The Coming Earthly Kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, Part 4
Scripture: Revelation 20:8-10
Code: 66-76

Well, we return now to Revelation chapter 20 and we're going to be looking at the Word of God tonight as it presents to us the coming earthly Kingdom of Jesus Christ. This is Part 4 in our look at these first ten verses of Revelation chapter 20, tremendous, tremendous portion of Scripture.

The hope of the world is the return of Jesus Christ to earth and the establishment of His great glorious Kingdom. As we know, God made a paradise originally, He called it Eden, and He will remake a paradise finally called the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. Man didn't write the first chapter in history, and he won't write the last chapter. God wrote the first one, and God will write the last one. God Himself will act to end man's day on this planet. And that very act of God in ending man's day and bringing about the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ is the theme of the book of Revelation. In fact, we've called this book "Back to the Future," and ancient prophetic book that is not only up to date but takes us clear into the future right to the very end.

Now remember the sequence in Revelation, if you will. Chapter 1 introduces us to the book and gives us a vision of Jesus Christ. And in chapter 1 Jesus Christ is moving in His church. In chapters 2 and 3 He's writing letters to the church. So we could say that chapters 1, 2 and 3 deal with the age of the church, in which age we now are living.

And then we are transported in chapters 4 and 5 into heaven. And when we get to heaven we are among saints and angels. And the scene is one of high interest. The scene is one of praise and adoration and glory. Not just in general but because something is about to happen. And what is about to happen is judgment. Chapter 4 and 5 show us a heaven filled with anticipation where things are being readied for the Lord to act in the world.

And then we come to chapter 6 and from chapter 6 all the way through chapter 18 there is judgment...a time of great judgment. It unfolds in seal judgments and trumpet judgments and bowl judgments and it ends with a holocaust of horror called the day of the Lord in which God's final fury is poured out.

Then you come to chapter 19 and the return of Jesus Christ as He comes back to earth, destroys the armies of the world and all the unbelievers. And then chapter 20, He sets up His Kingdom. His Kingdom is described in chapter 20 down through verse 10. At the end of His Kingdom there is a final judgment called the judgment if the Great White Throne, the end of this chapter. And then in chapters

21 and 22 you have the eternal new heaven and the new earth which is the final state in which the redeemed will live forever.

So this is a sweeping prophetic panorama, taking us from the present time, the age of the church, through the time of great judgment, the coming of Jesus Christ, the establishment of His Kingdom and then on into the eternal state. So in the flow and the chronology of the book of Revelation, we come now to chapter 20 and find ourselves learning about the period of the Kingdom. It's a period of one thousand years that is repeated over and over again in the first part of chapter 20, the term a thousand years, or THE thousand years is used numerous times...six or seven, as I recall. This is a thousand-year period in which Christ will reign over a restored earth and universe.

And as we've been saying, this marvelous Kingdom is not just introduced here. In fact, it is merely further defined here, it was introduced among the prophets of the Old Testament. They spoke about it, as we saw. Jesus Himself spoke about it. New Testament writers spoke about it. But nowhere in the New Testament is there a clearer more unmistakable presentation of the Kingdom than right here in Revelation chapter 20. And here we have a framework, a sort of skeleton on which we can hang all the other prophecies about the Kingdom. This sort of gives us the basic structure.

And so as we looked at these opening verses, we remember that in verses 1 to 3 as we are introduced to the Kingdom, the first thing that happens is the removal of Satan. "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 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."

So the first thing that happens in the Kingdom, and this gives it its character, is the removal of Satan and along with him all of his demons. It wouldn't do any good to remove him and leave all his demons here. They would be able to occupy the world with the same kind of frenzy and the same kind of influence they have currently. And since Satan himself is not omnipresent, the work of demons could be tremendously effective, as it is now when he's not even present. So I believe that when Satan is removed, so are all of his minions, all of his cohorts, all of those fallen angels who are part of his kingdom of darkness. So Satan being removed is going to have an immense impact on the character of life in the Kingdom. No longer will he be the god of this age, the prince of this world, the prince of the power of the air, he will be completely out of the picture. So we saw that in verses 1 to 3. And that has an immense impact on the nature of life during that thousand-year period.

Then in verses 4 through 6 we came to the reign of saints. From the removal of Satan to the reign of saints. "I saw thrones and they sat upon them...those being the saints...and judgment was given to them. 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 not received the mark upon their forehead and upon their hand and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years." So you have all the saints there, Old Testament saints, saints who lived during the time of Christ on earth, New Testament saints, and then even the Tribulation saints. And they're all there, reigning with Christ for a thousand years. "And the rest of the dead didn't come to life until the thousand years were completed." But all the saints are a part of the first resurrection and 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 again for a thousand years." And we discussed quite in detail what that reign of the saints means.

