the same century, in 1100. Now though, upon Christ's coming Satan fell like lightning from heaven, and multitudes of men, possessed with devils, were dispossessed by Christ, and he that had the power of death, the devil, was destroyed by him; and upon the preaching of the Gospel by the apostles in the Gentile world, the prince of the world was cast out, his oracles were struck dumb, multitudes were converted, and churches were set up everywhere, yet still Satan was not bound: he was not bound before the death of Christ; witness the many bodies of men possessed by him; his tempting Christ himself in the wilderness; his attacks upon him in the garden, and on the cross; his putting it into the heart of Judas to betray him; and filling the chief priests and scribes with malice and envy against him, to seek his death, which they brought about: nor was he bound, so as not to deceive the Jews, either before or after the death of Christ, nor is he to this day; they were in Christ's time under the influence of their father the devil, whose lust they would do, and did, in putting Christ to death; and after his death, they were instigated by Satan to persecute his apostles in Judea, and elsewhere; and though after the destruction of Jerusalem they had no more power to act in this way, yet they had no less ill will and malice against the Christians, and are to this day filled with enmity against them, and are led captive by Satan, and given up to believe a lie, that the Messiah is not come, and to reject the true Messiah, and to expect a false one: and as for the Heathen world, notwithstanding the progress of the Gospel in it, yet for the first three hundred years Paganism was the established religion of the Roman empire; and Christianity was everywhere spoken against, despised, and persecuted, and sometimes triumphed over, as if it was extinct; and Satan could never be said to be bound, and in prison himself, when he cast such multitudes into prison, and caused them to have tribulation ten days, (~~(Rev)~~ Revelation 2:10) in which so many martyrs suffered; nor did Satan appear to be bound, with respect to the church; the mystery of iniquity began to work in the apostle's times, and there were then many antichrists in the world, deceivers, false teachers and heretics; there was a synagogue of Satan, (~~(Rev)~~ Revelation 2:9) and such a set of vile persons under the name of Christians, as scarce ever was in the world; to which may be added, the great decline of love, and other graces, and of the purity of doctrine and worship in the best churches, and the many contentions among themselves,

in which Satan had a great hand, and therefore could not be bound: moreover, some hundreds of years before the thousand years ended, beginning from either of the above dates, the man of sin, the son of perdition, the pope, or western antichrist, was revealed, whose coming is after the working of Satan, (<sup>5109</sup>2 Thessalonians 2:9) and therefore surely he could not be bound then; besides, Mahomet, the eastern antichrist, sprung up, who opened the bottomless pit, and let out the smoke of it, by the Alcoran he delivered, and the false worship he set up: nor was there anything in the eleventh century, which answered to the loosing of Satan, to the Gog and Magog army, their war with the saints, and the issue of it; nor were the nations then more deceived than they had been in some centuries past; at least they were deceived in centuries past, both by the pope and Mahomet, which they would not have been, had Satan been bound then: to which may be subjoined, that if Satan was loosed, then he cannot be said to be loosed a little season, as in (<sup>6115</sup>Revelation 20:3) in comparison of the thousand years, as that must be understood; since it is now between six and seven hundred years since, which is more than half a thousand years. Others begin these years at Constantine's coming to the imperial throne; but though there was at that time a great spread of the Gospel, an enlargement of Christ's kingdom, and a weakening of Satan's, yet Satan was far from being bound; (see <sup>6127</sup>Revelation 12:7,8 13:15) witness the flood of errors and heresies which he quickly brought in, as the Eutychian and Nestorian heresies, the one confounding the natures, the other dividing the person of Christ; the Pelagian heresy, which obscured the grace of God, and advanced the free will of man; the Macedonian heresy, which denied the divinity of the Spirit: and especially the Arian heresy, which was opposed to the deity of Christ, and which introduced great contentions and confusion the churches, and issued in a violent persecution of them, being embraced by the sons of Constantine: not to take notice of Julian, an Heathen emperor, ascending the throne, who by many devilish arts endeavoured to extirpate Christianity; nor what has been observed before, the rise of both Mahomet in the east, and the Romish antichrist in the west, which were both within this period; in process of time the western empire was overrun by the Goths and Vandals, and the eastern empire by the Saracens and Turks; to which may be added, the violent persecutions of the Waldenses and Albigenes, before the year 1300, about which time the thousand years must cease, according to this computation, for opposing the pope of Rome, and who were slain where Satan had his seat, (<sup>6123</sup>Revelation 2:13) and therefore not bound; nor was

there anything happened in that century which might answer to the loosing of him. Others date these thousand years from the Reformation, and so not much more than two hundred of them are yet passed; but that Satan was not bound then, and is not now, is manifest. All the Popish nations have not been reformed, but still remain under the deception; and some, that have been, have revolted again; and the devil has continued to deceive the nations with that false worship, and to stir them up to persecute the reformed. Witness the burning of them here in Queen Mary's days, the massacres in France and Ireland, the present inquisition in Spain and Portugal, and the persecution of the Hugonots in France, and other Protestants elsewhere: and this is further evident from the decline in the reformed churches, both as to doctrine, discipline, and conversation; from the spread of errors and heresies of all kinds ever since, and especially in our age; and from the general profaneness and infidelity of the times, which, when considered, no man in his senses can ever think that Satan is bound; nor indeed will he be bound, or these thousand years begin, till after the conversion of the Jews, and the bringing in the fulness of the Gentiles, and the destruction of all the antichristian powers, Pagan, Papal, and Mahometan, as appears from the order of this vision, and its connection with the preceding chapter.

**Ver. 3.** *And cast him into the bottomless pit*, etc.] Or deep, into which the devils desired they might not be sent, and which they dreaded as a torment, it may be, because a place of confinement, (<sup><408></sup>Luke 8:31 <sup><408></sup>Matthew 8:29) for this is called a prison, (<sup><607></sup>Revelation 20:7) and is distinguished from the lake of fire, into which the devil is afterwards cast, (<sup><600></sup>Revelation 20:10).

