

## The Establishment of the Messianic Kingdom - Part 2

Revelation 20:1-3

We return, once again, to one of the most fascinating chapters in all of the Bible, Revelation chapter 20. Here we learn of the establishment of the messianic kingdom on earth. Let me read this text to you this morning. Although we will be focusing only on the first three verses this morning, I want to read the entire chapter—it is only 15 verses—so that you get the full context of what the Lord is revealing to John on the Isle of Patmos.

Revelation 20.

And I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, and threw him into the abyss, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he should not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time. And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of the testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is the one who has a part in the first resurrection; over these the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with Him for a thousand years. And when the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison, and will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war; the number of them is like the sand of the seashore. And they came up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and fire came down from heaven and devoured them. And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

And I saw a great white throne and Him who sat upon it, from whose presence earth and heaven fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead were judged from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they were judged, every one of them according to their deeds. And death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake

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of fire. And if anyone's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.<sup>1</sup>

We approach this text from a Premillennial perspective. If you don't understand fully what that means you can listen to what I taught on last week. But may I remind you that this is a perspective that believes that Christ comes to establish the millennial kingdom. He comes first, in contrast to the Postmillennial and the Amillennial perspectives that I explained and refuted last week.

Now several have asked if any of the early Church fathers during the post apostolic era held this post or this Premillennial position. And the answer is yes. In fact, the Church was Premillennial for about 150 years after the close of the New Testament era. Church fathers like Papias (who was a disciple of the apostle John), Tertullian, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus and even the author of the epistle of Barnabas all believed that Christ would come and establish an earthly, millennial, thousand year kingdom on earth. And this did not change until the Alexandrian school began to promote the allegorical method of biblical interpretation especially under the influence of Origen and Philo.

But Augustine had the greatest influence on the Church in turning it away from a literal hermeneutic and moving the Church towards this allegorical method which firmly entrenched Amillennialism, this whole system that somehow we are living in the kingdom now, that the Church has replaced Israel and so forth. And, of course, this was later advocated by—adopted and advocated by—the reformers and it is still very popular in reformed circles today. And, again, if you want more information on this you can listen to my discourse on “The Coming King and his Kingdom, Part 2” where I go into the history of this in a bit more detail.

But only in the last couple of centuries have the doctrines of ecclesiology, the understanding of the Church, the study of the Church, and eschatology, the *eschata*, the last things, the study of future events, only in the last couple of hundred years have these doctrines been really scrutinized and debated and refined like many other doctrines had been over the centuries.

This is a process that sometimes theologians call progressive revelation, not special revelation, but progressive revelation where, over time, certain doctrines are refined and clarified and systematized. There really is, if you study theology, a progression of orthodox Christian dogma. And, as I explained last week, we see this process coming to bear and bringing greater clarity on the doctrines of ecclesiology and eschatology. And, frankly, out of that, the Premillennial position has really become an increasingly formidable position against Postmillennialism and Amillennialism that is popular in many circles.

Because when you interpret the Bible consistently with a literal, historical, contextual, grammatical interpretation, when you take the normal meaning of Scripture, when you

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<sup>1</sup> Revelation 20:1-15.

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take Scripture at its face value you will ultimately come up with a Premillennial position. And even those who do not hold that position would agree with that statement.

So with this system of Bible interpretation we will begin to examine exegetically this amazing text in Revelation 20. There are seven themes that emerge in the text. Let me give them to you, even though we are only going to look at the first one this morning. We are going to see the incarceration of Satan, the allocation of rulers, the resurrection of saints, the incineration of rebels, the retribution of Satan, the disintegration of heaven and earth and, finally, the damnation of sinners.