And then we came to the third point in verse 7, from the removal of Satan, the reign of saints, to the return of Satan, as noted back in verse 3, he would be released for a short time. And here it says, "When the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison." And we know what happens. Satan comes out of his prison. And horrible and frightening things occur, as they always have when Satan had his sway in society.

And we answered the question that is a very important question. If you're in the Millennial Kingdom, how is it that Satan's going to be able to come back and have any influence? Isn't everybody a believer? No. The only people who enter the Kingdom will be believers. They will be the sheep in the judgments of Matthew 24 and 25 in the Olivet Discourse. The sheep who enter into the Kingdom, only believers will enter the Kingdom because when Christ returns He'll destroy all the ungodly. Only believers will enter but many of them, of course, will be in...still in their physical bodies and all of them who enter the Kingdom immediately on earth will be physically alive. And so they will reproduce and have children. Their children will have to confess Christ to be saved, like anybody in this current age would have to. And many of them will reject Christ, showing the depth of sinfulness as we saw in our last study.

And even though there is a comprehensive cultural morality, even though Christ rules with a rod of iron, even though there is massive evidence that He is in fact God in human flesh and the ruler of the world, and even though theology will not be disputed, but truth will reign, righteousness will prevail, peace will encircle the globe, even though the truth will be everywhere available to them, men will love their sin so much they will reject Christ even while He's present.

And having rejected the Lord Jesus Christ, they will then be a huge mass of unbelievers for Satan to influence upon his release from the kingdom...released, I should say, to the Kingdom of Christ from the place of darkness where he has been.

And we talked about the fact that man's depravity will not be altered by a perfect environment. Man's depravity will not be altered by a cultural morality. It doesn't change man. And Satan will not have his personality or his character altered by being in the abyss, either. His wickedness is fixed for eternity.

He will just come out of a thousand years, or nearly a thousand years of incarceration more irate, more determined than ever to try to destroy the Lord Jesus Christ. He doesn't change in his environment of punishment, and men don't change in a perfect environment of righteousness. And so here comes Satan as bad as ever, and he goes after sinners who are as lost as ever, even though christ is alive on the earth. And so you have then, the return of Satan in verse 7.

It says when the thousand years are completed he is released from prison. It also says back in verse 3 that he is released for a short time. So sometime near the end of the thousand years he will be released. It doesn't mean that the thousand years have to completely be over, some time near the end he will be released. And he will have some time to do what he sets out to do.

Now that takes us to the fourth point in verses 8 through 10, and the culminating point in this skeleton of the Kingdom, the revolt of society. We go from the removal of Satan, the reign of saints, to the return of Satan, and then the revolt of society. This is really an incredible thing that happens. It reminds us, as I've saying, that nothing external can change men. Judgment in the Great Tribulation...think of that. God is pouring out His fury, angels flying through heaven preaching the gospel, a hundred and forty-four thousand witnesses preaching the gospel who are invincible, two witnesses preaching the gospel worldwide who rise from the dead, right in full view of the whole world. Incredible, miraculous judgments falling all around people. They are hearing the gospel like it's never been preached before. It is everywhere. The truth is everywhere. Judgment is everywhere. And people still hate God and hate Christ and will not repent. They will not change in a time of judgment and they will not change in a time of righteousness. They will not change in a time of war. They will not change in a time of peace. They will not change under Antichrist's rule, they will not change under Christ's rule. Men love sin in every age and under every condition. They love sin.

And so, after a thousand year of a perfect environment of the utopia, paradise restored, Satan comes out. Verse 8 then, "And he'll 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."

Now there you have the revolt of society and its end in very rapid-fire staccato presentation. The deception comes in verse 8. The war in verse 9. And halfway through verse 9 the destruction and then into verse 10 where Satan himself is dealt with eternally.

Now I want us to look at this and I think there's some really wonderful things to understand about it as we look about the details of this text. First of all, in verse 8 it says that Satan comes out to deceive the nations. Now we're not surprised by that because that's what he's made a career out of doing. He is a

deceiver. In fact, back in chapter 12 verse 9 it calls him Satan who deceives the whole world. I mean, that is his character, that is what he does. He is a deceiver, ever and always. Back in verse 3 of this chapter, he is put into the abyss so he should not deceive the nations any longer until the thousand years were finished. And now when he comes back, he will deceive people.

