

## **Revelation 20:7-10** **Satan Loosed, Satan Destroyed**

Well let's turn in our Bibles please to the book of Revelation chapter 20. We're going to be reading together verses 1 through 10, though the focus of our study is going to be on verses 7 to 10. Revelation 20, verses 1 to 10:

“<sup>1</sup> And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. <sup>2</sup> And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, <sup>3</sup> and cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.

“<sup>4</sup> And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. <sup>5</sup> But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. <sup>6</sup> Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.

“<sup>7</sup> And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, <sup>8</sup> and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. <sup>9</sup> And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. <sup>10</sup> And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever.”

Revelation chapter 20 began the seventh and last parallel section in the book of Revelation. This last parallel section traverses the entire time period between the first and the second coming of Christ, just like all the six previous parallel sections did.

Chapter 20, verses 1 to 3, told us about the binding of Satan by Christ at His first coming. The result of this binding of Satan is that he is now unable to deceive the nations like he did in the past. Because Satan is bound, he is unable to get the nations to work together to persecute the church. Because he is bound, he is unable to mount any kind of a transnational effort to wipe the church off the face of the earth. As a result of the binding of Satan, the church enjoys a large degree of safety and protection from the persecution of civil governments in this age.

Furthermore, the result of this binding of Satan was that he was unable to stop the spread of the gospel around the world, and he was unable to stop the penetration of the gospel into every nation. The church is able to enter Satan's kingdom and take all of God's elect out of it, and Satan can do nothing to stop that. Because Satan has been bound, Satan has been helpless to stop the conversion of hundreds of millions of people to faith in Jesus Christ during this age. The result has been, as Jesus said in Matthew 24 and verse 14, that the gospel of the kingdom has been preached in all the world for a witness to all nations.

Now just because Satan has been bound so that he cannot raise up a worldwide persecution against the church, and so that he cannot stop the worldwide spread of the church, does not mean that he cannot still do a great deal of evil to the people of God. And so, as we looked at Revelation chapter 20, verses 4 to 6 last time, we saw that in this age during which Satan is bound, there are still many who are beheaded for the witness of Jesus and for the word of God, because they refuse to worship the false gods of this world.

But the encouragement to the believers in this age is this—that when Satan persecutes and kills believers on this earth through his evil agents, the Beast, the False Prophet, and Babylon, those same believers immediately go to heaven to rule and reign with Christ throughout this age. Satan's attacks on believers in this age accomplish nothing. It only increases their reward and their blessedness, and they are received by Christ and enthroned by Christ in the glory of heaven, where they rule and reign with Him.

This state of Satan being bound and the believers being thereby protected from worldwide persecution so they can engage in worldwide preaching of the gospel and a worldwide plundering of Satan's kingdom, is said to last for "a thousand years." We have seen that this number is symbolic, and that it represents the totality of the time between the binding of Satan and the loosing of Satan. This symbolic millennial period has been going on for nearly 2,000 years thus far, and it will continue to go on as long as needed for all of God's elect to become saved. But when the last elect person has been saved, then our testimony will be finished and this millennial period of God's protection will be over.

And when this millennial period ends, we are told that Satan will be released from the restraint he is currently under. We saw that in chapter 20 and verse 3, when it says that when the thousand years is fulfilled "after that he must be loosed a little season." And when he is released from his present restraint, the end times will begin, which is that "little season" spoken of in verse 3. Now we do not know when the last elect person will be saved. That event could occur today, or it could occur many centuries into the future. But when it does occur, Satan will be loosed and all hell will break loose upon the Christian community.

Now it's important for us to understand the sequence of events here and to cast off commonly held, but very erroneous end-times thinking that is propagated by modern Dispensationalism. Many people teach that the second coming of Christ could occur at any moment, and they teach that the second coming of Christ is imminent. But this simply is not true. The second coming of

Christ is not imminent. It cannot occur at any moment. And the reason why the second coming of Christ is not imminent and the reason why it cannot occur at any moment is because several very clear and very clearly defined events must take place before Christ returns.

