

Intro. It's been said Johann Sebastian Bach liked to sleep & his children had an unusual way of waking him. They would go to the piano & begin playing a composition, but when they got the last note, they would stop & not play it. It worked like a charm & it always woke him up. He would get up from him sleep, go to the piano & play the final chord. He couldn't stand to leave it hanging—unfinished. In the same way, we are awaiting God's final song in His victory on the earth & God will not leave His grand composition without striking the final note (Hitchcock, 420-421). As we continue our series on "The Dragon, the Lamb & Eternity," let's look at Revelation 20:7-10 on "Satan's Last Stand."

Theme: Satan's defeat

Background: Because this text is short and to help get everyone on the same page with what I believe are the order of events in Revelation, let me briefly go over those with you in a timeline of the events: Since Christ died, rose & ascended, we are in the last days. Toward the end of those days, there will be a 7-year Tribulation, where the Antichrist begins to reign. In the midst of that, he will break a covenant & usher in the Great Tribulation (the final 3½ years). While God's judgments are being poured out on the earth, believers will be protected from God's wrath, much like Noah & his family were preserved in the ark during the Flood judgment & much like Israel was protected during most of the 10 plagues on Egypt. The Battle of Armageddon occurs at the end of the Great Tribulation, when Jesus returns & defeats the Antichrist, false prophet & all the kings gathered against Him. As He returns, the resurrection of the saints & the rapture of the remaining believers occur & they are given new bodies. Christ sets up His millennial kingdom & begins by having Satan thrown into prison.

➤ Moreover, let me describe this millennial kingdom found mostly in 20:1-6, but referred to also in v. 7. These are the most prevalent conditions on earth during Christ's reign:

1. Peace (Isaiah 2:4; 9:4-7; 11:6-9; Zechariah 9:10)
2. Joy (Isaiah 12:3-6; Zechariah 8:19; 10:6-7)
3. Holiness (Isaiah 35:8; Ezekiel 43:7-12; 45:1; Zechariah 14:20-21)
4. Glory (Isaiah 35:2; 60:1-9; Ezekiel 43:1-5)
5. Justice (Isaiah 9:7; 11:5; 42:1-4)
6. Full knowledge (Isaiah 11:1-2; Habakkuk 2:14)
7. Absence of Sickness (Isaiah 35:5-6; Ezekiel 34:16)
8. Universal Worship of the Lord (Ezekiel 40-48; Zechariah 13:2; 14:16)
9. Economic Prosperity (Isaiah 35:1-2; Ezekiel 36:29-30)
10. The Presence of God (Ezekiel 37:27-28; Ezekiel 48:35)

➤ Some have asked the question, why does God give Satan one last shot? Why not just be done with him? Apparently, even the ideal conditions under the personal reign of Christ does not change the human heart, which desperately wicked—man is totally depraved & must be completely dependent on the grace of God

➤ In light of Revelation 20 & related passages, let me give you a few truths about the millennium & also Satan's release from captivity:

1. The initial inhabitants of the millennial kingdom include all the saints & some sinners who survive the Great Tribulation (20:4-6; Zechariah 14:16-21)

- There's no question the saints inhabit the millennial kingdom (20:4-6)
- Some scholars believe "the nations at the four corners of the earth" (20:8) are those which were so removed from Jerusalem that they never took part in the Battle of Armageddon
- This may be true, because Zechariah tells us of a group from the nations who will be forced to obey the Lord during His reign (14:16-21)
- Now the text doesn't say this next part, but it should not be surprising that some of those sinners will become believers at Jesus' coming

Illus: When looking at American history & the pilgrims from England, the vast majority of the original inhabitants in the New World who made the trek from Europe were believers, but there were a few unbelievers mixed in

2. Children will be born during the millennium & live long lives (Isaiah 65:20)

- Isaiah 65:20 may be talking about the New Heavens & New Earth, but several scholars have seen it applicable to the millennial kingdom
- Those sinners who survive & those who are converted shortly after Christ returns will have natural bodies (they haven't been glorified yet). They will be able to procreate & during the next 1,000 years, billions will most likely be born & they will live longer than ever before

Illus: The Florida Hospital's campaign for "Healthy 100" will become reality in the millennial kingdom

- It should not be surprising that people with glorified bodies (1 Corinthians 15:51-54) will coexist with people with natural bodies, because Christ had a glorified body after His resurrection & interacted with the disciples

3. Satan's release will be for the deception of the nations one last time (20:7-8)

- The reference to "Gog & Magog" probably refers to a man & a region (Magog means "land of Gog—in this case, it may simply mean "prince & people"), but it could refer to all the nations which gather against the Lord (Noah's son Japheth had a son named Magog, Genesis 10:2).
- Gog is the personal name of the prince of Meshach & Tubal in Asia Minor (Ezekiel 39:1)
- Some scholars believe there are two great battles—Gog & Magog before the millennium (synonymous to Armageddon) & one after it, kind of like WWI & WWII
- Others see the reference in Ezekiel 38-39 to follow the millennial kingdom, when Israel comes back to life (as mentioned in Ezekiel 37)
- Ezekiel 38 speaks of armies from the north & east (Persia) & west (Ethiopia) gathering against Israel

Illus: If you are a fan of history, you should be familiar with Waterloo, the battle in 1815 which turned Napoleon away from further European advances, leading to his eventual capture & began his downfall in Europe. Though it would be a few years before he died, Waterloo spelled Napoleon's doom. In similar fashion, Christ's defeat of sin & death via the cross & resurrection spelled doom for Satan, but he won't be done until his final battle.

4. Satan & his army will be defeated quickly & decisively by the Lord (20:9)

- The encampments of God's people reminds us of the wilderness wanderings of Israel in tents—even in the millennial kingdom, God's people are really pilgrims in a foreign land, awaiting a heavenly city
- Though Satan & the nations gathered an enormous army to fight against the Lord & His people, the battle was over when God sent down fire from heaven to consume them

Illus: Much like reigning fire & brimstone on Sodom & Gomorrah, Genesis 19

5. Satan will be judged for all eternity in the lake of fire (20:10)

- The archenemy of mankind ever since the Garden of Eden will be dealt with decisively & ultimately when he is cast in the lake of fire, where he will be tormented forever
- Satan was temporarily released from the abyss, but he will never be released from the lake of fire

So what?

➤ Don't assume you will get a 2nd chance as a survivor of the Great Tribulation

Conc. If I were prophetic in predicting the future & I said 1,000 people were going to die in a tsunami at the beach, but 10 people would survive, would you love the beach so much that you would stay there or would you heed the warning? You would heed the warning rather than take a chance at being the 1% who survive. So why would you not heed the warning to trust in Christ today & find deliverance in Him because a massive tsunami called death is coming, ready to sweep you away. You can hear this message or any other one like it & not be moved to act, but you need to remember this book was originally written to 7 churches, 5 of which desperately needed repentance. They needed to repent from leaving their first love, not putting the Lord first in their lives (we have some of that here). They needed to repent from following heresy (I don't think that is present here). They needed to repent from sexual immorality (it's hidden here). They needed to repent from complacency (we have some of that here). They needed to repent from spiritual pride (we have that here). So this message should continually challenge us to **see if love for the Lord & loyalty to the truth in belief & behavior are central to our lives**. Don't give in to sin, for that's the dragon's doing. Give yourself to the Lamb, who gave Himself for you!