

## **The Earthly Kingdom of Jesus Christ, Part 2**

Scripture: Selected Scriptures

Code: 1336

Can you imagine a world where justice always prevails. Where righteousness and goodness is always the rule and there is never an exception. Where there is total and lasting peace where joy is the dominant attitude. A world where health is so widespread that if somebody dies a hundred years old, they'll be said to be dying as if they were a child. A world where children can play in snake pits and not be afraid of being bitten or poisoned. A world where lions and lambs walk together with bears and cows and a little child leads them all. A world where agriculture is so effective and products are so profuse and food is so plentiful that even with a fantastic population explosion everybody has enough of everything. In fact, more than they could ever ask for.

Can you imagine a world ruled by a perfect ruler, loving, saving, caring, all wise, all knowing? That's the real world of the kingdom of Jesus Christ, and it's coming to this earth. Now last time we began our study, just the beginnings of the study were indicated to us in Revelation 19 and 20 and I invite you to turn there again in your Bibles.

People are looking for a new world. They always have been. But as they look for this new world, they're not convinced that this Jesus is the one who's going to bring it about. In fact, in most cases they are convinced that that is not the case at all. And even in the time of Peter in 2 Peter that most familiar passage, Chapter 3, "the scoffers come in the last days saying where is the promise of His coming?"

People have always doubted that Jesus will return. There are some Christians that really aren't too sure about it. There are people who have always held the kingdom of Jesus Christ somewhat suspect. And while they're looking for a new world, they're not sure that it's going to come in the terms that the Bible presents it.

Now as we come to Revelation 19 and 20 again, we find a very clear picture of the kingdom. Not in great detail, but really in kind of overview and yet it does give us some specific insights. Now we told you last time that there were six basic points that we were going to cover and we covered three last time. We'll cover the final three tonight.

The kingdom, according to Revelation 19 and 20, includes the rule of the Son, the removal of the serpent, the reign of the saints, the return of Satan, the revolt of society and the resurrection of sinners. Now let's review with some additional thoughts those first three. The kingdom to begin with

is the rule of the Son. Chapter 19, in verse 11, "heaven opens, behold a white horse, He that sat on him was faithful and true, He comes to judge and make war." Describes Him in verse 12. Verse 13 describes His vesture dipped in blood and gives His name the word of God and we know that to be Jesus Christ.

He's given another name in verse 16, King of Kings and Lord of Lords. And so here we see the picture of the arrival of the Lord Jesus Christ to set up His kingdom. And if we were to compare Matthew Chapter 24, we would read that immediately after the tribulation of those days, "the sun shall not give its light, the moon shall turn to darkness, the stars of heaven shall fall, then shall the sign of the Son of man be revealed and we shall see Him in heaven coming with His angels and power and great glory."

So it is immediately after the tribulation that Christ comes back to set up His kingdom. The promise is that Jesus, the very same Jesus that walked in this world, is going to be the one who comes back to set up the kingdom of promise that all men are looking for but that not all men will experience.

In Daniel 7:13, it says, "And I saw in the night visions and behold one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven and came to the ancient of days and they brought Him near before Him and there was given Him dominion and glory and a kingdom. That all people and nations and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed."

Now there Daniel says the Son of man was granted by the ancient of days, the Son of man is Christ, the ancient of days is God the Father, a kingdom and He will bring that kingdom to pass.

In Revelation Chapter 11, verse 15, the promise again is repeated regarding the kingdom. "The seventh angel sounded and there were voices in heaven saying the kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ and He shall reign forever and ever." Now though the kingdom specifically on earth last a thousand years, the reign of Christ is forever. And the kingdom merely phases into the eternal reign of Christ.

So the first phase of the kingdom that is so very important for us to recognize is that is the rule of the Son. That the earthly kingdom is going to be the place where Jesus Himself rules. Now we saw last time from Psalm 2 that it's going to be a universal rule. The Psalmist says in Psalm 2 very specifically in verse 6, "I have set my king upon my holy hill of Zion." This is God talking. "I will declare the decree the Lord said unto me thou art my Son this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me and I'll give thee the nations for thine inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession."

The Psalm then promises that the kings rule will be universal. He will give, the Father will, to the Son, the rule of all the nations. It also will be an absolute kingdom as well as universal. It says in Psalm

72:10-11, "The kings of Tarshish and of the isles shall bring presents. The kings of Sheba and Seba shall offer gifts. Ye all kings shall fall down before Him all nations shall serve Him."

And verse 9 says, "His enemies shall lick the dust." So it's universal and it's absolute. And then in Isaiah's wonderful prophecy, Chapter 11 in verses 3 to 5, just again reviewing, it says, "In the kingdom the Spirit shall make of him, make him of quick understanding in the fear of Lord and He shall not judge after the sight of His eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of His ears, but with righteousness shall He judge the poor and reprove with equity or equality the meek of the earth."