Before Christ returns, there will be the great apostasy and the betrayal of Christians by non-Christians. There will be this tremendous falling away. Secondly, there will be the rise of Antichrist and his one-world government. Thirdly, the great transnational persecution of the church, almost to the point of extinction, is going to take place. Fourthly, false Christs will be prevalent, who will do signs and wonders as false prophets in order to direct men to worship the Antichrist. Fifthly, there will be a shaking and a crumbling of the universe itself. And after all of these events take place, *then* the second coming will occur.

So the second coming of Christ is not imminent. It is not something that could occur at any moment, as the Pre-tribulational Rapture teachers would have us believe. All of these signs have to come to pass first, and then and only then will the second coming occur.

Now we have said that the second coming of Christ is not imminent, but what is imminent, and what could occur at any moment, is the salvation of the last elect person. And therefore, the loosing of Satan from the restraint he is currently under could happen today. Therefore, we need to always be ready for tremendous persecution to suddenly arise, and we need to always be ready to endure great suffering for Christ. We do not know when the last person will be saved. We do not know how much longer it will be before Satan is loosed. Therefore, be grateful for the time of protection you currently live in, and do all you can now to spread the gospel, and publicly bring glory to God, because the time may soon come when that is no longer possible.

Now you recall that verse 3 of Revelation 20 told us that at the end of this millennium of protection that the church is currently enjoying, Satan would be released from the restraint that was upon him, and he will be released for what is called a “little season.” So at the end of this age, Satan will be released from the restraint of the prison he is now in, and verses 7 to 10, which is the object of our study today, tell us what the result of that release will be. What we see is that Satan will incite the nations to unify in an effort to destroy the church from off the face of the earth. But before Satan and his helpers are able to complete that task, Jesus will return, He will rescue His saints, and He will cast Satan and all of his helpers into the lake of fire.

So we have seen in the previous chapters in the book of Revelation, that the focus has been on Satan’s helpers, on their evil work, and upon their final defeat. But here in chapter 20, the focus is on Satan himself and on his evil work, and on his final defeat. We saw the defeat of those with the mark of the beast in chapter 14. We saw the defeat of Babylon in chapter 17. We saw the defeat of the beast and false prophet in chapter 19. And now in chapter 20, we’re going to see the defeat of Satan.

Now in chapter 20, we have three major events occurring in relationship to Satan. First of all, Satan is bound; we saw that in verse 2. And then, Satan is loosed; we see that in verse 7. And

then finally, Satan is burned; we see that in verse 10, when he is cast into the lake of fire. So the movement in chapter 20 is: Satan bound; Satan loosed; and Satan burned. So what we are going to do is give our attention to this final event in the end of this age, when Satan is loosed, and seek to better understand how it's going to unfold, and how it's going to end.

In the first place then this morning, let us consider together the loosing of Satan from his bondage. Now the loosing of Satan from his bondage is in verse 7. Notice it says, "And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison."

Now we were told back up in verse 3 that at the end of this symbolic thousand-year period called the Millennium, Satan would be loosed from his bondage for a "little season," and verse 7 tells us of the fulfillment of that prediction contained in verse 3. This little season is a very short period of time, in relationship to the thousand-year period during which the church enjoys protection from much of Satan's power.

We can gather an idea about just how short this little season is from other passages that speak about this same event. There are three other passages that speak of the length of this little season, two in the book of Revelation, and one in the book of Matthew, and we want to look at each of them in turn. So turn in your Bibles please, first of all, to Revelation chapter 11. We're going to read together verses 1 to 12. Revelation 11, verses 1 to 12:

"<sup>1</sup> And there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. <sup>2</sup> But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months. <sup>3</sup> And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.