*And shut him up*; that so he might not rove about in the air, nor go to and fro in the earth, nor walk about like a roaring lion, seeking to affright, disturb, or devour:

*and set a seal upon him*; or upon the door of the pit, for further security, as was upon the stone at the mouth of the lion's den, (<sup><2067></sup>Daniel 6:17) and of Christ's sepulchre, (<sup><4076></sup>Matthew 27:66). The Jews <sup>f431</sup> make mention of a stone they call "Shetijah", with which the Lord of the world "sealed the mouth of the great deep", or bottomless pit, at the beginning; but here not that, but Satan in it, is sealed. The Alexandrian copy reads, "and sealed him firmly", so that it was impossible for him to break out: the end of this apprehension, binding, imprisonment, and security of Satan is,

*that he should deceive the nations no more*; that is, by drawing them into idolatry, false worship, and false doctrine; and by exciting them to make war against the saints, or to persecute them, as appears from (<sup>618</sup>Revelation 20:8) as he had done before; and it is notorious enough that he has deceived them both these ways; he deceived the Pagan nations not only before, but since the coming of Christ, to worship the Heathen deities; and the Papists, who are called Gentiles, or nations, (<sup>619</sup>Revelation 11:2) to fall down to idols of gold, silver, stone, and wood; and the nation of the Jews to entertain a false and deluded notion of the Messiah; and all of them, in their turns, to persecute the people of God, as the Jews at the death of Stephen, and afterwards; the Pagan emperors for the first three hundred years after Christ; the Papists from the rise of the beast, who had power given him to make war with the saints, and overcome them; but now he will be under such restraint, and in such close confinement, that he will not be able to move the wicked nations to anything of this kind, as he will when he is loosed at the end of the thousand years; nor will he be able so much as to tempt any of the saints, during this term of time, nor give them the least molestation or uneasiness.

*Till the thousand years shall be fulfilled*; or ended, the whole space of them run out:

*and after that he must be loosed a little season*; a small space of time, in comparison of the thousand years; how long it will be exactly, cannot be said; and this “must” be, not because he cannot be held any longer, or through any weakness in Christ; but because of the decree of God, who has so appointed it, for the glorifying of himself, in the salvation of his people, and in the final destruction of the devil, and the Gog and Magog army.

**Ver. 4.** *And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them*, etc.] Besides the throne of God the Father, and the throne of glory, on which the Son of God sits, and the twelve thrones for the twelve apostles of the Lamb; there will be thrones set, or pitched, for all the saints, (<sup>200</sup>Daniel 7:9) who will sit on them, in the character of kings, and as conquerors, and shall sit quiet, and undisturbed, and be in perfect ease, and peace, for they that sit on them are the same persons hereafter described in this verse; for after the binding of Satan, an account is given of the happiness and glory of the saints during that time:

*and judgment was given unto them*; that is, power, dominion, regal authority, possession of a kingdom, answerable to their character as kings,



and to their position, sitting on thrones, (<sup>21072</sup>Daniel 7:22,27) unless it should be rather understood of justice being done them, which does not so manifestly take place in the present state of things, and of which they sometimes complain; but now righteous judgment will be given for them, and against their enemies; their persons will be openly declared righteous; their characters will be cleared of all false imputations fastened on them; and their works and sufferings for Christ will be taken notice of in a way of grace, and rewarded in a very glorious manner. And so it may respect their being judged themselves, but not their judging of others, the wicked, which is the sole work of Christ; nor will the wicked now be upon the spot to be judged; nor is that notion to be supported by (see Gill on “<sup>4028</sup>Matthew 19:28”), (see Gill on “<sup>4012</sup>1 Corinthians 6:2”), (see Gill on “<sup>4013</sup>1 Corinthians 6:3”). The Jews fancy that their chief men shall judge the world in the time to come; for so they say <sup>f432</sup>,

“in future time, (or in the world to come,) the holy blessed God will sit, and kings will place thrones for the great men of Israel, and they shall sit and judge the nations of the world with the holy blessed God:”

but the persons here meant are not Jews, but sufferers for the sake of Jesus, as follows:

*and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God:* these, with the persons described in the next clause, are they who will sit on thrones, during the thousand years of Satan's being bound, and will have judgment given them; even such who have bore witness to the truth of Jesus being the Son of God, the true Messiah, and the only Saviour of sinners, and to him as the essential Word of God, or to the written word of God, the whole Gospel, all the truths and doctrines of it; and who have been beheaded for bearing such a testimony, as John the Baptist was, the first of the witnesses of Jesus: and since this kind of punishment was a Roman one, it seems particularly to point at such persons who suffered under the Roman Pagan emperors, and to design the same souls said to be under the altar, and to cry for vengeance, (<sup>4010</sup>Revelation 6:9). This clause, in connection with the former, is differently rendered; the Syriac version renders it thus, “and judgment was given to them, and to the souls that were beheaded”, etc. the Arabic version, “and to them was given the judgment the souls killed”, etc. the Ethiopic version, “and then I saw a seat, and the son of man sat upon it,

and he rendered to them judgment for the souls of them that were slain for the law of the Lord Jesus”.

*And which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands,* (see <sup><630></sup>Revelation 13:1,4,14-16). This describes such who shall have made no profession of the Popish religion, nor have supported it in any way; who shall not have joined in the idolatry of the Romish antichrist, but shall have protested against it, and departed from it, and shall have adhered to Christ, and to the true worship of God; (see <sup><640></sup>Revelation 14:1 15:2). And so this, with the preceding character, includes all the saints that lived under Rome Pagan, and Rome Papal, to the destruction of antichrist, and the setting up of Christ's kingdom; not that these martyrs and confessors, or even all the saints of their times, are the only persons that shall share in the glory and happiness of the thousand years' reign of Christ, and binding of Satan; for all the saints will come with Christ, and all the dead in Christ will rise first, or be partakers of the first resurrection; and all that are redeemed by his blood, of whatsoever nation, or in whatsoever age of the world they have lived, even from the beginning of it, shall be kings and priests, and reign with him on earth, (<sup><345></sup>Zechariah 14:5 <sup><313></sup>1 Thessalonians 3:13 4:14,16 <sup><610></sup>Revelation 5:9,10) though John only takes notice of these, because the design of this book, and of the visions shown to him, was only to give a prophetic history of the church, from his time, to the end of the world; and these particularly are observed to encourage the saints under sufferings for Christ:

*and they lived;* meaning not spiritually, for so they did before, and while they bore their testimony to Christ, and against antichrist, and previous to their death; nor in their successors, for it would not be just and reasonable that they should be beheaded for their witness of Christ and his word, and others should live and reign with Christ in their room and stead; nor is this to be understood of their living in their souls, for so they live in their separate state; the soul never dies; God is not the God of the dead, but of the living: but the sense is, that they lived again, as in (<sup><615></sup>Revelation 20:5) they lived corporeally; their souls lived in their bodies, their bodies being raised again, and reunited to their souls, their whole persons lived; or the souls of them that were beheaded lived; that is, their bodies lived again, the soul being sometimes put for the body, (<sup><910></sup>Psalms 16:10) and this is called the first resurrection in the next verse:

*and reigned with Christ a thousand years*; as all that suffer with him will, and as all that will live godly must, and do, (<sup><S182></sup>2 Timothy 2:12) (<sup><S182></sup>2 Timothy 3:12). Christ being descended from heaven, and having bound Satan, and the dead saints being raised, and the living ones changed, he will reign among them personally, visibly, and gloriously, and in the fullest manner; all the antichristian powers will be destroyed; Satan will be in close confinement; death, with respect to Christ and his people, will be no more; the heavens and the earth will be made new, and all things will be subject to him; and all his saints will be with him, and they shall reign with him; they shall be glorified together; they shall sit on the throne with him, have a crown of righteousness given them, and possess the kingdom appointed for them; they will reign over all their enemies; Satan will be bruised under their feet, being bound; the wicked will be shut up in hell, and neither will be able to give them any disturbance; and sin and death will be no more: this reign will not be in a sensual and carnal way, or lie in possessing worldly riches and honours, in eating and drinking, marrying, and giving in marriage; the saints will not be in a mortal, but in an immortal state; the children of this resurrection will be like the angels; and this reign will be on earth, (<sup><S180></sup>Revelation 5:10) the present earth will be burnt up, and a new one formed, in which these righteous persons will dwell, (<sup><S183></sup>2 Peter 3:13) of which (see Gill on "<sup><S181></sup>Revelation 21:1") and it will last a thousand years; not distinct from, but the same with the thousand years in which Satan will be bound; for if they were distinct from them, and should commence when they are ended, the reign of Christ with his saints would be when Satan is loosed, which is utterly inconsistent with it. The Syriac version very rightly renders it, these thousand years, referring to those of Satan's binding. Nor are these thousand years to be understood prophetically, for as many years as there are days in a thousand years; for as this would defer the judgment of the wicked, and the ultimate glory of the saints, to a prodigious length of time, so it should be observed, that prophetic time will now be no longer, according to the angel's oath in (<sup><S185></sup>Revelation 10:6) but these are to be understood literally and definitely, as before, of just such an exact number and term of years; (see <sup><S188></sup>2 Peter 3:8) this is a perfect number, and is expressive of the perfection of this state, and is a term of years that neither Adam, nor any of his sons, arrived unto; but Christ the second Adam shall see his seed, and shall prolong his days longer than any of them, (<sup><S190></sup>Isaiah 53:10). It is an observation of the Jewish Rabbins<sup>f433</sup>, that the day in (<sup><S197></sup>Genesis 2:17) is the day of the holy blessed God (i.e. a thousand years), and therefore the first Adam did not

perfect, or fill up his day, for there wanted seventy years of it: and it is a notion that prevails with them, that the days of the Messiah will be a thousand years <sup>f434</sup>; and so they will be at his second coming, but not at his first, which they vainly expect, it being past: and also they say <sup>f435</sup>, that in these thousand years God will renew his world, and that then the righteous will be raised, and no more return to dust; which agrees with John's new heaven and new earth during this state, and with the first resurrection: and so Jerom, who was conversant with the Rabbins, says <sup>f436</sup> that the Jews expect a thousand years' reign.

**Ver. 5.** *But the rest of the dead*, etc.] Meaning not the dead saints, for they will be all raised together, but the wicked dead; and not them as morally or spiritually, but as corporeally dead: these

*lived not again until the thousand years were finished*; so that there will be such an exact term of years between the resurrection of the saints and the resurrection of the wicked; nor will there be any wicked living upon earth, or in bodies, during that time; for the wicked dead will not be raised with the saints at Christ's coming, and the wicked living will be destroyed in the conflagration of the world, and neither of them shall live again until the end of these years. This clause is left out in the Syriac version.

*This is the first resurrection*; which is not to be connected with the living again of the rest of the dead at the end of the thousand years, for that will be the second and last resurrection; but with the witnesses of Jesus, and the true worshippers of God living again, in order to reign with Christ a thousand years; for this resurrection is not meant of a resurrection from the death of sin to a life of grace; though the work of grace and conversion is sometimes so represented, it cannot be designed here; for such a resurrection the above witnesses and worshippers were partakers of before their sufferings, and which was antecedently necessary to their witness and worship; besides, this resurrection was future in John's time, and was what was to be done at once, and was peculiar to the commencement of the thousand years; whereas the spiritual resurrection was before his time, and has been ever since the beginning, and is successive in all ages, and not affixed to anyone period of time, though there may be more instances of it in one age than in another; nor is this ever called the first resurrection, nor can any reason be given why it should; for though one man may be converted before another, his conversion cannot be called the first resurrection, since there are many instances of this nature before, and many