And so it's going to be a just kingdom. Absolute, universal, and just and Jesus Christ will reign. Now the second feature we saw of the kingdom was the removal of the serpent. We know that today the prince of this world is Satan. He is the ruler. He is the god of the age. And as we look at our world today, we see Satan in control and we know that when Christ comes the control must change. And if Christ is to take control, He has to deal with Satan. And He does, and we begin in Chapter 20 and we read this.

Revelation 20, verse 1, "I saw an angel come down from heaven having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, who is the devil and Satan and bound him a thousand years and cast him into the bottomless pit and shut him up and set a seal on him that he should deceive the nation no more until the thousand years shall be fulfilled, and after that he must be loosed a little season."

During the thousand year kingdom, Satan is going to be chained in the abyss which is the bottomless pit. The word in the Greek is abussos. Now let me give you a little word study that I think might help to clear up some confusion. If you're like most people who read the Bible and study the Bible you read about Sheol and you read about Hades and you about Hell and you read about the pit and you read about all of these things and you're not quite clear what's what and what's where.

So maybe I can just give you a little look at that. What is the abyss? And where is the abyss? Or as it's translated here, the bottomless pit, which is literally what abussos means. The word abussos is used nine times in the New Testament. It is a Greek word which means bottomless pit. Now if we were to look, for example, at one and seven times in Revelation twice outside Revelation, but one of the times outside Revelation gives us a good indication about it.

In Luke 8:31, you remember that Jesus had cast the demons out of the mad man of the Gadarenes, remember? And where did He send those demons? Into pigs, a herd of swine. And they besought Him the demons did, they were talking to Him and they besought Him that He would not command them to go into the abussos.

And there it translates it into the deep in the King James. I don't know why it takes the...that particular translation. It's rather arbitrary, but it's really the same word, bottomless pit. Now that gives us an idea what the bottomless pit is. The bottomless pit is where demons don't want to go. You say well, that's not a very clear definition. The bottomless pit is a place where demons are chained. That's what it is. It's not for people who die, the souls of men, it's for demons.

Now, it has the very same meaning every other time that it is used with no exceptions. In the book of Revelation it is once used in Romans 10:7 with the same meaning. In Revelation seven times it has the same meaning, abussos. Someone asked me this morning why I believe that in Revelation Chapter 9 the locusts...the locusts that came out of the pit were demons. And someone said that has been interpreted to be Muslims. Others interpret that to be a helicopters because it describes them like grasshoppers and all those little things.

And they said well, why do you feel that it is demons described like locusts? And I said, very clearly the answer is this, it is the word abyss that is used again. It says that the bottomless pit is opened up and they come out of there and all other times that that word is used it speaks of the place where demons are chained. So if somebody is unlocking the pit the only thing in the pit is demons.

And so the word abussos then is used to speak of the place where demons are bound. Now you say well which demons are bound? Well, if you were to read Peter and you were to read Jude, you would find that God has chained demons there since clear back in Genesis 6. Remember the demons in Genesis 6 who cohabitated with women? And He has reserved them in everlasting chains. See? And so there have been demons bound since Genesis 6. And apparently throughout history whenever God so desired, He could send other demons to the pit and so there is in this place the pit, a group of bound demons from Genesis 6 a pile of them and whoever else has been sent there since.

And you see that's why Revelation 9 says that when the tribulation begins in all of its terror, God lets this angel unlock the pit and the demons who have been bound from whenever they were bound, as far back as Genesis 6 come gushing out of the pit and overrun the earth. And that's what makes the intensity of the tribulation so much greater than any other time of evil in the world, because there will be more demons then there have ever been overrunning the earth.

The abyss then is not a place for the souls of men. It is a special place for bound demons. Now that is the place where Satan is going to get chained. Look verse 3, "and cast him into the bottomless pit and shut him up." Now that is what the abyss is. Now let me hasten to say this. There are other places besides the abyss, and we need to understand that.

I'll show you another one. Back up to Revelation 19:20, "And the beast was taken and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles," that's the antichrist and his religious cohort which he..."which he deceived them that received the mark of the beast and them that worship their image. These both

were cast alive," not into the pit, not into abussos, "but into a lake of fire burning with brimstone." Now the beast is a man, right? He's a human, the antichrist. The false prophet is a human. They don't go into the pit. They go into the place called the lake of fire burning with brimstone.

Now you say well what is this place? Well, look at that. It's a rather ultimate place isn't it. The first ones that are ever said in the Bible to go to that place are these two. This beloved is Hell. And I hasten to add this, and then I qualify it, as clearly as I can understand the Bible, no one at the present time is in Hell. Now hang on to your hat. No one at the present time is in the lake of fire as we see it here. And I'll try to defend that.