"<sup>4</sup> These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth. <sup>5</sup> And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed. <sup>6</sup> These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will. <sup>7</sup> And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them. <sup>8</sup> And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. <sup>9</sup> And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves. <sup>10</sup> And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth. <sup>11</sup> And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them. <sup>12</sup> And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them." And of course then immediately, we have the second coming with the seventh trumpet.

Now you recall that when we preached on this passage some months ago, we said that the forty two months was the same as the twelve hundred and sixty days, and that both of them are equivalent to three and a half years. So this symbolic three and a half year period, is the time in which the church bears witness throughout the world, and the church is represented by these two witnesses.

During that three and a half years, the church is unstoppable in its witness, and it is invincible in its progress, as verse 5 and 6 make clear. This long three and a half year period is followed by the rise of Antichrist, who is the beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit. It says in chapter 11, verse 7, “And when they shall have finished their testimony,” that is, when the last elect person is saved, then “the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them.”

So when Satan is loosed, Antichrist arises, who is this beast that ascends out of the bottomless pit, and a short symbolic three and a half day period follows, in which the church is severely persecuted. You recall that we said that three and a half days was less than one third of one percent of the three and a half years that symbolized the church age, in which the church was invincible in bearing witness to the whole world of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

So the symbolic three and a half years of church witness to the world is equivalent to the symbolic one thousand years of Revelation chapter 20; and the symbolic three and a half days of persecution of the church by Antichrist and his transnational coalition of nations is equivalent to the “little season” of Revelation chapter 20.

So however long the time is that Satan is bound and the church is invincible in its witness to the whole world, the little season that follows is extremely short in relationship to it, and in comparison with it. It is just a few years. I mean, it’s already been 2,000 years, okay? And one third of one percent of 2,000 years is only six years.

So what this passage is telling us is that this little season, in relationship to the long season in which Satan is bound, is a very short little season. The little season of Satan being loosed to raise up the Antichrist and form the transnational coalition of nations to attempt to destroy the church off the earth will be an extremely short period of time, compared to the length of time the church has been powerful and victorious and successful in spreading its message and presence over the whole world.

Now let’s turn to a second passage, and that one is in Revelation chapter 17. In Revelation chapter 17, notice if you will verses 12 to 14. It says, “<sup>12</sup> And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. <sup>13</sup> These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. <sup>14</sup> These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.”

Now you recall that when we preached on this passage, we said that these ten kings represent the transnational coalition that Antichrist, who is here called the beast, is going to assemble through the power of Satan, when Satan is loosed. Here, the time period in which Satan empowers the Antichrist to raise up this transnational coalition of nations to war against the church and against Christ, is said symbolically to be *one hour*, once again a term that speaks of a very short period of time, in proportion to the time in which the church bears witness to the whole world.

The third passage we want to look at is Matthew chapter 24, so turn there please with me if you would. Here the disciples asked Jesus a question about when His second coming is going to occur, and what signs will accompany it. I want to read verses 3 to 14, then we're going to skip down to verse 24, and then we're going to skip down to verses 29 to 30 to pick up the relevant passages. Matthew 24, 3 to 14:

“<sup>3</sup> And as he,” that is, Jesus, “sat upon the mount of Olives, the disciples came unto him privately, saying, Tell us, when shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world? <sup>4</sup> And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. <sup>5</sup> For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. <sup>6</sup> And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. <sup>7</sup> For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in diverse places. <sup>8</sup> All these are the beginning of sorrows.”

So up to this point in time, this has been what's going on in the church age. But there's a transition with verse 9: “<sup>9</sup> *Then* shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. <sup>10</sup> And *then* shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. <sup>11</sup> And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. <sup>12</sup> And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. <sup>13</sup> But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved. <sup>14</sup> And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in *all* the world for a witness unto *all* nations; and then shall the end come.”

Now skip down to verse 24: “<sup>24</sup> For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.” Now skip down to verse 29. “<sup>29</sup> Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: <sup>30</sup> and then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.”

