

HOPE FOR HUMANITY

REVELATION TODAY

PRESENTATION 10 • REVELATION'S 1,000-YEAR PROPHECY

SLIDE • BEN FRANKLIN. Benjamin Franklin was a fascinating man. A politician, statesman, ambassador, signer of the Constitution, inventor... One of the most famous Ben Franklin stories is the story of the kite and the key and the electrical charge. I'd often wondered how Franklin got lucky enough to hang a key from a kite and actually have electricity strike the key. What are the odds? Except, that didn't happen.

SLIDE • FRANKLIN'S KITE. If his kite had been struck by lightning, Franklin would have been killed. What happened was, Franklin, wanting to demonstrate the electrical nature of lightning, made a kite and attached a key to it to act as a lightning rod. He attached a hemp string to the bottom of the kite and a silk string to the bottom of that. The hemp string would get wet in the rain and conduct electricity. The silk string would be kept dry as it was held by Franklin in the doorway of a shed. Along with his son, Franklin waited, and waited, and waited for something to happen. When he was close to giving up on the whole thing that day, he noticed loose threads of the hemp string standing erect, "just as if they had been suspended on a common conductor." He moved his finger nearer the key, and as the negative charges in the metal piece were attracted to the positive charges in his hand, he felt a spark.

SLIDE • LIGHTNING. Ben Franklin wasn't the first to figure out the electrical nature of lightning. In fact, there are some who say Franklin never did fly a kite that day and that the story is a myth. What are these people going to say next? The Paul Revere didn't say, "The British are Coming!"? But it seems Ben Franklin advanced knowledge and urged science forward.

SLIDE • OLD POWER STATION. And we've come a long way since then. The first commercial power plant was built by Thomas Edison in 1882, and it was fired by coal. Since then, power plants have proliferated, because we need power. But today, things are different. A third of the world's electricity is (**SLIDE • COAL**) sourced from coal, where the chemical energy stored in coal is converted successively into thermal energy, mechanical energy and, finally, electrical energy. But people are concerned about coal as a source of energy. Years ago, coal was used to heat most American homes. It heated our hot water year round and heated our home in the winter. But today, coal as a source of energy is falling out of favor, because of concerns about what it does to the environment. The United Nations wants the world to have stopped generating energy from coal by 2040.

Today, we're getting more and more into renewable energy sources. Electricity is (**SLIDE • WIND FARM**) generated by the wind in many places. Solar energy is being utilized.

SLIDE • NUCLEAR. Nuclear energy is efficient but there are certain down sides, which is why we're familiar with (**SLIDE • CHERNOBYL RUINS**) Chernobyl and Three Mile Island and Fukushima.

SLIDE • SAVE THE PLANET. So there's a growing emphasis today on renewability. Wouldn't it be great to have an energy source that never runs out and doesn't harm the environment? And there's talk of sustainability, which refers to the capacity of the Earth's biosphere to exist along with the world's population. Can we keep on living the way we're living without eventually running into disaster? (**SLIDE • RAINBOWS**) Can the planet and the people who live on it learn to get along?

I'm going to tell you today that there's coming a time when the world is going to sing in perfect harmony. We'll grow apple trees and honey bees and snow-white turtle doves. Seriously, the world is one day going to return to Edenic perfection, and that's especially good news. We'd love to think that politicians and environmentalists and scientists are going to figure it all out, but given that scientific study has been around for a while now and given that things don't appear to be getting any better, I don't know how wise it is to expect human beings to be able to solve all of our problems. I don't suggest we should not do our very best, but if we're actually looking to ourselves to get out of the mess that we've created—and, let's be honest, it's very hard to look beyond one's own interests—then we might be looking in all the wrong places.

So look at this with me.

SLIDE • REVELATION 21:1. "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea."

SLIDE • REVELATION 21:4. "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."

SLIDES (2) • REVELATION 22:1–3. "And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him."

SLIDE • ENVIRONMENT. I don't think anyone is opposed to the idea of renewability, and we're all interested in sustainability—which just means, how long can this go on?—and here God shows it to us, in eternity. And here's where it all starts.

SLIDES (2) • 1 THESSALONIANS 4:16–17. "For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord." Jesus is going to come back to the Earth. That's what we're all looking forward to. That He came to Earth a first time is an indisputable fact. He came as the Messiah. And let me say something. People will say, "I have no problem with Jesus. He was a good man." No, He was either the Messiah, or a crazy man. Only a crazy man would think he was sent by God and then allow Himself to be nailed to a cross for the sins of the world. So you can't sit on the fence on this one. Jesus is either who He says He is—the Son of God—or He was bereft of good sense. If He was a madman, so be it. But if He wasn't, I don't know how you could ignore Him.

