

REVELATION – SERMON 81

THE FINAL REBELLION

Revelation 20:7-10

INTRODUCTION

- Environmentalists see humanity as a blight upon the planet
- These unbelievers are correct that man is evil, but they are wrong as to the cause, and the solution
- Man is not evil because of capitalism, industrialisation or overpopulation, but because of *sin*
- And the solution to man's evil is not socialism, de-industrialising or depopulating, but redemption through the blood of Jesus Christ
- Prior to the flood, God was so grieved at man's wickedness, that he repented making man, determining to destroy him from the face of the earth (Genesis 6:5-6)
- Were it not for Noah finding grace in God's eyes, the entire human race would have been wiped out
- The same is true today – the earth is corrupted, filled with violence, and man's thoughts are only evil continually
- If not for God's grace, we all would be eternally doomed to the hell we deserve
- In the coming 1000 year kingdom of Christ, with Satan bound in the bottomless pit, man will be given the optimum conditions to prove whether he is the inherently good creature

he thinks he is, or the desperately wicked creature God says he is

- The final result is a global rebellion against the King Jesus and his saints, proving God to be true

These events at the end of the Millennium will prove three things:

I. SATAN'S INCORRIGIBILITY

A. Satan will be bound for 1000 years in the bottomless pit (vv.2-3)

1. His hosts of demons will also be banished at this time (Isaiah 24:21-22)

2. This place is called "his prison" (cf. 1 Peter 3:19)

B. He will be released at the end of the 1000 years

1. It may be the same angel that bound him that looses him

2. "He must be loosed a little season" (v.3)

C. Upon his release, he immediately deceives the nations into going to battle against God

1. His 1000 years in the pit do not reform him – he remains the father of lies (John 8:44)

2. Satan is wholly and absolutely evil

3. This refutes the Eastern philosophical concept of "yin and yang", where good cannot exist without evil, with these two forces complimenting one another, and intermingling

4. Biblical Christianity holds to certain *absolutes*
 - a. The absolute holiness and goodness of God
 - b. The absolute truth of the Scriptures
 - c. The absolute moral standard of God's law
 - d. The absolute evil of Satan

II. MAN'S DEPRAVITY

A. The nations will be deceived

1. Despite the global blessings of Christ's reign, the earth being filled with the knowledge of the Lord, and the banishment of Satan, many will reject Christ
2. These will be the descendants of those believers who will survive the tribulation and enter the kingdom alive
3. Though the parents will be born again believers, many of their offspring will not exercise personal faith in the Lord Jesus Christ
4. Christ will rule with a rod of iron, and outward obedience to his laws will be strictly enforced
5. However, in their hearts they will hate him, and only "yield feigned obedience" (Psalm 66:3 margin)

B. This is the final proof of the wicked and corrupt heart of man

1. Today, people often blame their environment, circumstances, upbringing, etc, for their evil deeds

2. But the Millennium will show that that problem is, and always has been, in *us*, not our environment
3. Under every dispensation, man has failed to fulfil God's requirements, and ended in rebellion and judgment
 - a. The Age of Innocence (Genesis 1-2) ended with the fall of man (Genesis 3:1-6)
 - b. The Age of Conscience (Genesis 3-7) ended with global wickedness (Genesis 6:5)
 - c. The Age of Human Government (Genesis 8-11) ended with the Tower of Babel (Genesis 11:1-4)
 - d. The Age of Promise (Genesis 12-Exodus 18) ended with Israel dwelling in Egypt (Genesis 46:6)
 - e. The Age of Law (Exodus 19-Malachi 4) ended with the law broken and Christ rejected (2 Kings 17:7-20; Matthew 27:1-25)
 - f. The Age of Grace (Matthew 1-Revelation 19) will end in apostasy (2 Timothy 3:1-7)
 - g. The Age of the Kingdom (Revelation 20) will end with the final rebellion (20:7-10)

