REVELATION 20

The King Reigns from Jerusalem

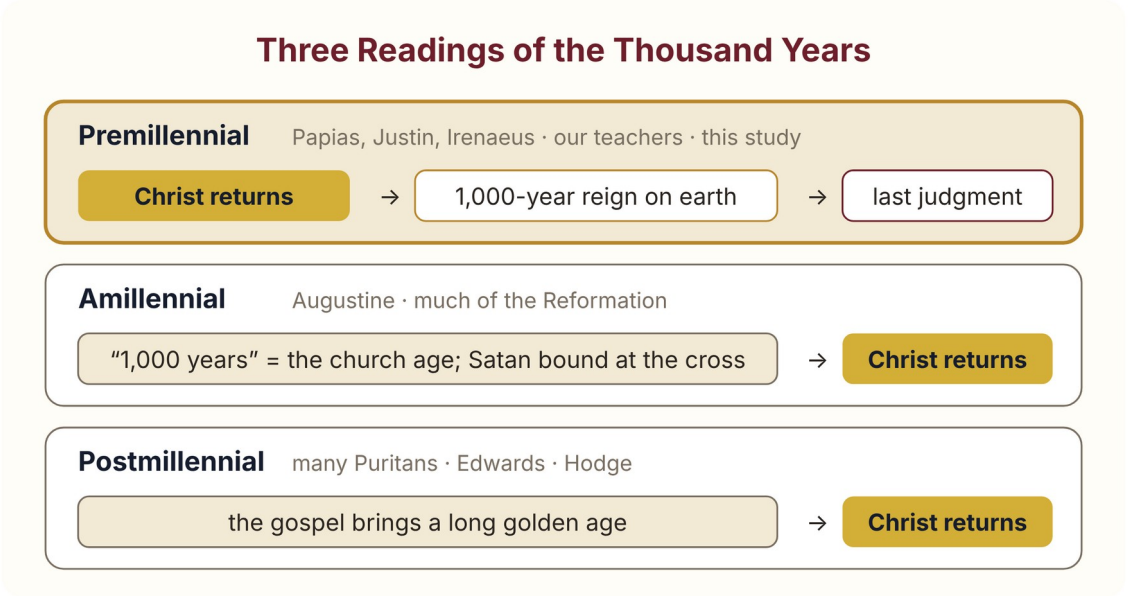
> *"Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years."*
> REVELATION 20:6

A SMITH FOR CHRIST STUDY · WITH TSARFATI · MACARTHUR · GUZIK · HITCHCOCK · JEREMIAH

Where John has brought us

1. Revelation 19 ended with the Rider on the white horse returning, the beast and the false prophet thrown alive into the lake of fire, and their armies fallen.

2. No chapter has divided careful believers more.



Satan Bound

The key, the chain and the seal — the deceiver taken off the field

REVELATION 20:1

Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand.

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik notices who does the binding: not Jesus, not Michael, but an unnamed angel — a dramatic declaration that Satan is not God's equal or opposite. One angel with a chain is enough.

MARK HITCHCOCK

Hitchcock lays the chapter on the timeline: the Second Coming, Armageddon, the binding of Satan, the thousand-year reign, the Great White Throne, the new heaven and new earth.

JOHN MACARTHUR

MacArthur puts one question to these verses — where is Satan during the kingdom? — and answers in a word: bound, out of the picture.

ἄβυσσος

ABYSSOS · "ABYSS, BOTTOMLESS PIT"

From a- ("without") and bythos ("depth"): the place with no bottom. In the New Testament it is a prison — the demons at Gerasa beg Jesus not to send them into the abyss (Luke 8:31).

The First Resurrection

Thrones, martyrs and a thousand-year reign — the blessed who share in it

REVELATION 20:4

Then I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years.

AMIR TSARFATI

Tsarfati's picture of the kingdom is physical and Jerusalem-centered. Jesus sits on the throne of David and reigns from Jerusalem; believers, in glorified bodies, reign and judge with Him (1 Corinthians 6:2–3).

JOHN MACARTHUR

MacArthur sees two kinds of thrones in Scripture, judicial and regal, and these are both.