SLIDES (2) • 1 CORINTHIANS 15:51–54. Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible

must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible has put on incorruption, and this mortal has put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written: "Death is swallowed up in victory."

I want to look at a stunning piece of writing found just inside the back cover of the Bible. Chapter 1187 of the Bible. **(SLIDE • REVELATION)** Revelation 20. Revelation was written by John, the beloved disciple, while he was under house arrest on the island of Patmos in the Aegean Sea. **(SLIDE • PATMOS)** It's a Greek Island, even though it's 35 miles from Turkey and 160 miles from Athens, about 1/3 the size of Manhattan. In Revelation 19 John has described the return of Jesus to the world. He starts chapter 20 by saying, **(SLIDE • REVELATION 20:1-2)** "Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years." This is the millennium you hear about. Many people believe that Jesus is going to reign on the Earth during the millennium, so let's look at this and see what's going on.

An angel comes down from heaven, takes hold of the devil, and binds him for 1,000 years. The angel is depicted as having a chain and tying up the devil with it.

SLIDE • REVELATION 20:3. Verse 3: "And he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while." So Satan is bound, and cannot deceive anyone for 1,000 years. But then he'll be released for a while.

The question is, How do you bind an angel, **(SLIDE • FALLEN ANGEL)** a fallen angel? And what's this bottomless pit he's placed into? It COULD be that the devil is dropped into a really deep hole. Or, let's remember what happens when Jesus returns.

SLIDE • 2 PETER 3:10. This is 2 Peter 3:10: "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night, in which the heavens will pass away with a great noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat; both the earth and the works that are in it will be burned up." You'll remember the return of Jesus depicted in **(SLIDE • DANIEL 2 IMAGE)** Daniel 2, the stone cut out without hands, lands on the feet of the image and sweeps away the kingdoms of the world. When Jesus comes back, the world is destroyed. Paul wrote about those who will be destroyed "with the brightness of his coming." The destroyed Earth is now represented as a "bottomless pit." Satan is bound because he is confined here, and he's stuck on this desolated earth with no one to tempt.

This is a lockdown! Lockdowns have been a difficult part of Covid.

SLIDE • ARGENTINA FLAG. Buenos Aires, Argentina, 234 days.

SLIDE • MELBOURNE. Melbourne, Australia, longer. Longest in the world.

Lockdowns happen because authorities have been wanting to contain a deadly virus. They're wanting to keep it from spreading. Let's look at a time when this **(SLIDE • EARTH)** entire planet will be on lockdown. For essentially the same reason. To flatten the curve. To contain a deadly virus. To contain sin, and to stop it from spreading. The good news is that this lockdown we're looking at tonight is only temporary, and it will be the last time we see a lockdown on this planet.

The idea of isolation or quarantine isn't new. You could say the first quarantined family was **(SLIDE • NOAH'S ARK)** Noah's family—quarantined on an ark before, during and after the worst storm to strike Planet Earth.

There's an interesting passage of the Bible dealing with a time still in the future. In fact, after the return of Jesus. Here's what the Bible says about Jesus' return.

When Jesus returns,

SLIDE • CHART. Return of Jesus. Earth is destroyed. Satan is bound.

But we read that after this, Satan will be released for a time.

Look at verse 4. It tells us some things.

SLIDES (2) • REVELATION 20:4. "And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. Then I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years." There are people here who had died, but now they're alive. That means there has to have been a... resurrection.

SLIDE • CHART WITH "FIRST RESURRECTION."

We read earlier that when Jesus comes back, the dead in Christ shall rise. And here are those ones who have been raised, and they're shown as being with Jesus. And where are they? If they're with Jesus, they're in heaven. Remember what Jesus said? (**SLIDE • JOHN 14:2-3**) John 14:2-3 "I go to prepare a place for you. "And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also." Jesus returns, and we're going to heaven. The Earth is destroyed, and Satan is bound here for a thousand years. Now, why would that be? I want to suggest something to you. This millennium time period is a time when God will not only be just, but will be seen to be just. There are some major questions being asked in the universe. I don't know for sure, but if an angel had been in heaven for.. how many years? Might it ever occur to God that before this angel is forever punished that everyone in the universe should see that Satan is beyond help, that he would never, ever repent? Satan is bound for a thousand years. Don't get me wrong. I'm not suggesting God is giving him a chance to repent. He's not. But he's showing us that even after a thousand years of reflecting upon the misery he has caused, the lives he has cost, the destruction he has caused and the pain he has brought to the heart of God, Satan is still thoroughly wicked, and lost. Bound for a thousand years.

Jesus returns. There's a resurrection. The saved go to heaven. Satan is bound here on the Earth.