more after; besides, at this time, there will be none of God's people to be raised in this sense; they will be all quickened and converted before; the nation of the Jews will be born again, and the fulness of the Gentiles brought in; to which may be added, that if the first resurrection is to be understood in a spiritual sense, then the second resurrection of the wicked dead, at the end of the thousand years, must be understood in like manner: nor is a reviving of the cause of Christ and his interest here intended, particularly through the calling of the Jews, and the numerous conversion of the Gentiles; for though the former of these especially is signified by the quickening of the dry bones in Ezekiel's vision, and is expressed by bringing the Jews out of their graves, and is called life from the dead, (~~6115~~Romans 11:15) yet that cannot with any propriety be called the first resurrection; for there was a great reviving of true religion in the time of John the Baptist, Christ and his apostles, especially after the effusion of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, both among Jews and Gentiles; and there was a revival of the Christian religion in the times of Constantine, and again at the reformation from Popery; and as for the conversion of the Jews and the Gentiles in the latter day, that will be the last reviving of the cause and interest of Christ, which will usher in his spiritual reign, and therefore should rather be called the last, than the first resurrection; besides, this affair will be over before this time; this is signified by the marriage of the Lamb in the preceding chapter; and the kingdoms of the world will become Christ's under the seventh trumpet, and both will be in the spiritual reign: moreover, this does by no means agree with the character of the persons who shall share in this resurrection, they are such who shall have lived and suffered, at least many of them, under Rome Pagan and Papal, (~~6116~~Revelation 20:4) and therefore can never be understood of Jews and Gentiles in the latter day, when neither one nor other shall be any more. To which may be subjoined, that if this was the sense, then this cause must revive also among the wicked at the end of the thousand years, whereas when they are raised, they will attempt the very reverse. It remains then, that by this first resurrection must be meant a corporeal one; for as some of those that will live again were corporeally beheaded, and all of them corporeally died, they will be corporeally raised again; and in such sense will the rest of the dead be raised at the end of these years; with respect to which this is properly called the first resurrection; it is the first in time, it will be at the beginning of the thousand years, and the second will be at the close; the dead in Christ will rise first in order of time, (see Gill on "~~6117~~1 Thessalonians 4:16"); they will have the

dominion in this sense over the wicked in the morning of the resurrection: Christ's resurrection is indeed first, but that is the cause and pledge of this; and there were particular resurrections both before and after his, but they were to a mortal state; and there were some saints that rose from the dead immediately after his resurrection; but these were but few, and were designed as an earnest of this; besides, though it was a resurrection, it was not the resurrection; and it may be further observed, that the resurrection of the righteous will be the first at the coming of Christ, (<sup><46152></sup>1 Corinthians 15:22) there will be none then before theirs; theirs will be the first; the resurrection of the wicked, to which this is opposed as the first, will not be till a thousand years after: add to all which, that this resurrection will be, **η πρωτη**, “the first”, that is, the best, as the word is used in (<sup><46152></sup>Luke 15:22) the chief, the principal; the resurrection of the wicked can hardly be called a resurrection in comparison of it, and in many places theirs is not taken notice of where this is, as in (<sup><46152></sup>1 Corinthians 15:12-57 <sup><50413></sup>1 Thessalonians 4:13-18) the righteous will be raised by virtue of union to Christ, in consequence of his having the charge both of their souls and bodies, and in conformity to his glorious body, and to eternal life, which will not be the case of the wicked,

**Ver. 6.** *Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection*, etc.]

This may be considered either as descriptive of the persons that shall partake of this privilege; as that they are only such who are blessed with spiritual blessings, with a justifying righteousness, with pardon of sin, and regenerating grace, and who are sanctified by the Spirit of God; these, and these only, will be first raised, and will be called to inherit the kingdom prepared for them, (<sup><46154></sup>Matthew 25:34) or else as expressive of their happiness and holiness when raised; they shall be perfectly blessed in soul and body, and perfectly holy in both: they shall be “blessed”, for

*on such the second death hath no power*; which is the lake of fire, (<sup><46154></sup>Revelation 20:14 21:8) the sense is, they shall escape everlasting burnings, the fire of hell, the torment and misery of the wicked; they shall be delivered from wrath to come; and as their bodies will die no more, their souls will not be subject to any sense of wrath, or to any sort of punishment: and they will be “holy”; they will have no sin in them:

*but they will be priests of God and of Christ*; of God the Father, and of his Son Jesus Christ, being made so to the former by the latter, (<sup><46156></sup>Revelation

1:6) or of God, even of Christ, that is, of God, who is Christ, since it follows:

*and shall reign with him*; they will be wholly devoted to and employed in the service of God and of Christ, and will be continually offering up the sacrifices of praise, or singing the song of the Lamb, adoring the grace and goodness of God and Christ unto them, shown them both in providence and in grace:

*and shall reign with him a thousand years*; this is mentioned again, partly to assert the certainty of it, and partly to point at the blessedness of the risen saints.

**Ver. 7.** *And when the thousand years are expired*, etc.] Which are not yet expired; not in the year 1000, or 1033 or 4, reckoning from the birth or death of Christ, when Paganism, which had been destroyed in the Gentile world, was introduced into the church, which bore the Christian name, through the man of sin; for this had been bringing in by degrees more or less from the times of Constantine; whence it appears, that Satan in this respect was loose before, and therefore this was not the time of his loosing; nor in 1073, reckoning from the destruction of Jerusalem, and the carrying and spread of the Gospel among the Gentiles, in which year Hildebrand came to the popedom, who may be truly called the brand of hell; Damianus, a brother cardinal, who lived at the same time with him when he was archdeacon of Rome, calls him the holy devil; he was an impostor, sorcerer, and necromancer, and by wicked arts got into the Papal chair; this pope raised the Papal power over princes to a very great height, and made the see of Rome absolutely independent, and all bishops dependent on it; he forbid bishops receiving their investiture from the emperor, or any lay person, under pain of excommunication: this is the pope that made the emperor, with his empress and child, wait three days barefoot at his gates, in the depth of winter, before they could be admitted to him; that doctrine of devils, forbidding priests to marry, was established by him; and in his days that monstrous and absurd notion of transubstantiation began to prevail, though he himself used his breaden god but very roughly; for taking it to be really God, he required an answer from it against the emperor; but it not speaking, he threw it into the fire, and burnt it. Now it will be allowed, that the devil was loose at this time, but then so he was before: there had been popes before this who were conjurers, necromancers, and had familiarity and confederacy with the devil; and near