Notice here the beast and the false prophet are thrown into a lake of fire. Now go to Chapter 20, verse 10 and I'll show you something else. "At the end of the kingdom," now the beast and false prophet were sent there at the beginning of the kingdom, at the end of the tribulation. A thousand years later after the kingdom is over, verse 10 of 20, "The devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone." Now it says "where the beast and the false prophet are and they've been there a thousand years and they shall be tormented day and night forever and ever."

Now here is the final Hell, see? The beast and false prophet are there. Notice how interesting it is that he says the devil was only...was cast into the lake of fire where the beast and false prophet are. It doesn't say anybody else is there. Interesting.

Now that's an argument from silence and not a heavy one, but it's interesting that it does exclude anyone else in statement. And so the devil is going to go to the lake of fire. You say anybody else going to the lake of fire? Go to verse 13. Here we are at the great white throne judgment of all the unsaved human beings of all time. And the sea gave up the dead that were in it and death and Hades delivered up the dead that were in them. Oh isn't that interesting.

Do you know where the dead have been until the great white throne? Not in the lake of fire, but in what, Hades. "And they were judged every many according to their works and death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire." Now you see then all these people are into the lake of fire. The lake of fire then is the technical term for final Hell. Verse 15, "And whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire." Now the problem comes up and the reason everybody gets confused is because the King James translates so arbitrarily the word Hades.

Do you remember an Old Testament word Sheol, S-h-e-o-l? Sheol simply means the world of the dead. That's all it means. It doesn't have any more specific meaning than that. It simply means the world of the dead. Now in the Old Testament Sheol had two parts didn't it? A person who died could go into the part where evil men were separated from God and believe me there was torment there in the absence of God. Or one who died as a Godly individual would go into the good part which Jesus called paradise.

Remember what He said to the thief, "This day shalt thou be with me in paradise." Which was the good part of the place of the Old Testament dead. Now watch when Jesus died on the cross, Ephesians 4:8 says, "He led captivity captive." And we've interpreted that in our study and if you want more detail on it, you can get that tape or study a commentary on that passage, but in...what happen was while Jesus was physically dead on the cross, His spirit descended into that place into the paradise and scooped up the good folks, the souls of those who were righteous and took them up to heaven. So then Hades only had one compartment left. See?

Old Testament saints their spirits waiting for the time when Jesus died and when Jesus accomplished salvation on the cross He went right down scooped them up and took them to heaven, led captivity captive. And then Hades only had one part. Now Sheol in the Old Testament and Hades in the New Testament, same thing, just a Hebrew word and a Greek word.

Now watch, when anybody dies since Jesus' death right on out or since the very beginning of death in the world, they go into a place called Hades. That is not to be confused with Hell. Let me hasten to say this, Hades is bad. It is very bad. But Hell is different. In the Old Testament it is a completely different word. It's the word tophet. And in the New Testament it is a completely different word is the word Gehenna. But the King James fouls it up because the King James translates Hades, Hades sometimes and Hell some other times. You see?

Now stay with me on this. In Matthew 5:29-30, I'll give you a Scripture that you can kind of sink your teeth into a little bit here and maybe get some clarity on it. Matthew 5:29, "If thy right hand offend thee, pluck it out. Cast it from thee for it's profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish and not thy whole body should be cast into Hell." Now watch, now watch, what does he say there is going to be cast into Hell? What? Your body.

People say John, do you believe in a literal Hell? How could I not believe in a literal Hell. I says right there your whole body would be cast into Hell. Now watch, There is no unsaved person dead now in a body, right. Where are the bodies of the unsaved? They're in the grave. When are they going to get resurrected? At the great white throne judgment. Therefore, they don't get their bodies until the great white throne. They couldn't be cast into the final Hell until that time.

So they're not in Hell today, they're in Hades, which is a spiritual waiting place, but believe me it is a tormented place. It is a place of burning in a spiritual sense. Now verse 30 says "if you're right hand offend you cut off and cast it from you for it's profitable for the that one of they members should perish and not that thy whole body should be cast into Hell."

Hell is a literal place. Do you believe that heaven's a literal place? Do you believe you're going to go to heaven in a literal, glorified body? Jesus is there right now in one, isn't He? And Hell is a literal

place. Now the term Hell here in this passage is the Greek word Gehenna, G-e-h-e-n-n-a. Now Gehenna was the valley of Hinom. It's just a term for the valley of Hinom. Now the valley of Hinom was outside Jerusalem. You can go to Jerusalem today and it'll be pointed out to you, the valley of Hinom.