DAVID GUZIK

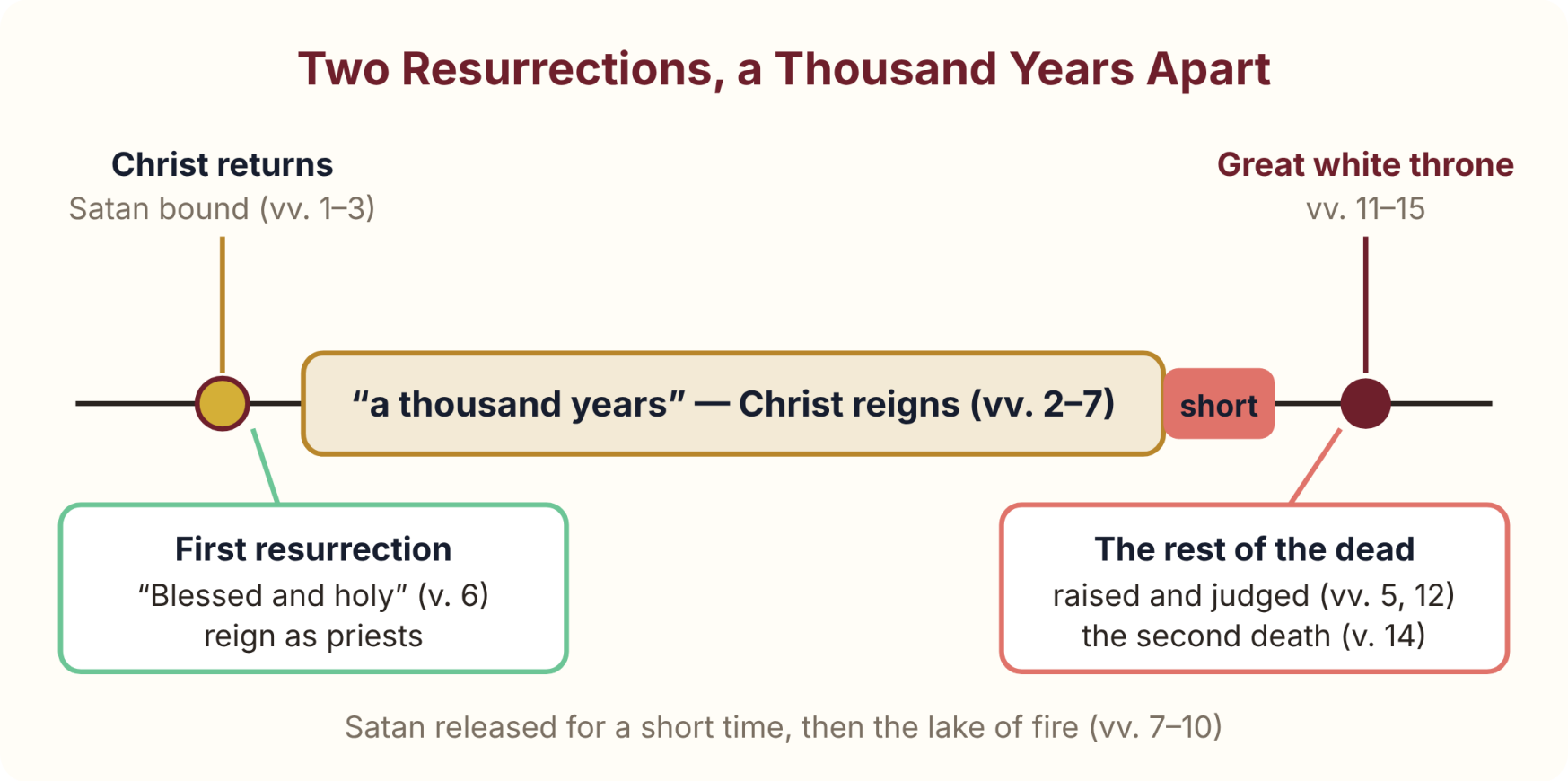
Guzik lists the options for who sits on the thrones — the twenty-four elders, the apostles, or the saints together — and then notes how John singles out the tribulation martyrs, vindicated and reigning.

