

Lesson # 71 Revelation 20:7-10 Man's Final Rebellion

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⁷ And when the thousand years are ended, Satan will be released from his prison ⁸ and will come out to deceive the nations that are at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle; their number is like the sand of the sea. ⁹ And they marched up over the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, but fire came down from heaven and consumed them, ¹⁰ and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

I. Satan is Released

v. 7

The first thing we want to notice in this passage is that Satan does not somehow escape from the bonds that God put on him. He is released. Once again, a sovereign God is involved in bringing about not only the end of the temporary incarceration, but in foisting Satan and his demonic horde back on the earth where some of the earth's inhabitants will be more than willing to have him rule over them. Even back in Rev. 20:3, there is a strong hint that he would be released after the 1,000 years was ended.

Christ has triumphantly returned to earth at the end of the Tribulation and set up His promised Kingdom, ruled from David's throne in Jerusalem during a time of idyllic, Eden like peace, safety and prosperity for His people with the specter of sin suppressed. Satan and his angelic followers have been in the Abyss for the 1,000 years or roughly 25 generations of humanity. ①

This is not an event that occurs leading up to the 1,000 year mark, but v. 7 states, "After the 1,000 years is ended...". A millennium of peace has been attained, as Christ has ruled with an iron rod, which implies that such a stern rule will be required. Each generation of people born during the Millennium will be born as sinners, and will need to be saved just as every other person in history. The difference will be that Christ is among them physically, but due to human depravity, even that will not guarantee that all will be saved. The one thing the unsaved will not be able to say at the end of this age is, "The devil made me do it", or "a demonic spirit influenced me, so I am not at fault". No such excuses will be valid.

II. The Warriors are Gathered

v. 8

When Satan is released along with his demons he comes out to deceive the nations – all the nations. Although demons are not mentioned here, one finite being (Satan) could not accomplish what now takes place on his own, so the presence of these demons is strongly implied.

Gog & Magog are mentioned here (cf. Ezek. 38-39), who were earlier enemies of Israel, but for the reasons I noted at length in lesson # 41, this battle in Revelation 20 is not the same one depicted in Ezekiel 38-39. These name may be symbolic or real, that is not certain, but the gathering of nations for this battle is very real. It is probable that Gog & Magog are not necessarily located in the same geographical region as during Ezekiel's battle, but what is being described here is a worldwide gathering of the wicked (those who had feigned allegiance to Christ or were openly rebellious) from whatever nations there are at the end of the Millennial Kingdom.

They are gathered for battle, and note that this is no small army. The number is like the “sands of the sea”. This at least means more like millions than thousands, plus the demons who are rallying them. If these demons are true to their nature as depicted in the Gospels, they will indwell many of the people on the earth.

III. Short Lived Anarchy

v. 9

They march out onto “the broad plain of the earth”. As was mentioned in earlier lessons, Jerusalem will be the high point on earth during the Millennium as the mountains will be leveled. They will look from space like a giant army of ants, and really, they have less power against God or His saints than ants.

Since they surround “the camp of the saints and the beloved city”, we are certain ② that this is Jerusalem where Christ reigns from and where His faithful are gathered. Note Jer. 3:17; 31:6; Micah 4:7; Zech. 14:9-11. The saints will surely be prepared to defend themselves against what seems imminent. Consider also that those who are alive during the Millennium, along with glorified saints will know that the end is approaching because God's word will still be available, studied and proclaimed. They will be ready.

However, the battle will not take place. The threat will be neutralized in a moment as a result of the fire which comes down out of heaven to consume them all. Note **Isaiah 37:33-38**.

Fire from heaven is a well known judgment from OT times. See I Kings 18:20-39; II Kings 1:1-18; Gen. 18. It was a divine remedy to judge the wicked and was the power John and James wanted in Luke 9:54 to deal with perceived enemies. However, in Luke, they were rebuked for asking for this. It is seen as a clear indication of divine judgment power and this verse in Revelation 20 is no exception. This fire will cleanse the earth once and for all of this gathering of human vermin. They are consumed in the fire, not just chased off. They are gone.

Though these people meet physical doom (& these will only be those born during the 1,000 years since all who entered at the start of it are saved), they will stand in the GWTJ which follows soon after this. Unlike those who have been in Hades

awaiting final judgment, these hapless people will not have long to wait for their transfer to the Lake of Fire, their soon to be permanent residence.

IV. Satan Finally Meets His Doom v. 10

Without hesitation, the devil is taken – he survives the fire because he is a spirit being as are his demons & all are thrown alive into the Lake of Fire. Their eternal fate is sealed and their power comes to an abrupt end. Once again, John reminds us that they are cast into the same place the Antichrist & False Prophet have been for the last 1,000 years, and that “they too will be tormented day and night forever and ever.” This phrase cannot be spun to mean Annihilationism.

So here ends rebellion and sin, never to raise its ugly head again. The devil and his demons have been judged and silenced, banished eternally from the presence of all that is good. They will do no more harm and it is not as if Satan will rule in Hell as the poet, John Milton postulates. He will simply be Hell’s most infamous inhabitant. Note Ezek. 28:11-19 & Isaiah 14:9-23. Satan will be in no position to ever do anything again but suffer for eternity. He is finally in the place Jesus said (in Matt. 25:41) that was “prepared for the Devil and his angels”.

Next lesson – Lesson # 72 -- Rev. 20:11-15 – The Great White Throne Judgment