SLIDE • REVELATION 20:5. Verse 5: "But the rest of the dead did not live again until the thousand years were finished." And then referring to the first resurrection, John writes, "This is the first resurrection."

Notice something. The lost live again! Destroyed when Jesus returns, there's a second resurrection at the end of the thousand years, when the thousand years are finished.

SLIDE • JOHN 5:28-29. "Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation." Two resurrection. (**SLIDE • GRAPHIC FIRST/SECOND RESURRECTION**) The resurrection to life—when Jesus returns. The resurrection to condemnation at the end of the thousand years.

SLIDE • REVELATION 20:6. "Blessed and holy is he who has part in the first resurrection. Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with

Him a thousand years.” We’ll talk in our next presentation about that second death. But look at this. Those who are raised in the first resurrection—ready to meet Jesus when He returns—will be priests with God and will reign with Him for a 1000 years.

There’s something about human beings that Satan understands well. You’ve likely heard of the famous marshmallow experiment. In 1972, Walter Mischel, a (**SLIDE • STANFORD**) psychologist at Stanford University, carried out an experiment in which a child was offered a small reward right away, or two small rewards if they waited 15 minutes. During the 15 minutes, the researcher left the room.

SLIDE • CHILD. The kids got either a marshmallow or a pretzel stick. One now, two later. The experiment was designed to shed light on delayed gratification. How people differentiate between taking something now, or waiting for something better later. This is a challenge we face with matters of eternity. We tend to think of what we can get in this world as the goal, while Jesus offers us peace in this world, forgiveness, a life of integrity, a life of meaning—and the world to come. The world tends to offer us only that which is shallow and unimportant. Our Stanford marshmallow test might just be this: God offers us the opportunity to be priests of God and of Christ and to reign with Him for a thousand years, but we might tend to be distracted by the praise of others, by possessions, by the always-changing fashions of this world. Let me encourage you: Paul wrote to the Colossians and said, (**SLIDE • COLOSSIANS 3:1–4**) “If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.” Notice what Paul said. Set your mind on things above. He said, “Christ is out life. And when He comes back, we’ll be with Him in glory.” How are your priorities, friend? Where are you looking tonight? One day we’ll have the opportunity to sit with Jesus in heaven, and you’ll be glad then that you didn’t get sucked into the distractions of the world.

And look at what God says He will do for you. Look how hopeful this is.

SLIDE • EZEKIEL 36:26–27 KJV. “A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them.”

See what God will do in your life? He can change your heart, change your priorities, change your desires, when He gives you a new heart. If you’re thinking, “My priorities are all wrong and so therefore there’s no hope for me,” look to what God does in your life, look at how God can change your tastes, your desires, your wants, your priorities. A new heart! This is what God can do, what God WILL do, what God is right now WAITING to do. And how do you get this new heart? You ask Him for it. You invite Jesus to take your heart and make it new. And then you believe that He has given you that new heart. As Paul wrote to the Romans in Romans 6:11, (**SLIDE • ROMANS 6:11**) “Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Too many people sell God short. “I’m an angry person, and I’ll always be this way.” “I’m a jealous person, a dishonest person, an immoral person, and I’ll always be this way.” Well if that’s what you think, that’s what you’ll be. But if you’ll accept what Jesus has done for you. If you’ll believe that God forgives you and gives you a new heart, if you believe that Jesus lives His life in you when you invite Him to do so, you’ll experience a radical change in your mind and in your life. You’ll grow, you’ll develop as a believer. You might still make mistakes, but you’ll grow. Some of your bad

habits will disappear. Others, they're a little more stubborn because of how you're wired, how deep they go, because of your environment, because of whatever, but because you're looking in faith to Jesus, believing He has forgiven you, you're going to continue to grow in His grace and experience more and more of His presence. In Mark chapter 4, Jesus spoke of heaven's work of grace in the human heart when he said, **(SLIDE • MARK 4:26)** "The kingdom of God is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground." **(SLIDE • MARK 4:28)** "For the earth yields crops by itself: first the blade, then the head, after that the full grain in the head." This is the work of grace in your life, as you grow more and more, as Jesus' character is seen more and more in your life. If today you see that your priorities are out of whack; if you can recognize that right now your main desire is NOT to reign with Christ; if you can admit that you're more enamored with getting stuff and consuming entertainment and letting your mind wander into unhealthy places; if that's your experience now, God wants to give you a new experience. And He will—if you want it. If you ask for that. If you accept that from Jesus now.

SLIDE • REVELATION 20:7. Verse 7: "Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison." The second resurrection has taken place. Satan has someone to tempt again as the lost have been raised from the dead.