I thoroughly expounded this entire chapter when I preached through the gospel of Matthew, and the relevant sermons in that series are sermons number 160, all the way through to number 165, which are available on Sermon Audio, if you want to get the full exposition of the passage.

Now the period in which Satan is loosed begins at verse 9, and in the subsequent verses Jesus describes the events and the signs that will precede His coming. First, the gospel will have been preached in all the world for a witness to all nations, and then the end will come. Secondly, believers will be hated of all nations, and the nations will seek to destroy and kill the people of God. Thirdly, there will be great apostasy of the professing church, and the true believers will be betrayed by the false believers. Fourthly, there will be a rise of false prophets and false Christs, who will do signs and wonders so great that if it were possible, even the elect would be deceived by them. Fifthly, there will be a great disruption of the created universe, in which the natural elements in the heavens will be shaken out of their places. And after all of these things occur, Jesus will return—verse 30.

Now I want you to notice the commentary of Christ on the timeframe in which all of these events that follow the loosing of Satan, beginning at verse 9, will occur. Notice Matthew 24, verses 32 to 34: “<sup>32</sup> Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh.” If you drove to church this morning, you saw trees beginning to bud and bloom, and you said to yourself, Summer’s on the way.

Verse 33: “<sup>33</sup> so likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it,” that is, the second coming of Christ, “is near, even at the doors.” Here’s our verse: “<sup>34</sup> Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled.” And so what Jesus is saying is, the generation that sees the things starting at verse 9, will not pass away until they see the event of verse 30, when Jesus returns.

In other words, these symbolic terms of three and a half days from Revelation 11; one hour, from Revelation 17; and a little season, used in Revelation 20—those time periods will not last longer than one generation, because the generation that starts to see these things will not pass away until it sees the end of these things. The same generation that starts to see the fulfillment of these signs that begin with the loosing of Satan will not pass away until that very same generation sees the coming of Christ. And since a generation, in the Bible, is forty years, this little season of Satan being loosed will last no longer than that, and probably significantly less than that.

The time between the loosing of Satan and the second coming of Christ will be very short. It will be just a few years; certainly less than one generation. Antichrist and his transnational coalition gathered together to slaughter the church from off the earth will have a very short reign. Jesus said in Matthew 24 and verse 22, “And except those days should be shortened, there should *no flesh* be saved,” that is, every Christian would be destroyed, “but for the elect’s sake those days shall be shortened,” that is, those days will only be for a little season.

Well that brings us then to our second major point this morning. Having seen the loosing of Satan from his bondage, which will only occur for a very brief period of time before Jesus returns, in the second place, notice secondly, the deception practiced by Satan on the nations. If you haven’t already, please turn back to Revelation chapter 20, and notice if you will, verses 8 and 9a. It says in verse 8, speaking of Satan, “<sup>8</sup> and [he] shall go out to deceive the nations

which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. <sup>9</sup> And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city.”

At this point in history, Satan’s only desire will be to eradicate the church from off the face of the earth, and as soon as he is released from his restraint, he immediately sets out to employ his agents to accomplish the destruction of the church. The way he gets civil governments of the world to serve his goal of destroying the church from the face of the earth is through deception. Satan raises up the Antichrist, whom he personally indwells, and then uses the false prophet, who represents anti-Christian religion, to deceive the nations of the earth into joining the Antichrist in striving to kill every remaining Christian on the earth.

Jesus said, regarding this time in which Satan would be loosed, in Matthew 24:11, that many false prophets would arise and deceive many. Jesus went on to say in Matthew 24 and verse 24 that these false prophets will show great signs and wonders that will deceive everyone except the elect.

This process of deceiving the nations into joining the Antichrist to make war against the church is described in Revelation chapter 16. Turn back there please with me if you would. Revelation chapter 16, beginning at verse 12. In Revelation 16 and verse 12, it says, “And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared. <sup>13</sup> And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. <sup>14</sup> For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. <sup>15</sup> Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. <sup>16</sup> And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.”