five hundred years before this time, the pope was declared universal bishop by Phocas; and the forbidding priests marriage was started in the council of Nice, and was approved of by Pope Siricius, long before this time, though it was now more firmly established; add to this, that if the expiration of the 1000 years and the loosing of Satan were at this time, he must have been loosed near 700 years, which can never be called a little season, as in (~~61B~~ Revelation 20:3) especially in comparison of the 1000 years, the time of his binding; when it is two thirds of that time: nor did these years expire in or about 1300, reckoning from Constantine, about which time Pope Boniface the Eighth lived, of whom it is said, that he came in like a fox, railed like a lion, and died like a dog; upon his accession to the popedom, he instituted a jubilee, and on the first day he appeared in his pontifical habit, and gave the benediction to the people, and on the next day he clothed himself with an imperial habit, and put on a rich diadem, and sat on a throne, with a naked sword bore before him, when he uttered these words, “Ecce hic duo gladii”, “Behold here are two swords”, referring to (~~427B~~ Luke 22:38) which the Papists would have understood of the temporal and spiritual power which Peter and his successors are possessed of; at the same time Ottoman was crowned emperor of the Mahometan nations, who founded the Turkish empire, and spread the Mahometan religion in Asia and Greece; and by both these, great disturbances and wars were occasioned, both in the east and west: but still this does not make it appear that now was the time of Satan's loosing; since before this time the Papal power was at its utmost height, and the Mahometan religion had been hundreds of years in the world, and had greatly prevailed; and therefore Satan must be loosed before; and indeed it is in vain to seek after the expiration of these years, and the loosing of Satan, when as yet the years are not begun, nor has Satan been bound, as has been shown on (~~61D~~ Revelation 20:2) but however, when they will be ended,

*Satan shall be loosed out of his prison*; during the thousand years he will be in a state of confinement, being bound, shut, and sealed up in the bottomless pit, which is therefore here called a prison, as is the place of damned spirits, in (~~419B~~ 1 Peter 3:19) but when these will be at an end; his chain will be taken off, at least will be lengthened; the seal upon him will be broken off, the bottomless pit will be opened, and he let loose; which will be done not by himself, but by him that bound him, or by divine permission.



**Ver. 8.** *And shall go out*, etc.] Of his prison, the bottomless pit, and shall walk to and fro in the earth, and go about like a deceitful serpent, and roaring lion, as before:

*to deceive the nations*: as he had done before the thousand years began, and from which he was restrained during that time; he had before deceived the Pagan, Papal, and Mahometan nations, and now he will go forth to deceive those at this time

*which are in the four quarters of the earth*; all the world over: the names of which nations are,

*Gog and Magog*: not the same which are mentioned in (<sup>3801</sup>Ezekiel 38:1-39:16) though there is an allusion to them, and from thence the names are taken, and some of the figures borrowed, and design the enemies of God's people, who will be in the world at this time; so the Jews <sup>f437</sup> speak of a Gog and Magog, that will come up against Jerusalem in the days of the Messiah, whom they still expect, by whom they shall be destroyed:

*to gather them together to battle*; not one against another, as some think, as the pope against the Turk, and the Turk against the pope, nor are they designed at all; nor "to kill them", as the Ethiopic version renders it; but against the saints and people of God, in the beloved city and camp; herein will lie his deception of them:

*the number of whom is as the sand of the sea*; that is, innumerable, in allusion to Gog and Magog in (<sup>3809</sup>Ezekiel 38:9,15,16) but the great question is, who are meant by these? — Not the Papists, the nations made drunk with the wine of Rome's fornication, the Gentiles, by whom the holy city is trodden under foot, and who will be angry when the time of avenging the saints is come, (<sup>6102</sup>Revelation 11:2,18 18:2) for these will be all destroyed, even all the remains of them, at the battle of Armageddon; nor is antichrist himself intended, who will be destroyed in the spiritual reign of Christ, with the breath of his mouth; and at the above decisive battle the beast and the false prophet will be taken alive, and cast into the lake of fire: nor are the Turks designed, the people of Magog being Scythians originally, as Josephus says <sup>f438</sup>, from whence the Turks sprung; or Tartarins, for Paulus Venetus <sup>f439</sup> says the countries of Gog and Magog are in Tartary, called Jug and Munjug; hence some think these are the same with the four angels bound at the river Euphrates, and loosed, whose armies are represented as exceeding numerous, (<sup>6104</sup>Revelation 9:14,16,17)

but though the Turkish dominions are very large, yet they do not extend to the four quarters of the world; and when the Turks were let loose, and came even into Europe, it was not against the true Christians, the camp of the saints, the beloved city, as here, but against the antichristian party; the Papists have suffered most by the incursions of the Turks, though it has not brought them to repentance; besides, the loosing of the four angels, or the Turkish nations, and their chiefs, is long before these thousand years begin; that is past already, under the sixth trumpet, whereas the seventh trumpet will be blown, and all the seven vials poured out, and the world cleared of all Christ's enemies, and after that a thousand years must run out, before this Gog and Magog army will appear: nor are the Americans the nations, here spoken of; for they are but in one quarter of the world; nor is there any reason to believe there will be there more enemies of Christ's people than in any other part, since in the spiritual reign of Christ the earth shall be full of his knowledge, and his spiritual kingdom will be to the ends of the earth: and as for that notion that those inhabiting the other hemisphere will be saved from the general conflagration, there is no reason to believe it, since the earth, and whatsoever is therein, shall be burnt up, (<sup>31310</sup>2 Peter 3:10). Some think that the wicked living in the distant parts of the world, in the corners of the earth, are meant, who, upon Christ's coming, will flee thither, and remain in continual dread and terror to the end of the thousand years, when Satan will gather them together, and spirit them up against the saints; but this cannot be, because they will all be destroyed at the universal conflagration of the world; nor will there be any in the new earth but righteous persons: but these will be all the wicked dead, the rest of the dead, who lived not again until the thousand years are ended, when will be the second resurrection, the resurrection of all the wicked that have been from the beginning of the world; and these, with the posse of devils under Satan, will make up the Gog and Magog army: all the characters agree with them; these may be called nations, or Gentiles, being aliens from the true Israel of God, the dogs that will be without the holy city; these may be said to be in "the four quarters" of the world, since where they die and are buried, there they will rise and stand upon their feet, an exceeding great army; and as they will die enemies to Christ and his people, they will rise such; as they will go down to hell with their "weapons of war", as is said of Meshech and Tubal, the people of Gog, (<sup>31227</sup>Ezekiel 32:27) they will rise with the same; the grave, the dust of the earth, will make no change in their vile bodies, nor the flames of hell any alteration in the disposition of their minds; yea, as is said in the above place, they will "lay their swords under