Jewish people have a liturgy prayer that is often used in times of morning called the *Kaddish*. And it begins like this, quote, “May his great name be exalted and sanctified is God’s great name in the world which he created according to his will. May he establish his kingdom and may his salvation blossom and his anointed be near. During your lifetime and during your days and during the lifetime of all the house of Israel, speedily and very soon and say amen,” end quote. And then it goes on from there. This opening line is inspired by Ezekiel’s text in chapter 38 verse 23 where the Lord speaks through his prophet and says, “I will magnify Myself, sanctify Myself, and make Myself known in the sight of many nations; and they will know that I am the LORD.”<sup>2</sup>

Sadly, most Jewish people today do not realize that their Messiah has already come, has offered them the kingdom and they rejected the kingdom. They crucified the Lord of glory. But one day a remnant of his chosen people will see their *Kaddish* answered when their Messiah comes again the second time to establish his kingdom just as he has promised. Then he will, indeed, fulfill what we read in Ezekiel. He will magnify himself, sanctify himself, make himself known in the sight of many nations and they will know that I am the Lord. Certainly the nations do not know that today. At least they will not acknowledge that.

Now, as we have learned, God has promised a kingdom to his people Israel. All through Scripture we see this, in the Old Testament and the New Testament. And the millennial, earthly kingdom that is merely summarized here in Revelation 20 is actually the fulfillment of his covenantal promises that are detailed in the Old Testament prophecies. This will be a time when paradise will be regained, when the world will be renovated, when the world will be returned to Edenic splendor. This will be the first phase, you might say the earthly phase, of the heavenly kingdom.

Perhaps a good way of thinking of this is the millennial kingdom on earth is really the consummating bridge between the end of human history and the eternal state. At the close of the tribulation period on earth the warrior king is going to return and he is going to destroy all of those who are gathered against Jerusalem in the slaughter of Armageddon. He will cast the antichrist and the false prophet into the lake of fire. The Bible teaches that he will preserve a remnant of his elect both from Israel as well as the Gentile nations and he will reconcile them unto himself. But the remaining, unregenerate

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<sup>2</sup> Ezekiel 38:23.

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people on earth will stand condemned before him. And he will then separate them from his elect in the sheep and the goat judgments of Matthew 25 which closes with this promise. “And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”<sup>3</sup>

Now, at this point in the prophetic chronology, only believers will be left alive to populate the kingdom. So life will go on much like we know it today only without much of the ravages of sin on a renovated planet, a planet now ruled by Christ. And even the saints in glorified bodies will be reigning with him and this will continue for 1000 years. And at the end of the messianic reign on earth God will utterly destroy the current heaven and earth that is polluted by sin and he is going to create a new heaven. He is going to create a completely new earth that will exist in a reality beyond our ability to even comprehend. It will be a reality where the current laws of physics will be radically altered, an existence beyond time and space and matter as we know it.

So after rendering judgment upon the wicked at his Second Coming, he is going to exercise his regal authority once more by dispatching this magnificent angel who is going to lay hold of Satan and bind him for 1000 years as we will examine here in the first three verses.

And may I remind you that ever since his temptation of Even in the garden, Satan has continued to try and deceive the world into following him rather than worshipping the one true and living God. He disguises himself as an angel of light. He tirelessly seduces men and nations with every imaginable temptation. He even unsuccessfully tried to tempt Christ, you will recall, in the wilderness, and, again, in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Scripture teaches that his character is one of presumption. He is proud. He is powerful, wicked, cynical, crafty, deceitful, fierce and cruel. Yet, interestingly enough, he is also cowardly. Indeed, he will flee from those who will submit to God and resist him according to James 4:7.

The apostle Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians chapter four where he speaks of the gospel being veiled to those who are perishing, “in whose case the god of this world,”<sup>4</sup> small g referring to Satan, “the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ.”<sup>5</sup> And yet we can all rejoice knowing that Jesus rendered powerless him who had the power over death, that is the devil, Hebrews 2:14.

Now, can you imagine what the world will be like when the activities of the father of lies are all terminated completely? No more false religions. No more false teachers, no more lofty philosophies raised up against the knowledge of God, no more Islamic terrorists, no more corrupt politicians. It just goes on and on.

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<sup>3</sup> Matthew 25:46.

<sup>4</sup> 2 Corinthians 4:4.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

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I was thinking because of something I saw in one of the commercials on television. It is getting to the point where you don't even want to see the commercials. No more lady gaga. Can you imagine that? No more MTV, no more Hollywood that glorifies Satan.