Now when we expounded this passage previously, we said that this sixth vial describes what happens during the little season of Satan’s loosing. And so the removal of the river and the coming of the armies is just simply a symbolic representation of the gathering of the nations under Antichrist to assault the church. But how was this gathering achieved? How was this unity accomplished, where all the nations of the earth wind up serving Antichrist in his persecution of the church?

Well how this is accomplished is described in verse 14. It is through demonically empowered miracle-working that all these false prophets, collectively referred to here in verse 13 as “the” false prophet, deceive the nations into gathering together under the Antichrist, who is of course the last manifestation of the beast. These nations gather together under the Antichrist in order to carry out this final war against the church on earth, which is known as the Battle of Armageddon. So this is how Satan is going to deceive the nations into following the Antichrist. He is going to do it through these false miracles done by the false prophets of anti-Christian religion.

Now turn back in your Bibles please to Revelation chapter 20, and notice in our passage in verse 8, we see that Satan, through his agents the Antichrist and the false prophet, is going to deceive the nations by means of this miracle-working of these false prophets. He is going to deceive the nations, it says in verse 8, that are in the four quarters of the earth. Now the four quarters of the earth simply refers to the four points of the compass—North, South, East, and West.

The point is, this deception is going to be worldwide in its extent, and it's going to be worldwide in its effect. All nations throughout the whole world will be deceived into joining Satan and his Antichrist in the coordinated, worldwide assault on the church in an effort to wipe it out completely. This worldwide, transnational coalition of nations is collectively referred to in verse 8 as “Gog and Magog.”

Now these names, Gog and Magog, are taken from the prophecy in Ezekiel chapter 38 and Ezekiel chapter 39. In these two chapters in Ezekiel, Gog is the name of a ruler, and Magog is the name of his people and his kingdom, over which he rules. Ezekiel prophesies that Gog and his nation and people, Magog, will attack Israel. But God says, I will defeat them. So this is what we have in Ezekiel 38 and 39.

So historically, Gog and his people Magog were the enemies of the people of God. John takes these terms from Ezekiel, and he transfers them to the Antichrist and his people, who are the ultimate enemies of the people of God, whom God Himself will destroy. Antichrist is referred to by the name Gog, and the coalition of nations serving him are referred to as Magog.

Verse 8 says that they are gathered together to battle, and they are so numerous that they are likened to the number of the grains of the sand of the seashore. That's a big army. This army consists of all of the people on the earth, minus the believers. It will therefore be an army of several billion people. Now notice verse 9a: “And they”—that is, Antichrist and his transnational coalition of all the nations and people on the earth—“And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city.”

Now verse 9a says of this great army of people that they will go up on the breadth of the earth and compass—that means surround. A compass is a circle. It means they'll encircle, is the idea. They will surround the camp of the saints and the beloved city.

Now both of these terms—the camp of the saints and the beloved city—refer to the church, the people of God. The phrase, “the camp of the saints,” recalls the image of Israel during her pilgrimage and journey from Egypt to the Promise Land, when she camped in the wilderness. This image speaks of the fact that the church is made up of pilgrims, who are on a journey from this world to the new earth, which of course is our Promised Land. We are aliens and strangers in this world; we are temporarily camped here, traveling through this world during this life, because this world is not our home. We are on a journey, and so we are the camp of the saints,

camping our way through life until we finally get to our home, camping our way through the centuries, until we finally get to the new earth.

Now the image of the beloved city in verse 9, was also spoken of as “the holy city” back in Revelation 11 and verse 2. If you remember Revelation 11 and verse 2, it says, “But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months.” And we said that when we expounded that passage that the holy city and the beloved city both referred to the same thing.