In that valley, first of all, idolaters burned their children to the god Molech. So it began as a place of burning and God cursed the valley of Hinom. And you know what happened at the valley of Hinom? The people of Israel then since God cursed it wouldn't use it for anything except the city dump. And so the valley of Hinom became the dump for the city of Jerusalem. And for centuries and centuries filth and garbage and animal carcasses were thrown into the fire of the valley.

Now watch, they made sure that the fire never died out. There was always something new being thrown into that valley. And the worms never died either because there was always enough new stuff for the worms to thrive. See? And when our Lord describes Hell, He said it is a place that the fire never ceases and the worm never dies. See?

And you remember that you if you look back in history and see such a terrible place, you would know that would be a place where scavenger animals would gather and the jackals would gnash their teeth as they ate the garbage in the terrible place called the valley of Hinom. That's Gehenna and that is the picture of Hell that Jesus chose. And whenever He wanted to speak of Hell, in the final sense, He chose the word Gehenna.

Now from that background the word Gehenna was used to describe the everlasting damnation of Hell where there is weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth and the worm never dies and the fire is never quenched and that is Hell.

You say then John, do you mean that my particular friends who die today without Jesus Christ go into some kind of a nice little waiting place? No, that...they go into a waiting place, not the final Hell, but it's not nice. I'll prove it's not nice. I'll show you a man who went there. And he not only went there, but he told us what it was like.

Luke 16, verse 19, now listen, "There was a certain rich man who was clothed in purple and fine linen and fared sumptuously every day. There was a certain beggar named Lazarus who was laid at his feet full of sores. And desire to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table. Moreover the dogs came and licked his sores." He was in bad shape. "It came to pass that the beggar died and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom." Do you know what that is? That's the good part of Hades. You see Christ hasn't died yet, so He hasn't emptied that part. But here's a godly beggar who dies and he goes into Abraham's bosom. He goes into a place of blessing. He goes to be with blessed Abraham whose waiting yet the death of Messiah, but that place that Abraham was in place of blessing and joy.

"But the rich man died and was buried," and watch, "and in," and your Bible might say Hell, that's unfortunate, "and in Hades." The word is Hades, not Gehenna. "He lifted up his eyes being in," what, "torment." And in verse 24, he says, "send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger and water and cool my tongue for I am tormented in this flame." It is not the eternal lake of fire, but believe it's the absence of God and it's the presence of punishment.

So just because I say that the people who die now do not go to final Hell, they do not go to the terrible, fearful Gehenna does not mean that they're waiting in some waiting place that's about as comfortable as a lounge. They're as apart from God as they'll ever be and they're in the pain and the agony of punishment and mostly the remorse of conscience for knowing that they have sealed their eternal doom by a wrong decision.

Now, I say all that because I want you to understand that though there is no one in Hell, to die without Jesus Christ now is to be in a place of terrible torment. Only to await the final lake of fire. Now, Jesus made the statement "Fear not them who destroy the body, but fear Him who is able to destroy both body and soul in Hell."

And the one you are to fear is not Satan. He doesn't run Hell, God does. That verse is talking about God. Now back to Revelation 20, I said all of that just because I want you to understand what the abyss is in relation to other things. I hope that helps.

And so Satan is bound and it says in verse 2 that "The old serpent is bound a thousand years." Have you ever heard the kingdom called the millennium? Yes, that comes from two Latin words, milla which means thousand and annum which means year. So a thousand years is a milla annum, millennium.

All right, then the kingdom begins with the rule of the Son and the removal of the serpent. Thirdly, the reign of the saints and we saw this last time. With Satan out of the way, the kingdom begins. And what a blessed thing it is. Verse 4, now remember Satan is not yet in the final Hell. He's bound where? In the bottomless pit. He is going to get cast into the final Hell at the end of the kingdom. He's just bound there. This is a temporary place.

All right, verse 4 tells us the reign of the saints. "And I saw thrones and they sat upon them. Remember I told you last week about the they and the them? And the they are all the saints of all the ages. Daniel 7:18 says, "The saints of the Most High shall inherit the kingdom." That's Old Testament saints. Matthew 19:28-30 the apostles are going to rule in the kingdom, that's between Old Testament and New Testament, those in the time of Christ.



And I told you about 1 Corinthians 6:2, which says the New Testament saints are going to reign. So the they refers to all the saints of all the ages. Thrones and they sat upon them. We're all going to reign. "And judgment was given unto them and I saw the souls of them." Oh now we have the them. We know who the they are. Who are the them? It tells us, "Them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus. That's an interesting statement because apparently people who die during the tribulation are going to die through the method of beheading.

And the reason they died was for the word of God and who had not worshiped..."for the witness of Jesus and the word of God and who had not worshiped the beast, neither his image, neither received his mark upon their foreheads or in their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a millennium."