I was reading an article about some blockbuster movie called *Twilight*. I guess it is now some television series, stories of lust and love and vampires and werewolves and good and evil, mortality, immortality and blood, stories about beautiful romantic people that are also vampires. And they are attracted to other people because of the scent of their blood. Now this is the rage among our teenagers. Can you imagine that? It is inconceivable. And this occultic fiction has produced a whole new vampire sub culture.

I was reading about it. I was just stunned, people that consider themselves real vampires. In fact, there are now vampire organizations and orders and covens who seek out willing donors who will consent to supply them with disease free blood for them to drink. I mean, this takes the occultic messages of Harry Potter to a whole new level.

What a vile perversion of the blood of the Lamb. The time is short dear friends and Satan knows it. The blood of the Lamb through which we have redemption and the forgiveness of sins, Ephesians 1:7, what a perversion of that. In fact, during the tribulation just before Christ returns Jesus tells us in Revelation 12:11 that believers will "overcome Satan because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony." This is exceedingly offensive to him and, thus, I believe it inspires him to such vile forms of deception.

Well, to be sure, Satan is alive and well today. And he is preparing the world to be willing subjects to the unholy trinity of the dragon and the beast and the false prophet. In fact, in 2 Thessalonians 2:9 the apostle Paul tells us that the coming of the lawless one who is the antichrist is according to the work of Satan with all power, signs and lying wonders.

But we see here in our text this morning that the reigning Messiah immediately terminates Satan's rule as he establishes his authority on earth. Isaiah the prophet tells us of this time of judgment during the day of the Lord in Isaiah 24 beginning in verse 21. And there we read, "So it will happen in that day, That the LORD will punish the host of heaven on high,"<sup>6</sup> referring to the demons, Satan and the demons.

And the kings of the earth on earth. They will be gathered together Like prisoners in the dungeon, And will be confined in prison; And after many days they will be punished. Then the moon will be abashed and the sun ashamed, For the LORD of hosts will reign on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, And His glory will be before His elders.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Isaiah 24:21.

<sup>7</sup> Isaiah 24:2-21.

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Now, with that introduction, let's look at the first theme that emerges from Revelation chapter 20, the incarceration of Satan in the first three verses.

Now, remember, by now, according to Revelation 12:9 Michael the archangel has forcibly expelled Satan and his minions from heaven to earth where they will be dwelling during this time. In fact, in verse 12 of chapter 12 we read, "Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he has only a short time."<sup>8</sup> And as we come to these first three verses in chapter 20, dear friends, we see that his time is up.

Verse one, the beginning phrase, "And I saw..." This is a phrase that is used frequently throughout the book of Revelation. It is a phrase that helps link together the sequential events of the chronology of John's vision and the inevitable series of events that will one day transpire.

Now, as an important footnote, may I remind you once again that the scene beginning back in chapter 19 verse 11 describes the final outpouring of the seventh bowl judgment that was introduced in chapter 16 which ultimately includes a chronological progression of eight magnificent action scenes or events that are revealed all the way through chapter 21 and verse eight. And here we are, really, in the fourth scene. The first scene was found in chapter 19 verses 11 through 16, the arrival of Christ. And then, secondly, the invitation of the vultures to devour the human carnage as a result of the slaughter at Armageddon in verses 17 and 18. And then you have, thirdly, the defeat of the beast in chapters 19 and 21. And now you have the fourth scene which is the binding of Satan in chapter 20 verses one through three. So there is an undeniable chronology that must guide our interpretation of this text.

Now notice how it unfolds here in the apostle's vision. Verse one. "And I saw an angel coming down from heaven."<sup>9</sup> He is coming down from heaven to earth because, again, that will be the sphere of Satan's habitation at that time.

Now, who is this angel? Well, we can't be dogmatic, but I believe it is probably Michael. Certainly Michael would be the most likely candidate given his previous role in chapter 12 where he physically expelled Satan from the realm of heaven. We also know in Jude nine that it was Michael the archangel that disputed with the devil and argued about the body of Moses. Evidently Michael secretly buried Moses' body in the land of Moab as we read about in Deuteronomy 34. And it was Michael, one of the chief princes, according to Daniel 10:13, who came to the aid of Gabriel who was opposed for three weeks by some great demon named the prince of Persia. And in Daniel 12 verse one Michael is called the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people. And there we are told that he will arise. As you go on to read the text you see that he will be instrumental in rescuing Israel from Satan in their final hour of peril as the Messiah king

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<sup>8</sup> Revelation 12:12.