We saw when we studied Revelation 11 and verse 2, that the symbolic concept of the holy city and the beloved city were fully developed and explained in Revelation 21, verses 1 to 2 and verses 9 to 10. Notice Revelation 21:1 to 2: “<sup>1</sup> 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.” Now here it is: <sup>2</sup> And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.”

So we started thinking, A city is like a bride? What is that? Well, this is explained in verses 9 and 10. Notice: “<sup>9</sup> And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb’s wife. <sup>10</sup> And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me”—and you would expect it to say, He showed me a beautiful woman, because that’s what brides are, right? But what does he say? He says, He showed me “that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, <sup>10</sup> having the glory of God.”

And so the holy city and the new Jerusalem are just a metaphor and a symbolic picture of the church, the bride of Christ. So clearly, the beloved city, the holy city, represents the church, the bride of Christ. The holy city represents Christian society, as it is lived out among the saints as they sojourn together in this world. It is a city that is the exact opposite of Babylon, which is the corrupt city that represents anti-Christian society as it functions in this world.

So the church in this world is the holy city, the beloved city; and the wicked in this world are Babylon, the corrupt city, in their anti-Christian society. So we have Christian society, we have anti-Christian society; we have the holy city, and we have Babylon.

So these two terms in Revelation 20 and verse 9—the camp of the saints and the beloved city—are symbolic terms that describe the church in her pilgrimage, and the church in her society - the camp of the saints, and the city of the saints.

Now clearly, the church is not in a single geographic locality at this point in history, because the gospel’s been preached in the whole world, and then the end comes, remember? The church is scattered all across the face of the whole earth, and it resides in every country. And this is why the nations go up on the breadth of the earth, and they surround the believers wherever they may be found, in an effort to destroy them wherever on the breadth of the earth that they may reside.

Now the assault of this transnational coalition of nations on the church, wherever it's located on the earth, in a unified coordinated effort, is described in Revelation chapter 11, verses 7 to 10. Turn back there please. Revelation chapter 11, verse 7—here's the assault on the camp of the saints in the beloved city. Here it is, verse 7: “<sup>7</sup> And when they,” that is, the believers, “shall have finished their testimony,”—they preached the gospel to the whole world; all the elect are saved—“the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit”—that's Antichrist, indwelt by Satan. “The beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.” The war will be successful. The church will be overcome; the church will be largely killed. Not killed 100%, but largely destroyed.

Verse 8: “And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city,”—now notice, the great city is not the holy city. The great city is Babylon. Babylon represents anti-Christian society, wherever it is across the earth, right? Babylon is always called “that great city,” consistently throughout Revelation, time and time and time again, “that great city Babylon, that great city Babylon.” So when it refers to the great city here, it's talking about Babylon. “That great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.”

“<sup>9</sup> And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations”—there's the transnational coalition. You see the whole world there in verse 9—“shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves.”—the tremendous disrespect and dishonor and scorn they pour out upon those that they've slaughtered—“<sup>10</sup> And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets”—of course, they represent the church in its witness and evangelism—“tormented them that dwelt on the earth.”

So we've been tormenting the world for 2,000 years. They're tired of it. We've been telling them they're sinners in defiance against God, they're rebels and on their way to hell. And of course, while the elect embrace the message, the rest of the world hates us for it, and they're finally going to get their day to crush us.

Notice also Revelation 13, verses 6 and 7, speaking of the final manifestation of the beast, who is the Antichrist—In verse 6 it says, “<sup>6</sup> And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. <sup>7</sup> And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.” There's the transnational coalition, that overcomes the church.

And so this is the work that Satan deceives the nations into doing, and this is the work that he gathers them together to accomplish under the deception and the direction of the now-loosed Satan and his demonic forces. Operating through the apostate church, the united nations of the world will be deceived into working together to eradicate every Christian from off the face of the earth. And they will be largely successful in doing so, to the point that the public witness and the

visible presence of the church will be removed from the earth, and it will just be a remnant scattered and in hiding, and when the last push is made to take them out, that's when Jesus returns.