In other words, it will not be clear to them why they're doing what they're doing. They will be under a deception. His primary operation has always been to lead people astray from the truth, from reality. You wonder why, don't you, the world is just absolutely filled with deception and lies, false religions everywhere, false views of morality everywhere, false understandings of virtue everywhere. Why? Because the god of this age has blinded the minds of the people of this age who are perishing and they have bought into his deception because they love their sin. And so Satan comes out and he deceives the nations.

So while Satan is released and Satan is the deceiver, it is the plan of God that is being executed. It is no different than when Jesus died on the cross and Peter reminded the people who killed Christ that they had done that, that they had killed the prince of life, they had wanted a murderer rather than the prince of life, but what they had done was by the determinant counsel and foreknowledge of God. And so God is behind the whole thing. It was God, of course, who gave the angel the authority to incarcerate Satan. It was God, of course, who provided the means of releasing him from the pit. It is God who allows him to pull off his deception. And it is God who gathers by allowing the enterprise of Satan to run its course, all of these hosts against His people and against His land and against His city.

So Satan, you will remember, always functions within the sovereignty of God. He always functions within the stated purpose and goal of God in His redemptive intention.

Now it says also in verse 8 that he will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth. Obviously the earth is round, we don't take this as some indication that people in the Bible times thought the earth was square. It simply means east, west, north and south...the points of a compass from all over the globe. And you can remember if you were with us back in chapter 7, four angels standing at the four corners of the earth holding back the four winds of the earth. And there again is that same reference to east, west, north and south, meaning global, the four points of the compass. So Satan's deception is global.

I don't know how he pulls it off, I don't know how he dispatches his demons because the Bible doesn't tell us. We don't know by what means he will bring about the deception. But the deception is going to basically at its heart be this kind of deception...we can conquer Christ. That's at the heart of it. I mean, they would have to believe that or they wouldn't do this. And that's going to be a very, very interesting deception because after all, they have lived under the rule of Christ for a thousand years and many of them have surely lived for hundreds of years because life will be elongated again, as we discussed

some weeks ago. And they've lived a long time under the rule of Christ. They have seen the rod of iron. It is well known to him that He rules with justice and righteousness and swiftness and there is no escaping. They understand His power. They understand His invincibility. So the deception has to involve the idea that they can actually overthrow Christ. And they are so deceived by Satan but that's all within God's plan.

So, back to verse 8. The nations from all over the globe are deceived. And then it says, "Gog and Magog." What is that? Well there's only one way to see that. That has to be the title for these enemies of the King of Kings. He gives them this title, they are called Gog and Magog. The world is going to march against Christ under that name, Gog and Magog.

Now that is not a non-descript or an obscure name. That is not something just pulled out of a hat. That has significance prophetically.

Now Magog we know. Magog was the grandson of Noah. Magog was the second son of Japheth, you remember Noah had three sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth. Japheth's second son, grandson of Noah therefore, was Magog. And Magog, this child of Japheth, founded a great kingdom. And the great kingdom that Magog founded was north of the Black and Caspian Sea. In ancient times it was known as Scythia, in modern times it is known as Russia.

Scripture says little about this kingdom at all. All we know about it is just a little bit of the history of the name because he is a grandson of Noah. And we know the location. We don't know much else. So from a historical standpoint we don't know much. And furthermore there is no way to know what Gog is. We have nothing about Gog by way of descriptive in Scripture. Perhaps it is best to refer to Gog as the leader of the Magog power. Magog being this great power, this great nation, this great group of people to the north, and Gog perhaps being the leader of Magog.

But we're not looking at history, we're looking at prophecy. And here is a prophecy that in the future Gog and Magog are going to appear. And so Gog, if he is indeed the leader of the Magog power, here refers not to someone in the past, but to someone in the future. This name is given to the final rebelling army of millions of people.

Now in ancient times Magog, Scythia, and even in modern times Russia is north of Israel. And it may well be that the reason this worldwide power is called Magog, there's a number of reasons perhaps, but one significant reason would be that it like all the other enemies of Israel comes down from the north. All those who have conquered Israel through history always come down from the north because you come down from the Heights, and they have immense vulnerability at that point. And so here is the final great conquering army, coming down into Israel from the north against the land, against the holy city, the beloved city, and against the reigning Christ.

Now the question that Bible students have pondered through the years is what event is this? What event is 38 and 39 of Ezekiel? When does this happen? Some suggest it happens before the Tribulation, some have suggested it happens at the beginning of the Tribulation, some have said it's in the middle of the Tribulation. Some have said it's toward the end of the Tribulation. Some have said it's...it's right after the Tribulation. Some have said it's...it's in the middle of the Kingdom. Some have said it's at the end of the Kingdom. Some have said it's after the Kingdom. And what that tells you is people are having a very difficult time figuring this out.