ἔζησαν

EZĒSAN · "THEY CAME TO LIFE"

The aorist of zaō, "to live" — they began to live. The same form is used of Christ, who was dead and has come to life (2:8).

Two Resurrections, a Thousand Years Apart



The first resurrection and the rest of the dead are separated by the thousand-year reign (20:4–5, 12).

Satan Loosed and the Last Rebellion

Gog and Magog, the beloved city, and the devil's final address

REVELATION 20:8

and will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war; the number of them is like the sand of the seashore.

DAVID GUZIK

Guzik calls this the hardest question in the chapter — why release Satan? — and answers that the millennium proves man's problem is not his environment but his heart.

MARK HITCHCOCK

Hitchcock calls them Gog and Magog I and Gog and Magog II — separate events more than a thousand years apart.

DAVID JEREMIAH

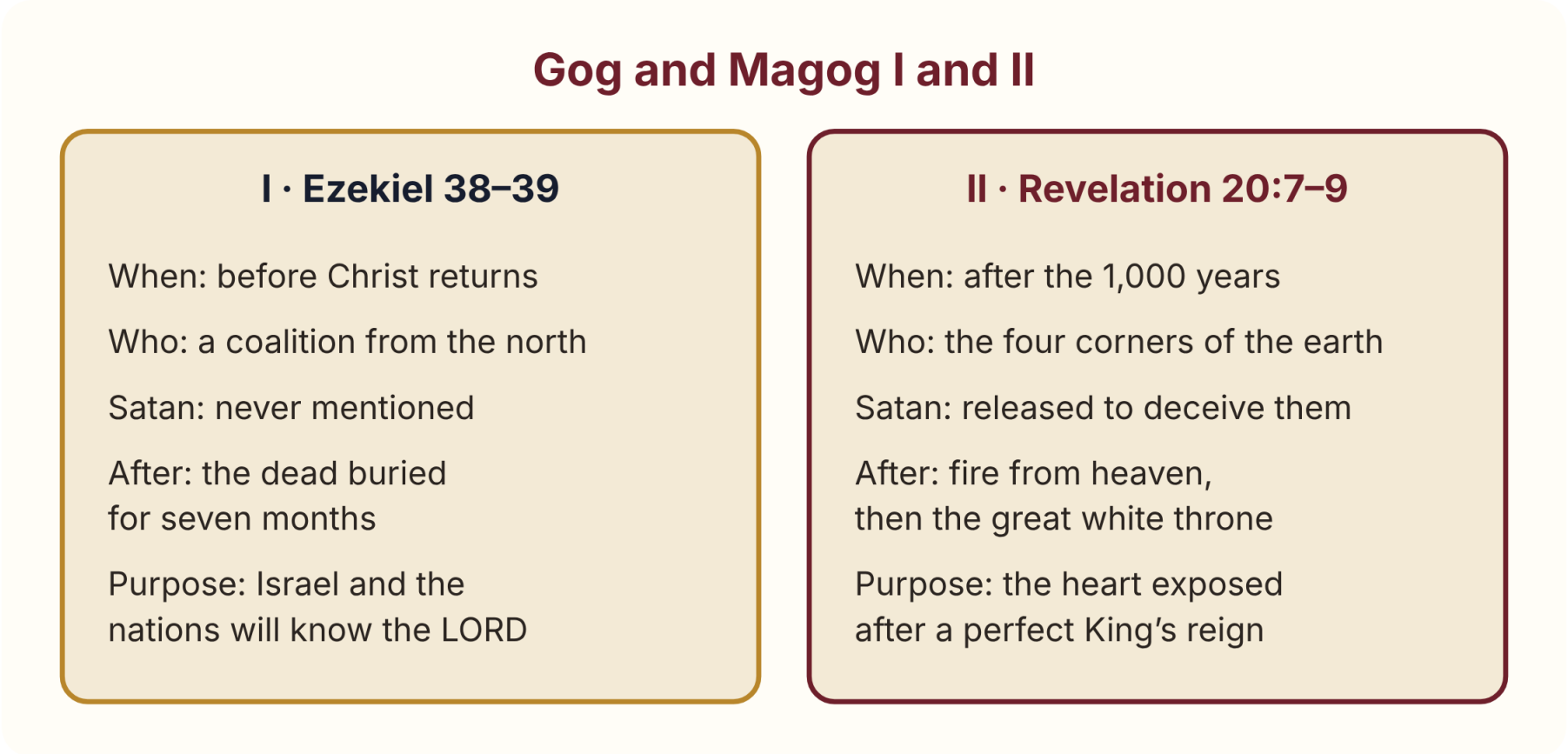
Jeremiah gives the final rebellion a purpose: it shows how deep human sin goes.