<sup>9</sup> Revelation 20:1.

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returns. So this angel is most likely Michael the great prince, the protector of Israel, but we can't be dogmatic.

Now, notice. John sees this angel coming down from heaven, "having the key of the abyss and a great chain in his hand."<sup>10</sup> The imagery is stunning here. Obviously God has commissioned this magnificent being to lay hold of the nefarious and powerful enemy of God and man. The key held by the angel is emblematic of his authority. It symbolizes power, the one who can unlock or lock something. So God has commissioned him with the responsibility of unlocking and relocking this demonic prison called the abyss.

Now what is this abyss? You may recall in Luke eight that Jesus confronted the demons in a particular man and the demons were called Legion. And the text says they were imploring him, that is the demons were imploring Jesus not to command them to go away into the abyss. And you will recall that Jesus ordered them to enter a herd of swine. So, to be sure, Satan will not go willingly to this place, but he will be utterly overpowered even as those demons were in Luke eight.

The key that John sees is probably the same one given to Satan in chapter nine and verse one. "The key of the bottomless pit was given to him,"<sup>11</sup> we read. This is when God allowed him, you will recall, to release the horde of demons to torment men. You will remember in that text in verse one we read there the key opened the bottomless pit, the **ABUSSOS** (ab'-us-sos) in the original language, the pit of abyss. It is the same term used here in Revelation 20 and verse one. It is a term that was used seven times in the book of Revelation to describe a mysterious subterranean cavern on earth that extends into the bowels of the earth via some kind of shaft that God has sealed shut, a place where he incarcerates the most wretched, the most vile of demons.

In fact, I believe this is probably the same place Jesus visited after his crucifixion between his death and resurrection where, according to 1 Peter 3:19 we read, "He went and made proclamation to the spirits now in prison, who once were disobedient, when the patience of God kept waiting in the days of Noah."<sup>12</sup> No doubt this was a proclamation of victory over Satan, sin and death and over their impending judgment. In fact, Jude describes this place and its inhabitants in verse six as a place for "angels who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode, He has kept in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of the great day."<sup>13</sup> And in 1 Peter 3:20 we read that these were demons, "Who once were disobedient,"<sup>14</sup> referring to those in the days of Noah in Genesis six, the nephilim when Satan and his minions conspired, you will recall, to corrupt the human race.

Now, I might also add and it is important for you to keep in mind that some demons are loose today and others are bound. Some are permanently bound as in the case here of

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Revelation 9:1.

<sup>12</sup> 1 Peter 3:19-20.

<sup>13</sup> Jude 6.

<sup>14</sup> 1 Peter 3:20.

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Jude six. But others demons have only been or are only being temporarily bound and they will be released upon the beast worshippers, for example, during the tribulation. We read about that in Revelation nine and Revelation 16.

So now the angel is about to unlock this vile dungeon that will be Satan's temporary prison during the millennium and at the end of which he is going to be released for a short time, lead one final rebellion and then be defeated and cast into the lake of fire forever.

Now note also the angel has more than a key of the abyss. He has a great chain in his hand. The binding of this supernatural spiritual creature is something that we cannot comprehend. So the Lord uses metaphorical imagery here of a great chain that can give us some sense of what he will do. The text says it is in his hand. In the original language "in" could be also translated "over his hand." It is the idea that this chain is draped over his hand. This is what John sees. It is hanging down, a daunting symbol of the capture that would be inevitable and the binding that would be inescapable.

Now I have witnessed, first hand, the super human strength of people who are demonically possessed. You will recall the demon possessed man in Luke 8:29. There we read, "He was bound with chains and shackles and kept under guard, and yet he would break his bonds and be driven by the demon into the desert."<sup>15</sup> And Mark's gospel adds in Mark five beginning at verse four "And no one was able to bind him anymore, even with a chain; because he had often been bound with shackles and chains, and the chains had been torn apart by him, and the shackles broken in pieces, and no one was strong enough to subdue him."<sup>16</sup> Yet we go on to read in the text that at the command of Jesus the demons left him and entered into the swine.