Now it says that not only all the saints of the ages, but the saints of the tribulation are going to be there, those who didn't bow down to the beast. Notice what it says, interesting thing there. It says they didn't worship the beast. Do you remember that the antichrist back in Chapter 13 during the tribulation requires that the whole world worship him, remember that? 13:8, "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him except those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life from the foundation of the world."

And then it says, "Not only they did not worship the beast, but they didn't receive the mark of the beast or worship his image." And you know over in verse 15 the false prophet sets up a big image, a big...some kind of a super idol of the beast and requires everybody to bow down to the image. And then it requires that everybody has a mark. He says that, verse 16, "everybody whether you're small, great, rich, or poor, free or enslaved, receive a mark in your hand or your forehead." And if you don't have the mark, you can't buy or sell.

In other words, the economy's going to reduce to numbers. And we're already in that economy, credit cards and number systems and you're social security numbers becoming increasingly important. There all kinds of new deals. I'm not even going to go into it. We've covered that in other messages. Where numbers are becoming the system by which we identify each other. And there's going to be ways to imprint those numbers on your hand and on your head and in any society no matter what people wear as clothing, the two most visible places is the back of the hand and the forehead, because you may cover a lot, but the forehead usually stays revealed.

And so in these places you will be marked with a number and by that number be able to buy or sell. If you don't have the number you can't exist. So the beast will require worship of himself, worship of his image and that you join his economy. Anybody who doesn't is going to be beheaded. They're going to lose their heads.

And they may lose their heads, but they'll reign with Jesus forever and ever. The reign of the saints. And during the kingdom, you say what's it going to be like? We covered that last week. I mean it's exciting. Do you know that I'm looking forward to the kingdom. I know you are. I get so excited about the kingdom just unbelievable. I mean, I start thinking about those things just really zeroing in on some of those qualities of the kingdom and I just...it just blows my mind. I mean, I can't even handle it.

But you know, I'm not the only waiting for it. Did you know that...did you know that your front lawn is waiting for the kingdom? Did you know that your dog, you know, the dog world is waiting and that's facetious, but let me show you what I mean. Verse 19 of Romans 8, "For the earnest expectation," and don't start telling that I believe dogs are going in the rapture because I don't, but that's only a figure of speech. Okay, verse 19, "For the earnest expectation of the creation waits for the manifestation of the sons of God."

You see the whole world is waiting to be returned to its prime existence before the curse. The creation was made subject to vanity not willingly. Verse 21, "The creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption." In other words, the curse of the earth will be reversed. And we said in verse 22, "The whole creation groans and travails in birth pains together until now, until this great day when redemption comes."

You see all of creation wants the kingdom. It's going to be fantastic. The reign of the saints. Now we covered some detail last week we won't cover tonight. Now verses 5 and 6, we're going to come back to so we'll skip them and go to our fourth point.

The reign of the saints follows the removal of the serpent, which follows the rule of the Son, but fourthly, and this is most interesting. We have the return of Satan, the return of Satan, verse 7. "And when the thousand years are ended, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison."

Now the kingdom is going to come to a climax and Satan is going to be loosed. I told you last week and I want you to understand this, I told you last week that Satan is not necessary for individuals to sin, right? We do real well on our own with our own sin nature and our own depravity. We don't need Satan for that. But watch, Satan is the one, now watch, who organizes evil on a worldwide scale. You got it?

It doesn't...Satan isn't necessarily involved in what you do as an individual and what I do as an individual in terms of sin, the works of the flesh are these. Read them Galatians 5, but Satan is the mastermind that coordinates it all so that it has a total global impact. That's why when you remove Satan from the kingdom, you don't remove individual sin, but sin can't get together enough to have an impact. You see?

And what happens at the end of the kingdom is God releases Satan from the abyss and he comes to the earth and he organizes the sinners. And they get all together in this gigantic rebellion against Christ and they march on Jerusalem. Now during the kingdom, children are going to be born. The children of saints. Now watch, you say oh my. Imagine being born in the kingdom. They'll never know what we've been through. That's right.

And you know something else they won't know? They won't know how good the kingdom is, because that's all they'll ever know. And you know the sad thing is everybody's going to conform to the rule of Christ, but some are going to conform only outwardly. And inwardly, some of those children born of the saints are going to be rebels.

And there will be no way that they can have a concerted effort to get together because Christ will rule and Satan isn't around with his demons to organize it. And so they sublimate their rebellion and they put on a facade of obedience to Christ. But you know why Satan's released? He's released so that he can reveal the true character of the hypocrites. You see that's the last batch of sinners in existence and they have to be dealt with before the eternal kingdom.

And so if Satan is loosed and he sweeps across the world and he finds all the hypocritical hearts and he organizes them into a worldwide rebellion. I'll tell you something folks, if somebody comes to me and says they don't believe in depravity of man, I don't think they understand this area of history yet to come. How could you believe that man isn't depraved when he does that in the kingdom where Jesus is on the earth and reigning?

