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**A0635 – August 27, 2006 – Rev 20:7-10 – The Postmillennial Loosing Of Satan**

**Revelation 20:8 and he will go forth (3SFMI) (out of the abyss) to deceive (AAInf)** (the purpose of his going forth) **the nations** (now, notice, only the **nations** are mentioned. This word is *ethnos* and refers to the Gentiles. So, apparently he will not go forth to deceive the Jews. Why not? Now, who are the nations? We discussed Matt 25:31-46 to answer this question a few weeks ago. In that passage the judgment of the nations is described. Of course, the nations there are the Gentiles. And this judgment is for Gentiles who physically survived the Tribulation. Briefly, there are three groups at the judgment. Sheep, goats, and Christ's brethren. If the nations are the Gentiles then Christ's brethren are the Jews. The sheep are the Gentiles who are "righteous" (v 37), justified by faith alone in Christ alone, but also have been faithful servants. So, they are not just believers but they are faithful believers. These the King says will "inherit the kingdom". This does not mean mere entrance into the kingdom. All believers *enter* the kingdom (John 3:5) but not all believers *inherit* the kingdom. To *enter* (*eiserchomai*) the kingdom one must have faith in Christ and receive the gift of salvation. To *inherit* (*kleronomia*) the kingdom a believer must walk faithfully and earn rewards. The sheep in this passage are believers who have walked faithfully and that is demonstrated by their provisions for the Jews in the midst of extreme persecution. Verse 46 says these will go into eternal life. Of course, they already received eternal life the moment they trusted Christ. So, to go into eternal life means more than merely having eternal life, it means really stepping into it, it means they will be given resurrection bodies at this moment so they can rule and reign in the kingdom. And that's what it means to *inherit* the kingdom. They will rule and reign in the kingdom. This is their reward for faithful service. Since not all believers faithfully serve then not all believers will inherit the kingdom. Instead, they will simply enter the kingdom in their natural bodies. These will be the one's who re-populate the nations in the millennium. So, the kingdom will begin with all believers, just as the world after the flood began with all believers. Obviously, from our passage today we see that the world will not all remain believers. So, even though all the parents of the nations will be believers their offspring will not all believe in Christ. This should shock you because we

always assume that if we saw Jesus, if Jesus were here today, then people would believe in Him and that's just not true. When Jesus came in the first century the majority rejected Him. He even came to His own people and they rejected Him. They saw His kingdom authority when He did miracles and still they refused to believe. When Christ returns again in His glorified resurrection body and everyone can see Him there will be people who believe but the vast majority will not believe. How do I know that? Well, look at verses 8c-9. **the number of them was [something] like the sand of the sea. 9 And they came up (3PAAI) on the plateau of the earth and surrounded (3PAAI) the camp (barracks) of the saints and the city of the beloved.** So, the saints are in a little camp near Jerusalem and the unbelievers are described as surrounding them in numbers comparable to the sand of the sea. We ought to recall that the earth at this time will have been regenerated (Matt 19:28) to conditions similar to the garden of Eden (Ezek 36:35). Christ will be sitting on His glorious throne, distributing justice and righteousness and peace from sea to sea and yet, seeing Christ does not result in believing in Christ. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God (Rom 10:14-17). So, the nations here, though they entered the kingdom as regenerate males and females will produce offspring that do will not believe. So, when Satan is released he will go forth to deceive the nations **in the four corners of the earth.** The **four corners of the earth** does not mean ancient people thought the earth was a flat square. This was a common designation for the four points of the compass (N, S, W, E; Isa 11:12; Rev 7:1) similar to four winds (Dan 7:2; Zech 2:6; Matt 24:31; Rev 7:1). So, he goes right back to doing what he did before he had a thousand years to think about it; he prowls about like a roaring lion (1 Pt 5:8). The explanation that the **four corners of the earth** are **Gog and Magog** needs further investigation. **Magog**<sup>i</sup> is first mentioned in Gen 10:2 as a descendant of Japheth (also cf 1 Chron 1:5). Josephus said that the descendants of Magog were the Scythians<sup>ii</sup> but there is stronger evidence that the Scythians are descendants of the Ashkenazi. However, the descendants of Magog did assimilate with the Ashkenazi and therefore a portion of the Scythians are descendants of Magog. The Irish Celts trace their lineage from Japheth through Magog.<sup>iii</sup> Magog is also mentioned in Ezek 38:2 as a land. The land of Magog is located north of Israel. During the battle described in Ezekiel 38-39 the warriors from that land will be defeated and the land of Magog will be supernaturally burned by God (Ezek 39:6). The ruler of the land of Magog in this battle is called Gog. He is prince over Rosh, Meshech and Tubal. He is the key military leader of the army that attacks Israel. He has with him armies from Persia, Ethiopia (Africa), Put (North Africa) and Gomer (Germany). So, he comes from the north of Israel but the armies assimilate from the north and south and the attack comes from the north. At the time Israel is at peace (Ezek 38:11, 14) and the reason for their attack is to take "great spoil" (Ezek 38:12-13). I take it that this battle will occur during the 1<sup>st</sup> half of the Tribulation when Israel is at peace under