Beloved, we cannot even fathom the kind of power required to shackle Satan. And it will be nothing to our omnipotent God who will empower his angelic servant to seize him and to bind him.

Verse two we read that "he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years."<sup>17</sup> "Laid hold" carries the idea of being overpowered and seized by one's hands. And notice the names the Lord uses to describe Satan. He is "the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan."<sup>18</sup> Satan, you will recall, was described as a serpent that tempted Eve in the garden in Genesis 3:1. The **NACHASH** (naw-khawsh') in Hebrew. But sometimes the Hebrew word for dragon **TANNIYN** (tanniym) is also translated as serpent. And this would be a reference to a marine or a land monster, a sea serpent, a dragon or a sea monster.

And, as a footnote, "the serpent was more crafty than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made,"<sup>19</sup> in Genesis 3:1, this creature that tempted Eve, would have

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<sup>15</sup> Luke 8:29.

<sup>16</sup> Mark 5:3-4.

<sup>17</sup> Revelation 20:2.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Genesis 3:1.



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resembled what we would call a dragon that would have stood upright and walked on two legs because it was not until after he was cursed that he was forced to be upon his belly and slither along and eat dust.

We also read in Revelation 12:3 Satan being describe as a great read dragon, the read dragon, **PYRROS** (poor-hros'), red, flame colored, the color of fire, of torment, of bloodshed which perfectly symbolizes his violent character. The Lord here calls him the devil, **DIABOLOS** (dee-ab'-ol-os), the slanderer, the false accuser, Satan which means adversary, one who opposes another in purpose or acts. Indeed, my friends, Satan is the inveterate adversary of God and Christ. He is one who down through millennia has incited people to rebel against God. He is the one that motivates apostasy, who leads demons to possess men and afflict them with disease and so forth. And so, indeed, he is the adversary. But here the Lord's angelic servant lays hold of this vile creature and he binds him for 1000 years.

Now, as I argued last week, there is absolutely no exegetical or contextual reason to interpret this 1000 years in some non literal, symbolic sense as some people do. Some would say, "Well, this really doesn't mean 1000 years. It means a long period of time." But I see that it is repeated here six times in chapter 20, 1000 years. I believe that if the Lord meant a long period of time he would have said so. Or he would have used language that would communicate something along that line like he did in chapter five verse 11 where he described the number of the angels as being myriads and myriads and thousands and thousands.

My friends, in all humility, all I can say is that if this does not mean a literal 1000 years, then for me the normal meaning of language cannot be trusted. I have no idea what it means if it doesn't mean that. And as I stated last week, every other number on Revelation is literal with the exception of two that are symbolic, the seven spirits in chapter one verse four descriptive of the seven fold work of the Spirit and the number 666, the mark of the beast in chapter 13 verse eight or verse 18. But all the rest are literal numbers.

As I said last week you have got seven churches, seven pastors, 24 thrones, 24 elders, 12 tribes, 12,000 from each tribe equaling 144,000. We have got seven stars, seven golden lamp stands, five months, one third of mankind, two witnesses, 42 months, 1260 days, three demons, seven kings, five have fallen, a crown of 12 stars on Israel. You have got 12 gates, 12 angels, 12 apostles of the lamb, the new Jerusalem has 12 foundations. It is 1500 miles in length and width and height and its wall is 72 yards. And in chapter 21 verse 17 it says, quote, "According to human measurements, which are also angelic measurements."<sup>20</sup>

So in chapter 20 when the Lord repeatedly describes the events of his kingdom with the phrase, 1000 years, I can find absolutely no reason to interpret it figuratively, except one. And that would be to defend a theological and philosophical bias, namely that the Church

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<sup>20</sup> Revelation 21:17.