their heads”, and so be in a readiness, when they rise, to make use of them against the saints, and to avenge themselves; for their envy, malice, and revenge, will be heightened and increased by their confinement and punishment in hell: nor need this be wondered at, since the devils, notwithstanding they have been so long expelled the realms of light, and have been in chains of darkness, and in expectation of everlasting torment, retain the same enmity as ever; and though the deception will be very great, to attack saints in an immortal state, who are like the angels that die not, nor will these die any more, and especially since Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who rules the nations with a rod of iron, will be at the head of them; yet it need not seem strange, when they will rise as weak and feeble, and as little able to resist temptation, and as much exposed to seduction, as they were before; Satan will have as much power over them as ever; and what with their own numbers, and the posse of devils at the head of them, and especially considering the desperateness of their state, and that this is their last struggle and effort for liberty, they will animate themselves and one another to this strange undertaking. These now may be called Gog and Magog, as the one signifies “covered”, the other open, or “uncovered”: these being all the enemies of Christ and his people, both secret and open: and this sense well accounts for their number, being as the sand of the sea; and which the Arabic version seems to confirm, “and Jagog and Magog shall rise with him”. The Jews have a notion that this deception of Satan will be at the day of judgment, which agrees with this account; for immediately upon this will follow the judgment of the wicked: they say <sup>f440</sup>,

“in the day that judgment shall be found in the world, and the holy blessed God shall sit upon the throne of Judgment, Satan **attwaly[ly] sa**, “shall deceive above and below” (angels and men), and he shall be found to destroy the world, and to take away souls.”

**Ver. 9.** *And they went up on the breadth of the earth*, etc.] Either the whole earth, in the several parts of which they will be raised; or the land of Israel, where Christ and his people will be; and so the wicked being raised, will come up from the several parts of the world, and spread themselves over the holy land; just as Gog and Magog are said to cover the land of Israel, as a cloud, (<sup>2886</sup>Ezekiel 38:16) and it may be observed, that the very

phrase of *Ætra bj r*, “the breadth of thy land”, is used of Immanuel's land, or the land of Israel, in (<sup>2388</sup>Isaiah 8:8)

*and compassed the camp of the saints about*; these are the blessed and Holy Ones, who have part in the first resurrection, even all the saints; not only the martyrs under the Heathen persecutions, and the confessors of Christ under the Papacy, but all the saints from the beginning of the world; these will be all encamped together, with the tabernacle of God in the midst of them, (<sup>6213</sup>Revelation 21:3) and Christ their King at the head of them, (<sup>3213</sup>Micah 2:13) the allusion is to the encampment of the children of Israel in the wilderness, about the tabernacle, which was in the midst of them, (<sup>4113</sup>Numbers 2:2) etc. afterwards the city of Jerusalem itself was called a camp, and answered in all respects to the camp in the wilderness<sup>f441</sup>, to which the reference is in (<sup>8313</sup>Hebrews 13:11-13) and which serves to illustrate the passage here, since it follows:

*and the beloved city*: not Constantinople, as some have thought, but the holy city, the new Jerusalem, (<sup>6212</sup>Revelation 21:2) the general assembly and church of the firstborn, beloved by God and Christ, and by the holy angels, and by one another; and these very probably will be with Christ upon the same spot of ground where the Old Jerusalem stood, a city so highly favoured, and so much distinguished by God; so that where Christ suffered so much reproach and shame, and such an accursed death, he will now be glorified, and live in triumph with his saints:

*and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them*; not material fire; with this the earth, and the bodies of the wicked then upon it, will be burnt at the beginning of the thousand years; but now their bodies will be raised immortal, and not capable of being consumed with such fire; but the fiery indignation of God, or his wrath, which will be poured out like fire, is here meant, which will destroy both body and soul; this is no other than the lake of fire, or second death, into which they will be cast; and which will not be until the judgment is over, though it is here related to show what will be the event and issue of their attack upon the saints: the allusion is to the fire sent upon Gog and Magog, and to the burning of their weapons, in (<sup>3322</sup>Ezekiel 38:22 39:6,9,10) and so the Jews<sup>f442</sup> say of their Gog and Magog, that

“they shall be killed with the burning of the soul, with a flame of fire, which shall come from under the throne of glory.”

**Ver. 10.** *And the devil that deceived them*, etc.] Both before death, in the present life, by tempting and drawing them into immorality and profaneness, or idolatry, superstition, and will worship, or persecution of the saints; and after their resurrection, by instigating them to make this foolish attempt upon the saints of the most High:

*was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone*; the same with the everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels; this will be his full torment, in which he is not as yet; and this will not be until the judgment is finished hereafter described; though it is here mentioned to issue the account of Satan at once, and to show what will be his final state and condition:

*where the beast and false prophet are*; (<sup>660</sup>Revelation 19:20) who for so many years have been companions in wickedness together; the beast being the first beast that received his power, seat, and authority from the dragon, or devil; the false prophet being the second beast, or antichrist in his ecclesiastical capacity, as the beast is antichrist in his civil power, whose coming is after the working of Satan, with signs and lying wonders:

*and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever*; that is, not only the devil, but the beast and false prophet, for the word is in the plural number: and this will be the case of all wicked men, of all whose minds are enmity to God and Christ, and to his people; and is a proof of the eternity of hell torments.