And when you get down to the irreducible minimum, the one compelling interpretation that you have of Ezekiel 38 and 39 is Revelation 20 because that's the only other place that Gog and Magog is mentioned. And certainly the Lord must have assumed that we would make a connection because in Revelation 20 He doesn't do anything to define Gog and Magog. Well He would assume that anybody who understands the Bible is going to get immediately back into Ezekiel 38 and 39 to find out what this Gog and Magog is all about.

Now there are some who say that, however, the events in Ezekiel 38 and 39 are not the same as the events in the time of the Kingdom, but they're more like the events of the Tribulation. Consequently there is some discussion at that point. But let me just suggest to you that I'm a simple man and if I see Gog and Magog in Revelation 20 and I see Gog and Magog in Ezekiel 38 and 39, I'm prone in my simplicity to make a connection. I think they're the same, and I think there are some compelling reasons why we can affirm that. And I want to share those with you.

Let's go back to Ezekiel 38 and I want to just help you to see why I think this fits into the time of the end of the Millennial Kingdom. Let me start reading for you.

"And the word of the Lord came to me saying, Son of Man, set your face toward Gog of the land of Magog, the prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal and prophesy against him, and say, Thus says the Lord God, behold I am against you, O Gog, prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal and I will turn you about and put hooks into your jaws and I will bring you out and all your army, horses and horsemen, all your splendid attired...all of them splendidly attired, a great company with buckler and shield, all of them wielding swords; Persia and Ethiopia and Put with them, all of them with shield and helmet, Gomer with all its troops, Beth- togarmah from the remote parts of the north with all its troops-- many peoples with you. Be prepared and prepare yourself, you and all your companies that are assembled about you and be a guard for them.

"After many days you will be summoned in the latter years you will come into the land that is restored from the sword, whose inhabitants have been gathered from many nations, to the mountains of Israel, which had been a continual waste. But its people were brought out from the nations and they're living securely, all of them. And you will go up, you will come up like a storm, you will be like a cloud

covering the land, you and all your troops and many peoples with you. And thus says the Lord God, It will come about on that day that thoughts will come into your mind and you will devise an evil plan and you will say, I will go up against the land of unwalled villages, I will go against those who are at rest, that live securely, all of them living without walls and having no bars or gates to capture spoil and to seize plunder, to turn your hand against the waste places which are now inhabited against the people who are gathered from the nations who have acquired cattle and goods who live at the center of the world. Sheba and Dedan and the merchants of Tarshish, with all its villages, will say to you, Have you come to capture spoil? Have you assembled your company to seize plunder, to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to capture great spoil?

"Therefore prophesy, son of man, and say to Gog, Thus says the Lord god, On that day when My people Israel are living securely, will you not know it? And you will come from your place out of the remote parts of the north, you and many peoples with you, all of them riding on horses, a great assembly and a mighty army, and you will come up against My people Israel like a cloud to cover the land. It will come about on the last days that I'll bring you against My land in order that the nations may know Me, when I shall be sanctified through you before their eyes, O Gog."

Just reading that gives me the same sense of what is said in the book of Revelation, doesn't it you? A collection of people from all over the earth coming against Jerusalem, coming down from thebbutz north which is where the conquerors always came from. Let's just pick out some of the key ideas here.

Whatever is going on Ezekiel 38 and 39 will occur when Israel is living in safety. Verse 8, "In the latter years you will come into the land that is restored from the sword..." and so forth, and at the end of the verse, "And time when they are living securely, all of them." Verse 11, "I will go up against the land of unwalled villages," that means they don't need protection. "I will go against those who are at rest, that live securely, all of them, living without walls and having no bars or gates." Verse 14, "In the day when My people in Israel are living securely, will you not know it?"

One very clear thing is it's a time when Israel is living in safety. That is not true of the Tribulation, is it? There is anything but safety in the time of Jacob's trouble. The time of Jacob's trouble is what Jesus called the worst time that has ever come on the face of the earth, Matthew 24:21. It is a time when He warns the Jews to flee and to hope and pray that it's not winter or they're not bearing children because that would hinder their escape.

Secondly, whatever this great war is, it occurs not only at a time when Israel is living safely, but when Israel is prosperous and flourishing. Verse 12, "They are going to have spoil, these people are going to come to capture spoil, seize plunder. They're going to come to those who have acquired cattle and goods who live at the center of the world." It's going to be then when the people of God are back in Jerusalem and Jerusalem, believe me, in God's eyes is the center of the world, right? It's the throne

of the Messiah. They're going to come at a time when Israel flourishes and when they have spoil. Down in verse 13, "Have you assembled to seize plunder, to carry away silver and gold and cattle and goods?" And let me say this, that is not true of Israel during the time of the Tribulation. They will not be wealthy, they will be poor. They will be slaughtered, they will be massacred, as we saw very, very clearly. They'll be leaving anything they possess where it is when they flee for their lives. They'll be hustling off to a place in the wilderness to be protected, taking nothing with them but bare necessities.