And now we have come to our third and final major point. Having seen the loosing of Satan from his bondage in verse 7; having seen the deception practiced by Satan on the nations in verses 8 to 9a; notice thirdly, the destruction of Satan in the lake of fire, verses 9b to 10. Notice verse 9b of Revelation 20. As they're surrounding the camp of the saints and are about to wipe out the last of them, it says, "And fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. <sup>10</sup> And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever."

Now then, this worldwide, transnational, coordinated effort to destroy the Christians from off the face of the earth will be, as I said, largely successful, to the point that the visible presence of the church and the public witness of the church will be eliminated. The church will be slain and the church will be silenced, except for a small remnant that has managed to flee and hide. And when they are about to be discovered and destroyed as well, then Christ will return and rescue them, and resurrect the dead bodies of the martyred Christians, and destroy Satan and all of his people.

Now as it becomes apparent to Antichrist, who is Gog, and the nations that serve him, who are Magog, that Jesus is appearing in the heavens to rescue His people. Therefore, Antichrist and his people prepare themselves to fight against Christ Himself. It's kind of like, if you're beating up on a man's wife and you've just about got her killed, and then the husband shows up, you have to leave the wife and turn and fight the husband, right? And so here, Satan has virtually got the bride of Christ killed, and the husband Jesus shows up, and now Antichrist turns and he's going to face the new adversary that's coming to deliver His bride.

We see this in chapter 19 and verse 19. The second half of chapter 19 describes the second coming of Christ. Notice verse 12: "His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns." And then it says in verse 19: "And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army." So now all the kings of the earth and this transnational coalition, and Antichrist and the false prophet—they all turn, and now they're going to make war against Christ, who is returning. He's the one sitting on the white horse. Well, good luck!

We also see this in Revelation 17. Turning back to Revelation 17, verse 12: "And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but [will] receive power as kings one hour with the beast," in the end. "<sup>13</sup> These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast." Now here it is: "<sup>14</sup> These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings."

Back to Revelation chapter 20. Now notice if you will verses 9 and 10. Here it is: "<sup>9</sup> And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed [surrounded] the camp of the saints about,

and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. <sup>10</sup> And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.”

Now when it says in verse 9b that fire came down from God out of heaven and destroyed them, this is a reference to Second Thessalonians chapter 1. Turn there, please, with me if you would. In Second Thessalonians, chapter 1, beginning at verse 7, it says, “<sup>7</sup> and to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels,” there’s the second coming. Notice verse 8: “in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: <sup>9</sup> who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power; <sup>10</sup> when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe.” And so when it says that fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them, this is the fire—it’s Jesus coming *in* flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God and that obey not the gospel of the Lord Jesus.

This is further described in Second Thessalonians chapter 2. Notice verse 8. It says, “And then shall that Wicked [One] be revealed,” speaking of Antichrist, “whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth”—here it is—“and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.” Remember it says His eyes are like a flame of fire?

So when Jesus comes, He comes in flaming fire, and the brilliance of His glory, and the anger of His justice flames out against the world and kills every single unsaved person on the face of the earth, because that’s all that’s left. When Jesus first appears, He raptures up the remaining believers off the earth. He resurrects the dead bodies of the saints that are in heaven. So that whole group is with Him, and then this flaming fire falls, and it just smokes the entire earth and everyone that is on it. And 100% of the unsaved people are slaughtered. That’s what we’re told in Revelation chapter 19, verses 20 and 21:

“<sup>20</sup> And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. <sup>21</sup> And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.”

And so Jesus destroys the beast, He destroys the false prophet, He destroys all those who have the mark of the beast—Boom! They’re all dead in one blast of flaming fire. And that’s why there’s no Battle of Armageddon. Antichrist and his people gather together to battle against the church, and they slaughter most of the church, and when they’re just about to slaughter the rest, Jesus returns. But it isn’t a battle, it’s a wipeout. It’s not like Antichrist has a campaign and pushes Jesus back a little, and then Jesus has a campaign and pushes Antichrist back a little, and finally after going back and forth in battle, Jesus wins. It’s just like—Boom! Just one fell swoop, and it’s over.