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has been replaced by Israel, that it is the new Israel of God which requires one to spiritualize or see this in a non literal light. And since there is not one New Testament passage that supports such a notion, I am compelled to believe, again, that Israel has not replaced the Church permanently and that this will be a literal 1000 year period of time.

So, verse three, we read that the angel, “threw him into the abyss, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he should not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time.”<sup>21</sup>

Now, these first three verses of Revelation 20 pose a real threat to the Postmillennial position that insists that the Church and political reform are ultimately going to Christianize the world, bring it to a place of Christian Utopia and then hand the kingdom over to Christ where he will rule it from heaven. Now, for this to happen, Satan needs to be bound right now. And some of them believe that he was bound at the cross. And others believe that his binding was limited in that he is now unable to deceive the nations, whereas he can still deceive people. And others, especially in the Pentecostal and Charismatic circles aren't so sure that he is bound and so they are constantly trying to bind Satan and demons through all manner of mystical incantations.

This is also a problem for the Amillennial position that argues that Christ has already come spiritually, that we are now living in the kingdom spiritually and that this will continue for a long period of time, their interpretation of 1000 years.

The problem is, according to this text Satan is bound during the millennium, what they believe is the kingdom age that we are living in now. So if we are living in the kingdom now Satan has to be bound. And, if so, how do we explain Satan entering Ananias and Sapphira in Acts five? How do we explain the warning in 2 Corinthians 2:11 to not let Satan take advantage of us by his schemes? How do we explain Satan being the god of this world that blinds the minds of the unbelievers in 2 Corinthians four? How do we explain that Satan disguises himself as an angel of light to deceive the people, 2 Corinthians 11:14? How do we describe Paul's detailed treatise that we read earlier this morning on how to stand firm against the devil by wearing the armor of God in Ephesians six? How do we explain Satan trying to thwart the ministry of believers that we read about in 1 Thessalonians 2:18? How do we explain Satan leading believers to turn aside and unwittingly follow him in 1 Timothy 5:15? How do you explain that we as believers are to resist him so that he will flee from us in James 4:7?

Well, their answer would be that Satan was bound at the cross, which now prevents him from deceiving the nations and therefore not allowing them to be able to grasp the truth of the gospel of Christ. So, for them, he is not completely bound in that he can still torment and tempt people, but he, at least, is partially bound, partially restricted in that he can no longer deceive the nations. That is the emphasis.

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<sup>21</sup> Revelation 20:3.

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Well, my response to that would be, number one, notwithstanding the chronology of this text, if the first three verses of Revelation 20 do not clearly state that Satan is completely immobilized and out of commission, then I don't know what manner of language the Lord would have to use to communicate this. I mean he says that the angel laid hold of him, he binds him, casts him into the abyss, shuts it and seals it over him. That tells me he is out of commission. There is no partial binding here.

And, secondly, if Satan was bound at the cross and thereby limited in his ability to deceive the nations in our current, quote, "kingdom age," then what do we make of Revelation 12:9 where he is described as the one "who deceives the whole world?"

And, thirdly, assuming that Satan was bound at the cross, thereby preventing him from his presumed and previous enterprise of deceiving nations so they could not learn of God's truth, if that were true then we could safely assume that prior to the cross no nation ever received the message of truth, right? But we know that is not true.

John MacArthur speaks to this and I quote, "Satan did not keep the Gentile nations from the knowledge of the truth before his alleged binding at the cross. The Egyptians heard about the true God from Joseph and from the Israelites during the 400 years they lived in Egypt. The Assyrians of Nineveh not only heard the truth from Jonah, but also repented, Mathew 12:41. The Queen of Sheba heard about the true God from Solomon, 1 Kings 10:1-19. The Babylonians from Daniel and his Jewish friends and the Persians from Esther, Mordecai and Nehemiah. Further, in what sense is Satan restrained from deceiving the nations in the present age since he blinds the minds of unbelievers, 2 Corinthians 4:4, is now working in the sons of disobedience, Ephesians 2:2 and holds unbelievers captive, 2 Timothy 2:26, in his kingdom, Colossians 1:13?" end quote.