Thirdly, whatever this event is in 38 and 39 it will occur when Israel has been brought back from the sword. In other words, when war is over. Verse 8, "It will come in the latter years, in the land that is restored from the sword." That is to say it will...it will come in a time when the land is, literally in the Hebrew, *shub*, returned...returned from war, from the sword.

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

Time when peace reigned. That's not the kingdom (Tribulation), according to Zechariah chapter 12, Zechariah chapter 12 lays out for us that Israel is trampled during the time of the Tribulation. Revelation 19, massive war during the Tribulation. This has to be a time when war is over, when the nation is redeemed, brought back from chastening wars, disciplining wars, wars of God's refining. And certainly, if you go back to chapter 36 and follow the chronology of Ezekiel's prophecy, it was in 36 that Israel was brought back, that the dry bones find life and they're redeemed and delivered and gathered to the land. And it's a great and glorious gathering, chapter 36. Then in chapter 37 in the vision of the dry bones as Israel is brought into the reality of the New Covenant, saved, redeemed and given life. So the nation is redeemed and gathered and wars are over.

And next, it has to be at a time when...when Israel is gathered for, I want to use the right word, within the framework of redemptive purpose. Verse 8 again, "Whose inhabitants have been gathered from many nations from the mountains of Israel." In other words, it's the time after God redeems Israel, when Israel has been gathered, *kibbutz*in Hebrew, when they have...it's used frequently for the Lord gathering Israel into the Kingdom. Isaiah talked about it, chapter 11, chapter 43, chapter 54, chapter 56, Jeremiah talked about it in chapter 23 and 29 and 31 and 32, Zephaniah chapter 3, Zechariah 10, Malachi 4. It talks about the gathering of Israel into the Kingdom. Surely can't...surely can't refer to Israel...listen to this...being regathered in unbelief to enjoy the false peace of Antichrist. It has to be Israel being gathered to a true peace and the reign of the Messiah, so it can't be a time in the Tribulation.

Furthermore, it must be a time when Israel is invaded by many nations, when Israel is invaded by many nations. Notice in verse 2, Gog, Magog, Rosh, Meshech, Tubal; verse 5, Persia, Ethiopia, Put;

verse 6, Gomer and Togarmah, house of Togarmah; verse 6...verse 13 rather, Sheba, Dedan, Tarshish. This is a massive global kind of thing, this isn't just some nation in the north coming down as is described in Daniel 11 and that must be at a different time for a number of reasons. First of all, it's just one people coming down from the north, secondly, they come down and make war with the Antichrist in Daniel 11, not with Christ. So that power, the king of the north coming down in Daniel 11 cannot be the same as this north power. Furthermore, east, south, west, north are all involved. He mentions here Ethiopia, that's south of Egypt. Put, that's Libya, that's south. Sheba, that's northeast Africa. That's Dedan or Saudi Arabia to the east. Tarshish would be the Mediterranean area. You can't be very specific about that but it could be Tarsus in Cilicia. Gomer, modern Turkey; Togarmah, eastern Anotolia which is a portion of Turkey, probably an ancient city of the Assyrians, far removed from the others mentioned. And some say it was the land bridge between the Black and the Caspian Sea. Meshech, other parts of Turkey; Tubal, other parts of modern Turkey; and Persia which is modern Persia or Iran.

The point is they come from all around, the four corners of the earth. It must also be a time when Israel's calamities have ended. Verse 8 says that they are living securely. They have been brought out from the nations and are living securely, all of them. That could only be true if they were brought out from the nations redemptively and were living under the leadership of Messiah. Certainly can't be the time of the Great Tribulation when Armageddon is about to break out. We find a similar indication over in chapter 39. Furthermore it will be a time, and this is very important, when Israel is unpolluted, when Israel does not profane God's name. Chapter 39 of Ezekiel verse 7, "My holy name I shall make known in the midst of My people Israel and I shall not let My holy name be profaned anymore." It will be a time when Israel is unpolluted, when God's name is not profaned anywhere in the world. It can't be the Tribulation because blasphemy reigns on every front.

It will be a time when Israel is being dealt with as a nation. And that time has to be the Kingdom. Over in verse 25 of 39, "I shall restore the fortunes of Jacob and have mercy on the whole house of Israel." Verse 27, "I bring them back from the peoples, gather them from the lands of their enemies and I will be sanctified through them in the sight of many nations." It's a time when Israel is lifted up and purified and purged and redeemed nationally and dealt with as a nation, reconstituted as a nation. That happens in the Kingdom. It is a time when Israel is led by holiness as we saw in verses 7 and 8.