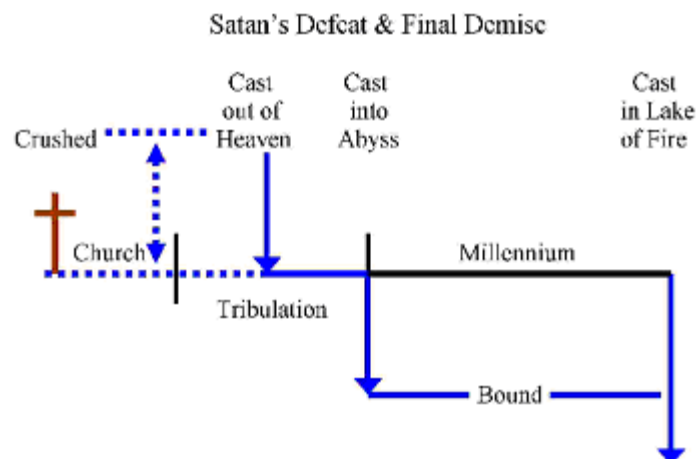
the protection of the Antichrist (Dan 9:27). Many expositors link this battle to the Battle of Armageddon because of similar descriptions but the Battle of Armageddon takes place during the second half of the Tribulation when Israel is not at peace but under persecution. Therefore she is not living securely as the Ezekiel text demands (Ezek 38:11, 14). Similarity of events does not mean identity. Two trees may be similar, both having green leaves, woody trunks, etc...but these similarities do not mean the trees are identical. In the same way, there are similarities between the Battle of Gog and Magog (Ezek 38-39) and the Battle of Armageddon (Rev 19) but the differences indicate they are actually two different battles. The Battle of Gog and Magog most likely takes place in the 1<sup>st</sup> half of the Tribulation while Israel is at peace and the Battle of Armageddon takes place in the 2<sup>nd</sup> half of the Tribulation while Israel is being persecuted. So, we have two battles mentioning Gog and Magog. The first is the key prophetic battle described in Ezekiel 38-39 and the second is here in Rev 20:8-10. You might be tempted to identify these two battles, yet, although there are similarities, once again this does not mean they are identical. The clearest difference is that in Ezekiel 38-39 the armies that gather come from a limited area of the world while in Revelation 20:8-10 the armies that gather come from “the four corners of the earth”. This fact alone indicates they are two separate battles. Therefore, though both passages mention Gog and Magog, the battle in Ezekiel 38-39 takes place *before* the thousand years and the battle in Rev 20:7-10 takes place *after* the thousand years. Apparently, after the battle of Gog and Magog in Ezekiel 38-39, the titles Gog and Magog come to refer to the enemies of God. Thus, after the thousand years, the enemies of God, Gog and Magog, from all over the world will be gathered for **the war** by the deception of Satan.

What will Satan’s deception be that leads to an innumerable host of men gathering to war against Christ and the saints? It will be much like his deception of Eve in the garden. He will be shrewd, crafty in formulating a lie which casts doubt in the nations minds about the truthfulness of the King. When they have bought into this deception then they will **gather** to war against the King, His saints, and His city. The number deceived and gathered is beyond calculation, **the number of them [something] like the sand of the sea**, by far the majority of those living on earth.