Sinners can't be changed by changing their environment. We have this idea well, if we just clean up the slums we'll get rid of crime. That is ridiculous. You won't have thugs, you'll just have embezzlers. You can't clean up crime by cleaning up the slums. You'll just scatter crime around and it'll become more sophisticated. It won't be hitting little old ladies in the back of the head and stealing their purses. It'll be cheating the government out of their rights in terms of the income tax.

Oh we'll get all the prostitutes off the street. Sure and then everybody will just play hanky panky with his neighbor's wife in suburbia. Why? Because that's man's nature and the environment does little to change his nature. It only changes the format of his disobedience that's all.

There's just some more refined type criminals. And that doesn't mean I'm against cleaning up the slums, understand that. Of course, I'm for that. But I'm just saying if you're going about that for the sake of the love of humanity and the care of individuals and supplying the needs, that's great. If you think you're going to change human nature, you're wrong. It doesn't work.

So here what happens, here are people living in the kingdom. They have everything. This is the golden age that has been dreamed about and they're in the middle of it and they still don't receive Christ. They say it's impossible I can't believe it. Just remember this, they didn't receive Him the first time He came either and He was in their midst.

Well, you say maybe Satan would be a little better after being bound for a thousand years. He's the same old vial character that he was when he went into that pit. He just sat there in that pit for a thousand years and got madder. He's as diabolical and as evil as he ever was. He hasn't changed.

He comes out of there and you know something he hasn't changed and neither has human nature changed. And he finds uncounted millions of people to join his rebellion and the Bible says they are numbered as the sand of the sea. Can you believe that? Now when somebody tells you that man's heart is hard against God's grace you can know it can't you?

You wonder why people resist your witness. Imagine they'll do the same thing with Jesus right there in Jerusalem. And so it's the return of Satan. The return of Satan leads to the fifth point the revolt of society. Boy he stirs up a revolution. Look at verse 8.

"And Satan after he gets out of his abyss, his prison, he goes out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth." Boy he covers the globe, "Gog and Magog," now it's not the Gog and Magog of Ezekiel 38, that was the uttermost part of Israel wasn't it? Gog being the land and Magog being the prince. That was Russia.

But here it's every Gog and every Magog, every land and every prince from every corner of the world joins the rebellion and the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. You talk about population explosion. Man, can you imagine in a thousand years what can be done in productivity in a world where everything is perfect and people aren't sick and people have babies and just multiplies and multiplies and multiplies?

Number as the sand of the sea. And look what they do. Boy Satan is so...he could deceive...these people are so witless to buy his bill. They go up to the...up on the breadth of the earth. They come from everywhere and they compass the camp of the saints about and the beloved city. Can you believe that?

Satan actually talks them into attacking Jerusalem with Jesus Christ on the throne. Boy you say Satan is a deceiver. Yes, he can actually deceive people living in the glorious kingdom of Jesus Christ that they can go to Jerusalem and knock off Jesus Christ. Now he's clever. Keep that in mind. Cunning, craftiness, and they buy his bill. And they all arrive there. Oh man. Terrible tragedy. You know what this is when they get there? It's what I call the Waterloo of the world. It's the end.

Verse 9 says, "And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them." Some would tell us that that's atomic fire. That God sets off an atomic chain reaction and the whole earth goes up in a blaze. Because you see by the time you come to Chapter 21, verse 1, "I saw a new heaven and a," what, "new earth for the first heaven and first earth were," what, "passed away." That the fire is an atomic holocaust that destroys the earth and immediately, immediately the devil is shot into the lake of fire and everybody else appears in heaven at the great white throne or in the heavens in the sky at the great white throne.

Nobody ever appears on earth again. And so it's very possible that nine is the destruction of the earth. Verse 10 says, "And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone." That's Hell isn't it? Not the pit this time, but into the eternal Hell. "Where the beast and false prophet are and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever."

This is the last confederation against God. I don't know how you feel, but it kind of is a sigh of relief. This is the last rebellion. This is the last death, listen beloved, this is the last sin never again for eternity shall sin never touch God's universe. That's it.

Satan's had a long career. It started back in the heavens before the world as we know it. Decided to be like God. Isaiah tells us about his beginning. Revelation tells us about his end. Back to the abyss, no. Hell for eternal torment.

You say well, yeah, if Satan goes to his place and he runs hell, right? No, he doesn't run Hell. You know who runs Hell? God does. Satan and Hell is the same kind of victim that anybody else is. Now the Hell of Satan is in some sense different, since he is a spiritual being. Just to add a final note, keep in mind that Satan suffers just like the rest. And one thing that I've often thought about in terms of Hell that's just a fearful thing is that Hell is not going to be...you know, you hear people say well, I want to go to Hell because my friends are all going to be there.