The only period of time that I can understand that happening is the Kingdom. And that's why I think if you start with Gog and Magog in Revelation 20, there's only one place to go, that's Ezekiel 38 and 39. There are some features here that trip up some people. Some people wonder about seven years in verses 9 and 10 of chapter 39, seven years to burn the weapons that are going to be used in that war. Well that's not a problem. If Satan is released a few years before the end of the thousand, and the war starts and ends immediately, there can be a period of time in which the weapons can be burned before the Kingdom ends and the eternal state begins. There will be, remember, believing people still alive on earth. There will be a great multitude who will believe in Jesus Christ and be

saved. And when all the ungodly are destroyed, they'll still be around to do that if that's what God has purposed to do. That's certainly not a point that would debilitate this argument.

Well, all of that...let's go back to Revelation 20. I want you to know that because I think it's important when we study the Word of God to be as accurate as we can possibly be. And when the Lord gives us something as specific as Gog and Magog, we want to do our best to interpret it. I can't imagine any better parallel to the event of Revelation 20 than Ezekiel 38 and 39. And as you read through Ezekiel 38 and 39, if you took the time to do it in great detail, there might...you might come across a few things that you wonder how they fit. That shouldn't surprise you, because that's the nature of prophetic truth. We can't know all the details, we can't resolve all the issues.

You can imagine how the Old Testament prophet or the Old Testament saint read everything that the Old Testament said about the coming of Messiah and tried to fit it all together. First of all, they would have one massive problem because they would be reading the Old Testament and they would read...King, King, King, King...and then they would come to Isaiah and they would find suffering servant which would pose for them an immense conflict, which conflict exists to this very day among Jews who don't know what to do with that section of Isaiah. That's the nature of prophecy, in that we can't see everything that could be known, only God knows the future in its perfection.

So, back to Revelation 20. Satan then comes back, collects a world of sinners from the corners of the earth. They are given this title Gog and Magog because that represents the ancient enemy that descends on the people of God. Satan gets all these people, gathers them together for the war, the absolutely final battle. That's it, folks, there ain't no more. Now we've seen a lot of battles through Revelation, this is it...this is the last battle. The next battle that occurs in the Bible is the battle you have to find the right thing in the Concordance because after this there aren't any battles left...the absolutely final battle.

And it says amazingly, "The number of them is like the sand of the seashore." Now that's hyperbole. It doesn't mean that if you could count the number of grains of sand on the seashores of the world you'd know exactly how many soldiers there would be in that battle. That's hyperbole, that is simply a way to illustrate this massive number. And that is so tragic that there will be a number, a massive number of people who will join Satan's rebellion. By the way, such hyperbole is used back in Genesis 22:17, God says, "I'll greatly bless you, multiply your seed as the stars of the heavens, as the sand which is on the seashore." In other words, a tremendous, great number, not necessarily equal mathematically to the number of grains of sand. It came, it says in Joshua 11:4, they came out, they and all their armies...and this is talking about some kings...and they came, as many people as the sand that is on the seashore. Well we know that army wasn't equal to the number of grains of sand, it's simply a hyperbolic way to express a large number, a massive number. We have the same kind of use in 1 Samuel 13, it says, "The Philistines assembled to fight with Israel, thirty thousand chariots, and six thousand horsemen, and people like the sand which is on the seashore in abundance." The

Jews just used that as a hyperbolic way of expressing great number, a great horde coming in a warring effort.

Back for just a moment, it came to mind, back in Ezekiel 38 verse 9 it says that they'll come like a storm, like a cloud covering the land. That's the same kind of hyperbole. Down in verse 16, "Like a cloud covering the land." So it's going to be a, there's going to be a population explosion in the Kingdom. People are going to live a long time, conditions are going to be perfect. I told you the earth is going to be restored. Things are going to change. There are not going to be the natural enemies. I don't think the disease factor is going to be there. I think when you saw Jesus coming in His first coming and healing and healing and banishing disease from Palestine, that was a taste of the age to come. It will be an age of healing, of wholeness, of long life, of high reproduction. It will be a time of peace. People won't be dying as they die today in wars and crime and all of that. And so people will live long healthy lives. And they will be highly reproductive. There will be a population explosion exponentially that will create a massive population of millions on the earth by the time that thousand years is complete. The conditions of health and safety and peace are going to make a lot of people available for Satan to gather his hosts.