And let me come back to something. Back in verse 4 we read that "judgment was given to" the saved in heaven. This is fascinating. I mentioned that God is going to be seen to be just in heaven. And here, while the world is in complete lockdown and the saved are in heaven for 1000 years, the saints have the opportunity to look with God at His work of judgment. Imagine getting to heaven and finding that someone you thought would be there is not there! Or, discovering that someone you thought would not be there, is there! What God does is He opens up the books of record so we can look into the decisions he has made. Any questions you might have will be answered. Any thoughts you might have will be addressed. God is just, and will be seen to be just. Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 6, **(SLIDE • 1 CORINTHIANS 6:2–3)** "Do you not know that the saints will judge the world?" And then he wrote, "Do you not know that we shall judge angels?" this is when that happens. We look into the decisions God has made in the judgment, and we'll agree that all of the decisions God has made are just and fair.

So Satan is loosed out of his prison, the lost have been raised from the dead, and this is the end of the 1000 years.

And the Bible says that Satan **(SLIDE • REVELATION 20:8)** "and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number is as the sand of the sea." Now this is where we need to look at how we interpret the Bible. Gog and Magog are sometimes interpreted to represent countries in Europe or the Middle East. **(SLIDE • FLAGS)** Russia and Turkey and Iran are often mentioned, in some kind of end-time war against Israel. But let's look at how we're to interpret this. Gog and Magog are first mentioned in the book of **(SLIDE • EZEKIEL)** Ezekiel, in chapters 38 and 39. In Ezekiel, Gog and Magog represent the enemies of God. Now: the book of Revelation is written largely in figures, in types and images. Almost 3/4 of the verses in Revelation contain references of some kind to the Old Testament. **(SLIDE • BEASTS)** The beasts in chapter 13, for example? Those images are drawn from the book of Daniel. **(SLIDE • WOMAN)** The woman in Revelation 17? That's drawn from the book of Jeremiah. The leaves on the **(SLIDE • TREE)** tree of life that John wrote about? That's drawn from Ezekiel. John is writing to a people whose frame of reference is the Old Testament. So when he's trying to describe a power in Earth's last days, he goes into the Old Testament and borrows the image of

"Babylon" as the power in Earth's last days. His readers say, "Oh, we know what he's talking about. We're familiar with that. We get that!" So here he writes about Gog and Magog, and his readers say, "Okay, we know he's talking about enemies of God. The devil is going to deceive those who are opposed to God. And that's what he does. The lost are raised from the dead. And Satan inspires them to rebel against God again.

Verse 9 shows us something. **(SLIDE • REVELATION 20:9)** "They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city." What city is this? It's the New Jerusalem, which has come down from heaven. You read that more clearly in chapter 21. **(SLIDES • REVELATION 21:1-2)** "Now I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away. Also there was no more sea. Then I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband."

SLIDE • HOLY CITY. The New Jerusalem comes to the Earth. The saved are inside. The lost are outside.

Did you ever have an experience where you KNEW you'd missed out on something. It's usually not a great feeling. I've seen people miss buses and planes and sometimes they're distraught because they just HAD to be on that bus or plane. But now you've got people who are outside the

SLIDE • NEW JERUSALEM. They realize now that it's forever too late. They simply cannot be saved. Imagine the desperation people will feel then.

In Revelation 22 the picture is painted clearly. Jesus says,

SLIDE • REVELATION 22:11-12. "He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still. And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work." In Revelation 6, the Bible speaks of the return of Jesus when it says, **(SLIDES (3) • REVELATION 6:14-17)** "Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place. And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, "Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"

Imagine how you'd feel to know you'd had every chance to know and accept and follow Jesus. And you hadn't taken it. In the Old Testament, the story is told of Esau, who sold the birthright, the special privileges that belonged to the first born, for a meal of lentil stew. Why in the world would someone do that? Well, he was hungry. Yes, but didn't he realize he'd get over his hunger? He could have waited. And if he really wanted that food, he could have bought it without paying so much! All that is true. But remember the marshmallow experiment carried out by Stanford University? People aren't good at delayed gratification. We want what we want when we want it. Esau wanted that food. He was faint with hunger. He couldn't wait. Well, he WOULDN'T wait. Can you think of there EVER being a reason that we should wait to come to Jesus in faith?

Let's think this through. All of us have sinned according to the Bible. Everyone alive. And sin brings death with it, because sin is us going our own way and separating from God. God is vast.

SLIDE • JOHN 3:16. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life."

SLIDE • PHILIPPIANS 2:13. "For it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure."

SLIDE • PHILIPPIANS 1:6. "Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ."

SLIDE • LUKE 22:42. "Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done."

SLIDE • THE CROSS.

SLIDE • HOLY CITY.

SLIDE • EARTH MADE NEW.

SLIDE • REVELATION 20:9. "They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them."

SLIDE • JESUS INVITING.

SLIDE • SECOND COMING.



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