And so what is the result of this coming of Christ in flaming fire to exercise vengeance? Verse 10 tells us that Satan is burned. Verse 10: “And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.” So he is cast into the lake of fire, where the beast and false prophet are, where he will never be able to harm us ever again for all eternity, and where he will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

So this is the absolute and final end of Satan and his kingdom and his power. He will suffer forever for his sins against God and for his sins against us. He will be fully repaid and recompensed for all the evil he has done. We will be fully delivered from his destructive work, and though he came to kill and to steal and to destroy, he will do so no longer, for all eternity. Satan is finished. His head, as Genesis 3:15 says, has been crushed. What he did in the Garden has now been completely undone; his kingdom and his person have been destroyed; the Garden is restored; and it is as though Satan has never existed and never done a thing, so perfect and glorious is the restoration.

And so it says in First John 3 and verse 8, “For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil,” and this is the ultimate and final destruction of the work of the Devil. When Jesus returns, all those who have the mark of the beast, the false prophet, the Antichrist, and Satan himself are all cast into the lake of fire.

Now this final destruction is described in Isaiah chapter 14, and I want us just to turn there for a moment. The book of Isaiah, chapter 14. We’ll start reading together at verse 12. It says: “<sup>12</sup>How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! <sup>13</sup>For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: <sup>14</sup>I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.”

This is what Satan has always aspired to be and to do; this is what he was attempting to do once he was loosed. But notice verse 15: “Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit. <sup>16</sup>They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms; <sup>17</sup>that made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; that opened not the house of his prisoners?” You see, Jesus delivered all of *His* people. Satan damns and imprisons all of *his*.

And so this is the great, final, climactic triumph of the Lord Jesus over Satan and his kingdom, and all of his helpers. And throughout all eternity, we will not have to deal with any of them, for they will all be eternally destroyed.

And so the question I have to ask you this morning is, Who are you identified with? Are you identified with Satan, or with Christ? If you are identified with Satan, you will have his end.

You will be cast into the lake of fire along with him. But, O, if you are Christ's, if you have repented of your sins and believed in Him, and served Him as Lord and Savior, in the end, He will deliver you. And though the wicked may do great injury to us, they can never permanently harm us. He will deliver us and we will be with Him forever.

And so this is the glorious end of the story of Christ destroying all of His enemies. Next week we'll look at the final judgment and the final disposition of all the peoples that have ever lived on the face of the earth. And then we will begin to see our eternal dwelling place—the new heavens and the new earth.

May God give us courage to keep fighting the good fight of faith, and to resist the Devil, who must flee from us, and not to give in to his evil devices and to his temptations, for we know his end. Let us not share in it by submitting to him, but rather, let us depart from it by resisting the Devil and fighting against him. Shall we pray together.

Our Father, we thank you for our wonderful Lord Jesus and the grand victory that He obtains for us. And even when Satan is loosed to do his worst and to marshal his best in the aid of his cause, yet even then, he shall go down to failure.

Thank you, Father, for this time of relative protection that we are living in, when Satan is bound. We don't know how much longer it's going to go on, but as long as it does, may we continue to press outward with the gospel, and to publicly declare the glory of God and the message of salvation through Christ throughout the world, until that last elect person has been saved.

Lord, we are grateful that even whatever martyrdom we suffer now, it's meaningless, because we're instantly enthroned in heaven, there to rule and reign with Christ until He returns for the remnant that is left on the earth.

Father, be pleased to strengthen us with faith and confidence and hope and optimism regarding the future, knowing that Christ will triumph, and in His triumph, we too shall triumph as well. In Jesus' name. Amen.