**Revelation 20:9 And they came up (3PAAI) on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded (3PAAI) the camp (barracks) of the saints and the city of the beloved (PerfPassPart).** This describes the place of this massive armies gathering. First, **they came up** indicating that **the saints** are located on the high point of earth. The armies must **come up** no matter what direction they come from. Descriptions of the topography of the earth during the millennium confirm the necessity that they **come up**. For example,

under the 7<sup>th</sup> Bowl a great earthquake will cause all the islands will sink and all the mountains to be flattened (Rev 16:18-20). Jerusalem will be the high point on the earth (Zech 14:8, 10) and so this army must **come up** to Jerusalem **on the broad plain of the earth**. This plain is described in Zech 14:10. So, apparently, the region described here will be a raised plateau and the smaller area described in Zech 14:8 will be the highest point on earth. The nations will come up on this plateau **and surround the camp** or military **barracks of the saints and the city of the beloved**. The city of the beloved is, of course, Jerusalem. The word **beloved** is a perfect passive participle. It is passive because Jerusalem is loved by someone and that someone is God. It is perfect in voice which means Jerusalem came to be loved in the past and continues to be loved. He loves Jerusalem because He chose Jerusalem to be the place where His name is forever (2 Kings 21:7). So, here we see the zenith of world Anti-Semitism as billions converge on the King and His saints and His beloved city, in an attempt to exterminate them and take over the earth. But the results are startlingly different. Even though a massive army of incalculable numbers has gathered against a small camp, **fire came down (3SAAI) from heaven and consumed (eat down 3SAAI) them**. The text literally says **fire came down from heaven and ate them**. The picture is of fire suddenly scorching a dry field of grass. Complete consumption. The verb **consumed** is an aorist voice indicating a point action, a rapid and total consumption of God's enemies. No one will be left except the King, His saints, and His beloved city.

**Revelation 20:10** And the devil, who led this revolt, initialized by **deceiving (PAPart)** them. The idea is that he was continually deceiving **them** so that they were thoroughly deceived to the point of making war against God, he **was cast (3SAPI) into the lake of fire and brimstone**. We are not told who casts him **into the lake of fire**, only that he is cast into it. This is the third stage of Satan's final demise. He was defeated at the cross but his final demise comes in three stages.



First, he will be cast out of heaven to earth at the middle of the Tribulation. Second, he will be cast into the abyss for a thousand years. Third, he will be cast into the lake of fire for all eternity.

The **lake of fire and brimstone** is defined in verse 14 as “the second death”. The first death is physical death, the separation of the spirit from the body. The second death is spiritual death, the separation of the person from God for all eternity. They will not be exterminated from existence, but in everlasting punishment, a sobering reality and one which ought to stimulate us to evangelize the world. The location of their eternal punishment is the **lake of fire**. This lake was prepared for the devil and his angels according to Matt 25:41 and not for men. But men who do not believe in Jesus Christ are also cast into the lake of fire. Two are already there, **the beast and the false prophet**. They were cast into the lake of fire after the final battle of Armageddon in Rev 19:21. Other men will also be cast into the lake of fire after the great white throne judgment. So, at this point the counterfeit Trinity will be re-united in their final resting place, the lake of fire.

The main thrust of the passage is Satan being cast into the lake of fire so let's discuss a little bit about angels. Each angel is an individual creation and thus, as Aquinas said, an individual species (i.e. an individual kind). They were all created simultaneously and most likely sometime during creation week (cf Gen 2:1), possibly on day 1 or 4). They do not have bodies but rather are spirit beings (immaterial), not composed of flesh and blood (Eph 6:12), although they have appeared in bodies at times or as men (i.e. they can materialize; Matt 28:3; Rev 15:6; 18:1). They have personality, capacity for great intelligence (they still learn, they are not omniscient), great strength (but not omnipotent, Rev 5:2), are morally responsible (Job 4:18; Ezek 28:12ff; Isa 14:12-14), and are all male, thus, they do not procreate among themselves. Angels in heaven do not marry (Matt 22:30; Mark 12:25). Their number remains the same and since they are spirit beings they do not experience physical death, but they are capable of spiritual death (i.e. separation from God; cf Rev 12:3). Like men, once in existence they continue to exist forever. Though all things are reconciled to God through the cross of Christ, things on earth and things in heaven (Col 1:20), there is no substitutionary application of the atonement for angels. This is because angels are not made in God's image. For angels to enjoy substitutionary atonement would require an individual Redeemer for each individual angel since each is its own individual kind. When Satan fell, 1/3 of the angels fell with him and at that point the angels were fixed in either a holy or fallen state. No more angels will fall in the future and none who are fallen will become holy. Thus, for