**Ver. 11.** *And I saw a great white throne*, etc.] This vision refers not to the Gospel dispensation, from the exaltation of Christ to his second coming; when he sat down on his throne at the right hand of God, and was declared Lord and Christ; when there was a shaking of the heavens and the earth, a removing of the Mosaic economy, and the ordinances of the ceremonial law in Judea, and of Paganism in the Gentile world; when the Gospel was preached to all nations, and the dead in sins were quickened, and arose and stood before the throne of grace; when the books of the Scriptures were opened and explained, and the book of life was also opened; and by the conversion of some, and not others, it was known who were written in it and who were not, and men were judged to be alive or dead in a spiritual sense, according to the influence the opening of these books had upon them; and the powers of the world, comparable to a sea, and of death and hell, were not able to hold in the dead in sin, when they were called to life, with respect to whom death and hell were destroyed; nor was the Gospel the savour of death to any but to such who were not written in the book of

life. This, in other words, is the sum of Cocceius's sense of this vision; but this affair will be over, and all God's elect gathered in by the preaching of the Gospel, before this vision takes place: nor does it respect the restoration of the Jews, who now are as dead, like Ezekiel's dry bones, but will at this time be quickened, and stand upon their feet an exceeding great army, and will be gathered from the several parts where they are as dead; and when it will be known by their conduct and behaviour who are God's elect among them, and who are not; which is Brightman's interpretation of the vision: but this, as we have seen, will come to pass according to the vision in the preceding chapter, before the thousand years begin; whereas this vision will not begin to be accomplished until they are ended: it is best therefore to understand it of the general judgment at the last day, which is the common sense of ancient and modern interpreters; though it seems only to regard the judgment of the wicked, for no other are made mention of in it: the "throne" here seen is a throne of judgment; it is called a "great" one, because a great Person sat upon it, the Word of God, the King of kings and Lord of lords, even he who is the great God, and Judge of the whole earth; and because of the great work that will be transacted upon it, the judgment of all the wicked; this will be the greatest assize that ever was held; it is called the judgment of the great day, and the great and dreadful day of the Lord, (Jude 6 <sup><3016></sup> Malachi 4:5) this throne is also said to be a "white" one; just as the same Person is said to sit upon a white cloud, and ride upon a white horse, (<sup><6144></sup> Revelation 14:14 <sup><6691></sup> Revelation 19:11) it may be in allusion either to a white and serene cloud, or to a throne of ivory, such an one as Solomon made, (<sup><4497></sup> 2 Chronicles 9:17) and this is either expressive of the majesty and splendour of it, it being a throne of glory, or a glorious throne, (<sup><4251></sup> Matthew 25:31) or else it may denote the purity and justice of him that sits on it, according to which he will proceed in judgment, and finish it; his character is the righteous judge, and the judgment he will execute will be righteous judgment:

*and him that sat on it;* the throne was not empty, one sat upon it, who is no other than the Son of God; to whom all judgment is committed, and who is ordained to be Judge of quick and dead; and is every way fit for it, being of great knowledge, wisdom, and sagacity, and of great integrity and faithfulness, as man and Mediator, and being, as God, both omniscient and omnipotent, and so capable both of passing a right sentence, and of executing it; to which may be added, his great majesty and glory, necessary to strike an awe, and command an attention to him:

*from whose face the earth and the heavens fled away, and there was found no place for them;* which is to be understood not figuratively, as in (~~6114~~ Revelation 6:14 ~~6161~~ Revelation 16:20) where in the one place is described the destruction of Paganism, and in the other the destruction of the Papacy, and all antichristian powers; but literally, and not of the present earth and heaven, as they now are, for these will be burnt up with fire at the beginning of the thousand years, but of the new heaven and new earth, at the end of them; and the phrases of fleeing away, and place being found no more for them, show the entire annihilation and utter abolition of them; after this there will be no place in being but the heaven of angels and saints, and the lake of fire, in which are the devils and damned spirits: but though this is mentioned here, it will not be till after the judgment is over; for how otherwise will the dead have a place to stand in before the throne, or hell, that is the grave, and also the sea, give up their dead, (~~6112~~ Revelation 20:12,13) but it is observed here, though afterwards done, to set off the majesty of the Judge upon the throne, at whose sight, and by whose power, this will be effected.

**Ver. 12.** *And I saw the dead,* etc.] An account being given of the Judge, next the persons to be judged are described, and in this clause, by the state and condition in which they had been; for it cannot be thought they were dead when they stood before the throne, but were raised from the dead; for this character is not descriptive of them as dead in trespasses and sins, though they are such as die in their sins, and rise in them, who are meant, but as having been corporeally dead; these are the rest of the dead, the wicked, who lived not again until the thousand years were ended, (~~6115~~ Revelation 20:5) as for the righteous, they will be judged upon their resurrection from the dead in the beginning of the day of the Lord; and will be declared righteous and blessed, and be called upon and introduced to inherit the kingdom prepared for them, which they shall have possessed a thousand years when these wicked dead will be raised: who are said to be small and great; which may refer either to their age, being children and adult persons; or to their condition, being kings and peasants, high and low, rich and poor; or to their characters, as greater or lesser sinners; and this description respects them as they are in this world, and is designed to show that no consideration whatever, of age, condition, or character, will exempt them from the general judgment. This is a way of speaking used among the Jews <sup>f443</sup>, who say,

“in the world of souls,  $\mu\eta\eta\iota\ \kappa\alpha\iota\ \omega\ \mu\iota\lambda\ \omega\delta\gamma\eta$ , “the great and the small”, stand before God.”