Γὼγ καὶ Μαγώγ

GŌG KAI MAGŌG · "GOG AND MAGOG"

These names appear in the New Testament only here. In Ezekiel 38–39 Gog is a ruler of the land of Magog, leading a coalition from the north against a restored Israel; Magog first appears as a son of Japheth (Genesis 10:2).

Gog and Magog I and II



Following Tsarfati and Hitchcock: Ezekiel 38–39 and Revelation 20:8 share a name, not an event.

The Great White Throne

The books, the book, and the death after death

REVELATION 20:15

And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

AMIR TSARFATI

The prophetic program ends where every soul ends: before a throne. Tsarfati's urgency is the urgency of a man who believes this is coming and that the clock is running.

JOHN MACARTHUR

MacArthur preaches the scene as 'Man's Last Day in God's Court' and insists it is a just judgment. The Judge is God in the person of Jesus Christ (John 5:22).

DAVID JEREMIAH

Jeremiah reads the throne by its name: great for the infinite Judge, white for His holiness and justice, throne for His right to decide destiny. Jesus conducts the trial, and no one is better qualified.

βιβλία … ἡ βίβλος τῆς ζωῆς

BIBLIA … HĒ BIBLOS TĒS ZŌĒS · "BOOKS … THE BOOK OF LIFE"

Two kinds of record. Biblia, the plural of biblion (G975), are the books of deeds — the dead are judged from the things written in them, "according to their deeds," said twice. Then one book, biblos (G976), the book of life.

What to carry from this chapter

1

Six times, one number.

“A thousand years” appears in verses 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 — the only place Scripture gives the kingdom a length.

2

One unnamed angel is enough.

Satan is not God’s equal or opposite; a single anonymous angel with a chain takes him off the field.

3

Even the release is on God’s schedule.

“He must be released” — the passive voice: he is let out; he never breaks out.

4

One verb, two risings.

Ezēsan, “came to life,” is used of the martyrs (v. 4) and of the rest of the dead (v. 5); if one is bodily, so is the other.

More to carry

5

The beheaded sit on thrones.

Those who refused the mark lost their heads and gained a throne in a real kingdom reigned from Jerusalem.

6

A perfect world cannot make a righteous heart.

After a thousand years of ideal conditions the nations still rebel — man's problem is his heart, not his environment.

7

This is sentencing, not a trial.

The books are a perfect record; for those outside the book of life, works are the evidence, and the evidence is complete.

8

The books and the book.

The books of deeds measure the sentence; the book of life decides the destiny.

Talk it through

1. Satan is the one who deceives the nations. Where does his deception reach you most easily — in what you fear, what you want, or what you believe about God?

2. Premillennial, amillennial and postmillennial believers all confess Christ's return. How can you hold your view firmly and still treat a brother who differs as a brother?

3. The martyrs lost their heads and gained thrones. What might faithfulness to Jesus cost you this year, and what does this passage promise in return?

4. After a thousand years of a perfect King, the nations still rebel. What does that tell you about your own need for a new heart?

5. At the white throne great and small stand alike. Whose name do you long to see written in the book of life, and what is one step toward him this week?

CLOSING

A chain, a reign, a short rebellion and a great white throne — and between them a thousand years in which the King reigns from Jerusalem. Death and Hades are thrown away. Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection.

Teaching the Word. Watching the Times. — Smith For Christ

O·I·A study, slides, reflection journal and film: see the Revelation study page.