Then verse 9, "When the army was gathered," and it's an amazing thing to see how he's able to gather them from all over the earth. "They came up from the broad plain of the earth." Now remember, the earth has been reconfigured. We remember that. We remember back, for example, in Revelation chapter 16 and verse 20, "Every island fled away and the mountains were not found." There has been during the time of the Tribulation a rearrangement of topography and geography. The holocaust of judgment has reshaped the earth. Mountains have come down, and islands have fled away. That indicates barriers being removed, access being given, a feature of the Kingdom. And so this tremendous army...it doesn't mean there is no hill anywhere, it just means that the earth is reconfigured. There is still a mount on which Zion exists and which Christ rules and there may still be some hills here and there as the prophets looked toward that time. But in general the earth is flattened out. And so they come up on the broad plain of the earth and they surrounded the camp of the saints. That's...that's what they're after. The saints encampment would be, of course, nothing other than the land of Israel.

You can believe that...that the world of true believers is going to want to get as close to Jerusalem as they can get, right? Because Jesus is there. I'll tell you one thing, if I were alive in that Kingdom, I wouldn't be living in L.A. if He was in Jerusalem.

If you're thinking about future property investment.... Of course, it's got to survive the Tribulation, may not make it. And if we have an earth that is as peaceful as far as weather is concerned as Eden was, we might not even need to protect ourselves like we do in houses today.

But anyway, they go up against the people of God, the camp of the saints. That word "camp" is used in the New Testament to speak of a military encampment. It is used to speak of Roman barracks. It is used in Acts 21, Acts 22, Acts 23 in that same way. So they come up against the camp of the saints and the saints will have encamped around the city and around the throne of Jesus Christ. They want to be where He is. They want to be in His glorious presence.

And the Scripture makes this clear that that's what the saints are going to do. Isaiah, for example, chapter 24, says in verse 23, "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." His spiritual leaders, His elders, His saints surely all gathered as close to His presence as they can possibly be. Jeremiah 3:17, "At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord and all the nations will be gathered to Jerusalem for the name of the Lord." All those who believe out of the nations are going to go there and they're going to live there because He is there.

Zechariah, the last chapter, chapter 14 verse 9, "And the Lord will be King over all the earth. In that day the Lord will be the only one and His name the only one." Marvelous. "And all the land will be changed into a plain from Geba to Rimmon south of Jerusalem." It will all be a flat plain. "But Jerusalem will rise and remain on its site." It will be a mount where He reigns, everything else is flat. Verse 11, "And people will live in it and there will be no more curse for Jerusalem will dwell in security." And so he goes back to what the psalmist said in Psalm 78:68, to Mount Zion which He loves. Psalm 87:2, "The Lord loves the gates of Zion."

So the capital city of the Millennial Kingdom is the point of attack where Christ reigns, where the saints live, the battle is very brief. "Fire came down from heaven and devoured them all." End of battle. Fast, sudden, instantaneous and devastating.

It is a favorite judgment of God to send down fire from heaven and devour people. You read about it in Genesis 19, Leviticus 10, 2 Kings 1. It is a favorite way for God to destroy the ungodly. In Luke 9 in the New Testament in verse 54, "And when His disciples, James and John, saw this they said, `Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?'" Even they knew it was a favorite of God's to do that. And so it says in verse 9, "Fire came down from heaven and devoured them," killed them...killed them.

What do you mean by that? Well they were literally physically killed which meant their body was dead and their soul then went into the realm of punishment, waiting to be resurrected. Because even the ungodly will be resurrected, as we will see in the next section. They were devoured. That means they were physically annihilated.

It's a devastating and horrible judgment and it's the last one.

And then the final feature, verse 10. "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."

The devil, Satan who led them, who deceived them was now thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, a sulphur-like chemical fire, symbolizing torment. Satan joins his cronies. You remember back in chapter 19 verse 20, the beast was seized, the false prophet was seized, and they've already been in the lake of fire for a thousand years. They've already been burning with fire and brimstone. And now Satan joins them.

You say, "Is that a literal fire like we understand fire? Is that literal brimstone like we understand it?" No. "Is it literal anguish, literal pain, literal punishment?" Yes. Remember now, these are spiritual beings. The nature of their torment is spiritual. You say, "What about humans? When they get cast into the lake of fire, is theirs a literal burning and a literal fire?" Yes. We're not talking about spiritual beings like demons now, we're talking about physical beings who have resurrected physical bodies. And we'll talk more about that in the future. For human beings hell is a literal place that burns their...their resurrected flesh and never destroys it.