the fallen angels our verse tells us, **they will be tormented (3PFPI) day and night forever and ever**. The word **tormented** is passive voice indicating that the torment will be imposed by someone else, presumably by God who prepared the lake of fire for the devil and his angels. The word is *basanizo* and means “to torture”. The “torture” can be both mental and physical in nature. The duration of the torture is said to be **day and night forever and ever**. Notice it is **day and night**, that is, there is no rest and it is **forever and ever**, there is no end of torture. This is one of the most difficult teachings of Scripture; a horrible thought. As horrible as everlasting torment sounds we must remember that God has graciously given every person ever born into the world revelation for which they are responsible so if they reject it they are without excuse. Let’s review the Doctrine of Revelation.

The Doctrine of Revelation can be divided into two aspects. The first aspect is general revelation and the second is special revelation. General revelation is revelation available to all men without exception. God has made this available to all men in two forms. First, creation and second, conscience. In creation God has made His divine nature and eternal power known. The Bible says that all men see God clearly through creation. Therefore they are without excuse. In conscience, God made men morally responsible for their actions so they are without excuse. General revelation in creation and conscience is enough to condemn but it is not enough to save. To be saved a person must receive the second aspect of revelation, special revelation. Special revelation is revelation of the person and work of Jesus the Messiah in the gospel. God has made this revelation available only to some men. Many men have lived their whole lives and never heard the gospel message. When they die they will be without excuse and will ultimately go to the lake of fire. Many people think this is unfair but it is not. Let me explain. All men receive the revelation of God in creation and conscience. If a man responds negatively to general revelation then they would have responded negatively to special revelation. A rejection of the lesser revelation is a rejection of the greater revelation. However, if a man responds positively to the light of revelation in creation and conscience then God will send him more light. This may come as an answer to prayer when the believer asks God to send missionaries out into the harvest. Then someone is called to the mission field and they go to that person who responded positively to general revelation. Whatever the means God will make sure that person gets more light so they can hear the gospel and believe. This story could be recounted time and again as missionaries have been sent all over the world to evangelize pagan tribes.

So, today we have seen that Satan, who must be released for a short time, will be released from the subterranean cavern after the thousand years. His first activity is that of

deceiving the nations. So, rehabilitative efforts have not worked. He's had time to think about what he's done and yet there's no change. We can't change who we are, only God can change who we are. So, he deceives the nations with a lie that causes them to doubt the King's goodness. And he gathers them for war from the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, which has come to refer to the enemies of God. And they gather against the King, His saints, and His beloved city, Jerusalem. They come from all directions, an innumerable company as the sands of the seashore, and they come up on the plateau described in Zech 14:10 and surround the military barracks of the saints and Jerusalem and then God sends down fire from heaven which devours them. Then the third stage in the demise of Satan, he will be cast into the lake of fire where the Antichrist and false prophet have already been for a thousand years and after the great white throne judgment all the rest of the unbelieving dead will be cast in the lake of fire and they will be under torment day and night forever and ever. This is the second death. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved.

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<sup>i</sup> Magog - Gen. 10:2 (a son of Japheth); 1 Chr. 1:5 (a son of Japheth); Ezek. 38:2 (the land ruled by Gog); 39:6 (the land will be burned with fire); Rev. 20:8. In Rv Gog and Magog are two peoples (BDAG).

<sup>ii</sup> "Magog founded those that from him were named Magogites, but who are by the Greeks called Scythians" (Josephus, *Antiquities*, 1.6.1)

<sup>iii</sup> Bill Cooper, *After the Flood*, 200-205.

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