III. GOD'S VICTORY

A. Gog and Magog

1. This is a reference to the enemies of Israel in Ezekiel 38-39

2. The battle recorded in Ezekiel is not the one in Revelation 20:8-9, as it involves regional powers, not global, and takes place in the early part of the tribulation
3. Gog and Magog here then are taken to be a general reference or title for God's enemies

B. Gathered for battle against Jerusalem and the saints

1. It seems astonishing that that people would think this could succeed, yet it shows the deceptive power of Satan upon a mind that is willing to be deceived
2. They will be deceived to forget God's past judgment on his enemies at Armageddon
 - a. People easily forget history
 - b. Man has largely today forgotten that God once destroyed the world with a flood, despite the clear evidence in geology, and the sign of the rainbow
3. They will be deceived to believe that God is not Almighty, and can be overcome
 - a. This has been Satan's successful deception from the beginning
4. He will convince the nations that there will be no negative consequences for going to war against Christ and the saints, only good will come of it – a better kingdom with better laws

C. Devouring fire from heaven

1. This can hardly be called a battle, as God destroys them before they can attack
2. God will destroy them the same way he destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 19:24)
3. As the Sodomites, these rebels will not only suffer bodily death by fire, but suffer “the vengeance of eternal fire” (Jude 7)

D. The devil’s damnation

1. The beast and false prophet, cast alive into the lake of fire 1000 years earlier (19:20), remain there suffering torment
2. Just as God has a place prepared for his saints (John 14:2), so God has prepared a place for the devil and his angels – the everlasting fire of the burning lake (Matthew 25:41)
3. Eternal torment
 - a. The language here leaves no room for “annihilation”, but clearly shows a continuous, eternal state of torment
 - b. “Day and night” denotes continuousness (Luke 18:7; Acts 9:27; Revelation 7:15; 12:10)
 - c. The Greek for “for ever and ever” (*eis tous aionas ton aionon*) is literally “to the ages of the ages”
4. The exact same eternal fate awaits all men who reject Jesus Christ (14:10; 20:15)
5. This is the final stage in Satan’s progressive downfall

- a. He was cast down from his exalted position after his first rebellion against God (Isaiah 14:12; Ezekiel 28:16)
 - b. He was cast down to the ground after tempting Eve in the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:14)
 - c. Christ's death and resurrection marked Satan's defeat and sealed his future casting down (John 12:31; Colossians 2:15; Hebrews 2:14)
 - d. He will be cast out of heaven by Michael (Luke 10:18; Revelation 12:9)
 - e. He will be bound and cast into the bottomless pit at the coming of Christ (20:2-3)
 - f. After 1000 years he will be finally cast into the lake of fire (20:10)
6. Note, that in the third chapter from the beginning of the Bible, the serpent enters; in the third chapter from the end of the Bible, the serpent exits
 7. Genesis 3:15 will be fulfilled in Revelation 20:10
 8. The damnation of Satan is a necessary part of the conclusion of Christ's millennial reign, when he delivers up the kingdom to the Father (1 Corinthians 15:24-28)
 - a. All enemies must be put under his feet, particularly Satan
 - b. Then the final enemy, death, shall be destroyed

CONCLUSION

1. If we needed any further proof of man's depravity, these verses give it, yet few people will acknowledge themselves to be the evil wretches we are
2. Are you like most people, proclaiming your own goodness? (Proverbs 20:6)
3. Until you are ready to confess you are a sinner by nature and practice, with your entire being polluted by evil, then you are not ready to be saved
4. Have you come to the place where you can say with the apostle Paul "I know that in me...dwelleth no good thing" (Romans 7:18)
5. Have you cried out with Job, "I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes" (Job 42:6)
6. God requires truth in our speech, truth in our conduct, but above all, truth in the inward parts (Psalm 51:6), because the heart is the fountainhead of the whole life (Proverbs 4:23)
7. To be accepted with God, we require a righteousness that goes beyond our external actions (Matthew 5:20)
8. The only hope for us is a *new heart* given to us, and created in us by God, upon our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (Ezekiel 36:26)