You know, that's really a...that's really a tragic statement because you know that Hell is going to be absolute and total isolation. There isn't going to be anybody there as far as you're concerned and that's sad. So what do we see about the kingdom? We see the rule of the Son, the removal of the serpent, the reign of the saints, the return of Satan, the revolt of society and lastly, the resurrection of sinners, verses 11 to 15. Once the earth is burned up by fire oh of the ungodly are resurrected.

Now listen friends, everybody, say it again, everybody is going to be resurrected. Are you with me? Everybody, the godly are going to be resurrected and so are the ungodly. All of the ungodly are going to be resurrected at the same time. The Bible talks about here the first resurrection, that's the resurrection of the godly, the second resurrection that's the resurrection of the ungodly.

Now let's go back to verses 5 and 6 and we'll move right into this and just close with it. And it's clear...you just see it, it's clear to your own your eyes. Verse 5, "The saints lived and reigned with Christ during the thousand years, but," verse 5, "the rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years were finished." Right? The ungodly spirits are waiting in Hades but their bodies are in graves all decayed and so forth.

Now this is the first resurrection, he says, and I really think that ought to go with verse 6, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection." Whatever the first resurrection is, it's blessed and holy, right? So it's not the second resurrection is it? The second resurrection is the resurrection of the damned. The first resurrection is the resurrection of the blessed and holy.

And on such the second death has no power, "but they shall be priests of God and of Christ and shall reign with Him a thousand years." Watch, the first resurrection, now get this, the first resurrection takes place before what? The kingdom, has to. Why? You're going to have to reign with Him.

The second resurrection not until the thousand years were what? Finished, the first resurrection, the second resurrection separated by how long, a thousand years. Now the first resurrection is our resurrection, but the same word is used for both, anastasis. It means the raising again of a fallen body. It's a bodily resurrection. You say John, you mean that actually the sinners are going to be...have bodily resurrection? Yes. Yes, in a body that's prepared for their eternal punishment.

There are several passages that really ought to be carefully looked at this...in an understanding of this. In terms of the first resurrection, we have the promise of Jesus Christ in these words, "Because I live," what, "ye too shall live also." And Jesus said to Martha, "Thy brother shall rise again." And Martha said, "I know that. He shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day."

You see she knew all about it. Jesus said, No, no, no, I wasn't talk about that. I was talking about in a few minutes. But she was right. They all knew about the resurrection. In Philippians 3:11, there is an interesting statement that bears the thought because of the Greek that is used. Paul says, "If by any means I might obtain unto the resurrection of the dead." The literal Greek is "The resurrection out from among the dead."

The first resurrection is out from among the dead. "And on them," go back to Revelation 20, "on them the second death has no power." And of course, the second death means eternal death. The first death is what? Physical death. The second death is eternal death. And so those who are save are in, now watch this, those who are save are in the first resurrection and they escape the second death. Those who are not saved are in the second resurrection and experience the second death.

Now the second death if you'll notice there in verse 6, is eternal damnation. Go over to verse 14. "And death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire." Now watch, this is the second death even "whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire. That is the second death." The first death is when you die physically. The second one is when you're sent to Hell without God.

Beloved there are two resurrections. I'm glad I'm in the first one aren't you? You say what's it going to be like at that second resurrection? Well, let's look at verse 11 and see. "I saw a great white throne and Him that sat on it." You know who sat on it? Jesus, because Jesus said in John that the Father had committed all judgment unto the Son. And in that most powerful statement, it must have boggled the brains of the people listening, Jesus said, "Marvel not at this for the hour is coming in which all that are in the grave shall hear His voice and shall come forth. They that have done good under the resurrection of life and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation."

The first resurrection Jesus calls the resurrection of life. The second one, the resurrection of damnation. And Jesus even makes the statement in verse 25, "the hour is coming and now is when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God and they that hear shall live." He claimed that resurrection power. He, by His own power, will bring the bodies of the dead unsaved to the great white throne.

And from His face, the earth and the heaven flood away. And this is where the earth as we know it is gone. It had been rejuvenated in the wonderful kingdom. It is consumed in judgment in verse 9 and it flees away in verse 11. "And there was no place for them." No more earth and heaven as we know it. And John says in his fearful, "I saw the dead, small ones, great ones, stand before God." This is judgment.

You say well, John, how are they going to be judged? Listen, the books were opened, the books were opened. Verse 13, watch, "And the sea gave up the dead that were in it," this is bodies, it has to be. People have drowned. "And death and Hades delivered up," that is the grave death and Hades the place of the spirits, "delivered up the dead that were in them, and here come the spirits joined a resurrected bodies and they were judged every man according to their," what, "works."