The disputations of the schoolmen, about the age and stature in which mankind will rise and be judged, are vain and foolish: these John saw stand before God; that is, Christ, who is God and Judge of all; before his judgment seat and throne, in order to be judged; for they will stand not as ministering to him, nor as having confidence before him; in this sense they shall not stand in the judgment, (<sup><19005></sup>Psalm 1:5) but as guilty persons, to receive their sentence of condemnation. The Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions read, “before the throne”; the sense is the same; for if they stood before the throne, they must stand before God, that sat upon it: and the books were opened; the book of God’s omniscience, which contains all the actions of the wicked, in which all their sins are taken notice of, and will now be brought to light; and the book of his remembrance, in which they are all written as with a pen of iron, and with the point of a diamond; and the book of the creatures, which they have abused, and which will witness against them; and the book of providence, the riches of whose goodness have been despised by them; and the book of the Scriptures, both of law and Gospel, as well as the book of nature, of the light of nature, (see <sup><802></sup>Romans 2:12,16) to which may be added, the book of conscience; the consciences of men will be awakened, and will accuse them, and bear witness against them, and be as good as a thousand witnesses:

*and another book was opened, which is the book of life:* the same that is mentioned in (<sup><605></sup>Revelation 3:5 13:8 17:8) the book of eternal election, (see Gill on “<sup><605></sup>Revelation 3:5”), (see Gill on “<sup><613></sup>Revelation 13:8”), (see Gill on “<sup><617></sup>Revelation 17:8”). No other use seems to be made of this book in the judgment of the wicked, than only to observe whose names were not written in it, as appears from (<sup><615></sup>Revelation 20:15) reference seems to be had to (<sup><2070></sup>Daniel 7:10). It is a notion that has obtained among the Jews <sup>f444</sup>, that

“at the beginning of the year (or every new year’s day)  $\eta\gamma\ \tau\eta\eta\iota\ \mu\eta\tau\eta\sigma\ \gamma$ , “three books are opened”, one of the wicked perfect, another of the righteous perfect, and a third of those between both; the righteous perfect are written and sealed immediately for life; the wicked perfect are written and sealed immediately for death; the middlemost are in suspense, and continue from the beginning of the



year to the day of atonement; if they are worthy, they are written for life, if not worthy, they are written for death.”

and in the same treatise <sup>f445</sup>, they represent God at the same time of the year as a

“King, sitting on a throne of judgment, and the books of the living, and the books of the dead, *^yj wtp*, “open”, before him:”

this with them was a prelude and a figure of the future judgment:

*and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works*; that is, they were sentenced to everlasting condemnation and death, according to the just demerit of their wicked works; for no other are done by wicked men, nor can any other be in the books, since they are without God and Christ, and destitute of the Spirit, have no principle of grace to act from, nor any good end in view in any action of theirs. So the Jews say <sup>f446</sup>,

“all the works which a man does in this world are “written in a book”, and they come into thought before the holy King, and they are manifest before him.”

**Ver. 13.** *And the sea gave up the dead which were in it*, etc.] Which is not to be interpreted metaphorically of the world, and the men of it, who are like the troubled sea; but literally of the sea, and of all such who have been drowned in the waters of it, as were Pharaoh and his host; or have died upon the mighty waters, and have been cast into them, and devoured by the fishes; and particular regard may be had to the men of the old world, drowned by the flood; these shall be raised from thence; the sea shall deliver them up: now this, and what is expressed in the next clause, will not be done after the judgment is set, the books are opened, and the sentence passed, but before all this, and in order to it, as the last clause of this verse shows:

*and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them*; “death”, which is here represented as a person, and elsewhere as a king, reigning and having power over men, signifies death in general, and every kind of death of which men have died, whether natural or violent, over whom it will now have no longer dominion, but will be obliged to deliver up all its subjects; and “hell” signifies the grave, which will now be opened, and deliver up all its prisoners, all that have been buried in the earth; (see

<8315>Job 26:5,6) the Ethiopic version adds, “and the earth delivered up them that were dead in it”: but this seems unnecessary after the former:

*and they were judged every man according to their works*; some to greater, some to lesser punishment, as their sinful works deserved.

**Ver. 14.** *And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire*, etc.] Death cannot be taken properly, nor hell be the place of torment, for devils and damned spirits; since that is that lake of fire, for then the sense would be, hell is cast into hell; but either by these the devil is meant, who has the power of death, and is the prince of hell, were it not that the casting of him into this lake is mentioned before in (<6200>Revelation 20:10) or it denotes the destruction and abolition of death and the grave, that from henceforth they should no more have power over men, nor have any under their dominion, and in their hands; and so what has been promised will now be fully performed, (<2834>Hosea 13:14 <6153>1 Corinthians 15:26) (see <6204>Revelation 21:4) or rather the wicked dead, which they shall have delivered up, and will be judged and sentenced to eternal death, (<6213>Revelation 20:13)

*this is the second death*; or the destruction of the soul and body in hell, which will consist in an eternal separation of both from God, and in a continual sense of his wrath and displeasure. The Alexandrian copy and the Complutensian edition read, “this second death is the lake of fire”; and so the Arabic version, “and this is the second death, even the lake of fire”; and not much different is the Ethiopic version, “the second death, which is the fire of hell”.

**Ver. 15.** *And whosoever was not found written in the book of life*, etc.] Upon the opening of it, (<6212>Revelation 20:12) as all that worship the beast, and wonder after him, (<6218>Revelation 13:8 17:8) and all wicked men, everyone of them:

*was cast into the lake of fire*; where are the devil, beast, and false prophet, (<6220>Revelation 19:20 20:10). It is a saying of R. Isaac <sup>f447</sup>,

“woe to the wicked, who are not written **aqtpb**, “in the book”, for they shall perish in hell for ever and ever:”

and in the Targum on (<2839>Ezekiel 13:9) it is said of the false prophets,

“that **aml [ yj btkb**, “in the writing of eternal life” (or in the book of eternal life), which is written for the righteous of the house of Israel, they shall not be written.”

There seems to be some allusion in the phrase used here, and in the preceding verse, and elsewhere in this book, to the lake Asphaltites, a sulphurous lake, where Sodom and Gomorrah stood, which the Jews call the salt sea, or the bituminous lake; and whatsoever was useless, or rejected, or abominable, or accursed, they used to say, to show their rejection and detestation of it, let it be cast into the sea of salt, or the bituminous lake; thus, for instance,

“any vessels that had on them the image of the sun, or of the moon, or of a dragon, **j l mh μyl μkyl wy**, “let them cast them into the salt sea”, or bituminous lake<sup>f448</sup>.”