But for now, Satan is thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, prepared for him and his angels. He joins his cronies, his head is finally bruised, as John 12:31 says, "Now the ruler of this world shall be cast out," and here is where that is fulfilled. And this is final hell. This is the final place. This is the last place. Every kind of imaginable torment will be there. In every conceivable way in which this creature can suffer, he will suffer, in every conceivable way in which a fallen angel can suffer, he will suffer. And they are, frankly, inconceivable to me because I cannot comprehend how spiritual beings suffer in fire and brimstone. But God knows that and I'm content not only to not know that now, but never to know it. For those who reject Jesus Christ who are among men, those human beings in whatever conceivable way a resurrected human body and a living eternal human soul can suffer, they will suffer.

And so, Satan is cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are also. And then this horrible statement, "And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever." The "day and night" means it's unrelieved, there's never a moment when they're not tormented and they will be tormented without relief forever...forever and ever. Absolutely astounding thought.

In Revelation 14:11 it says, "Those who drink of the wine of the wrath of God, their smoke will go up forever and ever." The smoke of their torment and they have no rest day and night. And here it's talking about human beings, whereas in chapter 20 it's talking about Satan. Hell for Satan and his angels is eternal. But remember, the beast and the false prophet are human and for them it is eternal as well.

You say, "Are you sure hell is eternal?" As sure as I am that heaven is eternal. When it says forever and ever it uses the same phrase in chapter 1 verse 6, and there it says "To God be the glory and the dominion forever and ever." And if hell isn't forever and ever, then God isn't glorious forever and ever. People want to come along and deny that hell is forever, and to do that you have deny that God is forever cause the same expression is used to describe Him. In chapter 1 verse 18 it says, Christ speaking, "I was dead and behold I am alive forever." If hell is not forever, Christ is not forever, and neither is heaven. But if God is forever and Christ is forever, then heaven is forever and so is hell.

There's no way around it. The language of Scripture is clear. Chapter 4 verse 9, "The living creatures gave glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, to Him who lives forever and ever." Verse 10, "We will worship Him who lives forever and ever." Chapter 5 verse 13, "To Him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb, be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever." Chapter 7 verse 12, "Amen, blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might be to our God forever and ever. Amen." Chapter 10 verse 6, "They swore by Him who lives forever and ever, who created heaven and the things in it, earth and the things in it, the sea and the things in it." Chapter 11 verse 15, "The kingdom of the world has become the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He will reign forever and ever." Whatever "forever and ever" means in connection with God and Christ, it means in connection with hell, *eis tous aionos*.

So, the demise of Satan, the destruction of Satan was...was assured at the cross and executed at the end of the Millennial Kingdom. So what have we learned? About the removal of Satan, the reign of saints, the return of Satan and the revolt of society. In understanding that you have the picture of the Kingdom. And we've tried to fill in a lot of details over these four messages. This is the future of the world. It never ceases to astound me how that so many people in our society can run from poll to poll trying to figure out the future and here it is. And what a wonderful reality. We're already citizens of that Kingdom, right? Our citizenship is already there. That's our place, that's our home, He's our King. And we will come back with Him in glorified form to reign alongside those who are still living in human form. We will enjoy the Kingdom even more than they and we will rule under Christ, carrying out His wishes on behalf of those who live in the world. We will enjoy the peace and righteousness, the joy, the power, the truth, the wisdom that reigns supreme. And we will rule with Christ. What a glorious future. And it awaits us.

It's a very trivial comparison but I was watching some commercial of some athlete, and after the championship they said, "Now where are you going?" And he said, "I'm going to Disneyland." And I thought to myself, if they ever ask me that, I'm going to tell them I'm going to the Kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen? Amen! Let's pray together.

Father, we thank You for a glimpse into the glories of our future and at the same time our hearts are grieved over the sinfulness of sin. Father, we...we are overwhelmed, overpowered, shocked and

startled by Your grace to us, by Your mercy to us that has made us citizens of the Kingdom. We are humbled by that for there's nothing in us to make us worthy. O what joy, O what love, O what fellowship, what hope we have because we are citizens of the Kingdom and subjects of the King. And You are our King now, and You have been since we placed our faith in You. And we are Your humble subjects. We don't have to wait for the future for that, we just have to wait for the future to enter into the eternal inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled that fadeth not away and is reserved in heaven for us. We just have to wait until we can enter into the glories of Your Kingdom and reign with You and rule with You. But until that time, we thank You that we are children of the King, subjects of the King, members of the Kingdom. What a privilege.

Father, our hearts reach out to those who don't know You, who are in the kingdom of darkness. We think of the frightening eternal realities that await them and we plead with You to be gracious and merciful to sinners as You have been to us that You might be glorified. And we ask these things in the name of Christ. Amen.

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