You say John, but you can't be saved by works. That's right. But if you don't believe in Jesus Christ, what do you have left to commend yourself. Works. And isn't God a fair God and a just God so God has kept a running record of the works of every man. Per chance that some man might be perfect.

The books were opened, verse 12. God has kept a record of the deeds of every man. Why? If you're going to go into court and you're going to say the man is guilty, you better have, what? The evidence. And the books are open. Now this is the congregation of the doomed. They're judged according to their works, but by the deeds of the law, no flesh is justified.

Romans 3:20, "Not of works." Ephesians 2:9, "No way to be saved by works." Many will say unto me in that day Lord, Lord we prophesied in Your name. We cast out demons and we did many wonderful works. And He shall say unto them, "Depart from me, I never knew you."

Nobody's ever saved by works are they? It doesn't matter how good you are. God will keep a work of your works and nobody will make it. Look at the end of verse 12. "But another book was opened." Oh I'm so glad for that book. "Which is the Book of Life. The dead were judged out of those things that's written in the books according to their works."

You say what's the Book of Life? It's called elsewhere, listen to this, I love this. Revelation 17:8 "The beast that thou sawest was and is not and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit and into perdition and they that dwell on earth shall wonder," listen, "whose names were not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world."

Whose Book of Life is it? The Lamb's Book of Life. You say, how do you get in that book? How do you get your name in that book? One way. Peter said, "Neither is there salvation in any other for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved." And who was that man? Jesus. Jesus.

Put your faith in Jesus Christ it means that your name is written in the Book of Life. If your name is not in the Book of Life, you'll be judged out of the books by your works and no man shall ever be justified by works.

No man can ever say that God sent him to Hell. No man can ever say that God damned his soul. In Matthew 25:41, Jesus said, "Depart from me, ye cursed into everlasting fire," listen, "prepared for the devil and his angels." Hell was never even prepared for people. God is not willing that any, what, should perish.

But they all should come to repentance. Verse 14 says, "And death and Hades," now there's Hades, "were cast into the lake of fire." You see the Hades that we talked about now just is thrown into the eternal Hell." And verse 15, what can I say? "Whosoever was not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire."

You say John, this disturbs me. Well, it disturbs me too. It hurts to even study this. It's painful. Because I don't like to think about people going to the lake of fire. But it's here isn't it? It's here. I close by saying what Jesus said, listen to His words. "Truly, truly, I say unto you he who hears my word," listen, "and believes on Him who sent me, has eternal life and does not come into judgment, but is passed from death unto life."



All you have to do is hear the Son and believe and God will put your name in the Book.

Father, thank you tonight for clarity of the word and marvelous plan that you've laid out for those that are righteous and those that love Jesus Christ. But Lord we just...we just hurt inside and it sickens us to think of a place of torment for those who know not Christ. But God we know that if somebody didn't want You, You'd never force your presence on them for eternity, surely not. And we know that Hell doesn't change anything. It just makes permanent what you were in this life if you want to live without God, you'll live without Him forever. If you want to know God, you'll know Him forever.

Father, we thank you that You've given us the truth that we might choose and choose wisely. While our heads are bowed as we close tonight in just a...I feel just in a message like this that I need to just pinpoint some thoughts in your mind. And while you're meditating with your eyes closed and silently sitting where you are, I would just not be fair with my own heart nor with the Holy Spirit if I didn't say if you don't know Jesus Christ tonight and have never put your faith in Him, you are in a dangerous position.

And there are no words that I can add to the Scriptures to soften the blow. Judgment awaits. I don't understand that. I don't understand all about that. And it grieves me and like John 1...it's bitter but it's in the Bible and I believe it. But God calls and He says "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and ye shall be saved." That's all that's required.

And if you're sitting there in you're saying well, I don't know Jesus Christ and I don't know if I've ever asked Him into my life and I think if I were to die I'd be in Hades and ultimately I'd be at that great white throne and I'd have nothing but works and works won't make it and I'm in trouble. What do I do? I'd just say to you just silently, quietly say this, God I don't think my name...I don't think my name is really there, at least from my perspective." I've never committed myself to Jesus Christ, but tonight Father I want to do that. Forgive my sin, take over my life. Can you pray that prayer?

I'm not trying to get you to join a religious system. I'm just...I just want to get you right with God. Just invite Jesus Christ to come into your life. Some of us as Christians have sure taken lightly this haven't we, in terms of our witnessing? We need to stop to think about where people go when they die without God.

Father as we sing a closing hymn, we ask that You'll speak to hearts and bring those into the prayer Lord who just need tonight to make the decision of committing everything to Jesus Christ. We pray in His name, Amen.

COPYRIGHT (C) 2015 Grace to You

You may reproduce this Grace to You content for non-commercial purposes in accordance with Grace to You's Copyright Policy (<http://www.gty.org/connect/copyright>).