Well, dear friends, in all humility and in Christian love towards my brothers who differ with me on this point, there, for me, is simply no exegetical or contextual reason to say that Satan was bound at the cross. There is no indication anywhere in Scripture that he no longer deceives the nations, nor is there any proof that they were at his mercy prior to the cross.

Do I believe that we are living in the kingdom now? No. I do not believe that. Today Satan and his minions are loose, wreaking havoc on the world and this will continue until Satan is bound at the end of the tribulation, after the pre-kingdom judgments, at the inauguration and the establishment of the millennial kingdom.

And I would also add that nations are made up of people, aren't they? And Scripture is abundantly clear that Satan has enormous influence on people.

Shifting gears a bit from this debate as we begin to wrap this up this morning, may I add that people do not need Satan to deceive them. They are perfectly capable of doing that on their own.

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You see, men do not reject the gospel of Christ, men do not refuse to believe the gospel because they have been deceived even though that is a huge element of it. Men reject the glorious gospel of Christ because they love their sin. Men love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil.

It is interesting. If we go back to verse three we see that his deceptive, rebellious influence over the world during the millennium is completely gone. He is out of commission. He is nowhere to be found. He is in the abyss. And yet we see that man still continues to sin. Isn't that amazing? Even with Christ reigning on earth during the millennium.

See, think about it. Only believers are going to enter the kingdom. But their life spans will be exceedingly long. They will have many children. But many of their offspring will not humble themselves before the Messiah King. Why? Because they have been deceived? No. Because they love their sin more than they love the Savior.

So you have got no Satan, no demons, yet man still sins. He continues to rebel. By the way, this is why Christ must rule with a rod of iron. Then at the end of the millennial reign we see that Satan is going to be released as we are going to study more in days to come. He is going to be released for a little while to lead this one last rebellion at the end of verse three. But where does he find his followers? Well, the answer is, sinful men, haters of Christ, rebels without having any influence from Satan.

Well, this is an astounding vision of the incarceration of Satan. And as I meditate on it, don't you know this brought great joy to the beloved apostle, this 90 year old servant of Christ, banished on this island, to see Satan the enemy of God, the enemy of the people of God finally get what we would call here in Tennessee his "comeuppans." Don't you know that that had to bring joy to his heart? It does to mine. It absolutely does to mine.

The things that I deal with day in and day out are absolutely sickening to me. And to know that one day the father of lies, this great deceiver, this arch enemy of Christ is going to be done away with brings great joy to me.

I believe that Satan has been well aware of this day ever since he first read it in the sacred apocalypse. Through his pride, he has convinced himself as well as others that he can somehow defeat Christ. He is blinded by his arrogance thinking that he can triumph over Christ. And yet I believe the vision of this key and this chain haunts him even this very moment as I speak. But one day he is going to see it for real. The day is coming when he will experience the supernatural restraint, and then the enraged, yet humiliated dragon will be nothing more than a pip squeak in the hands of the angel who will then unlock the dreaded shaft and throw him in it. Then down he will go into this mysterious abyss and there he will squirm in this chains for 1000 years.

And there he will hear, I believe, the taunts of other demons, his followers who are also there awaiting judgment. Now they see their arrogant leader, the prince of the power of

## The Establishment of the Messianic Kingdom - Part 2

Revelation 20:1-3

the air, the one who once worked in the sons of disobedience. Now they see him writing in his chains.

Well, this is a day he abhors. But, beloved, it is a day we celebrate, a day when the roaring lion is overcome by the lion of the tribe of Judah.

Let's pray together.

*Father, thank you for these truths that encourage our hearts. Lord, to know that the world is not just spinning out in some random way, but it is moving inexorably towards to a day of judgment, towards a day of righteousness because you are the sovereign God that has ordained the end from the beginning, Lord, I pray that as we contemplate these great truths today, if there is anyone within the sound of my voice who has never bowed the knee before Christ, who has never confessed their sins and cried out for forgiveness, oh, God, would today be the day that they experience the miracle of the new birth because, Lord, if they are not worshipping you, if they are not serving you and loving you then they are serving their father the devil.*

*So, Lord, bring conviction to the lost and bring encouragement to those of us who have been redeemed by your grace. And, Lord, come quickly we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.*

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