

# **God's Gracious Covenant With Israel: The Foundation For Worldwide National Covenanting #20 (Pt. 8)**

Revelation 20:7-10  
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Perhaps some may question the need to spend the time we have in addressing how various eschatological interpretive systems interpret the future prophetic outlook for the nations of this world (including the nation of Israel). However, I am convinced that when such a Biblical study is developed and examined, when the truth is declared and when error is exposed and refuted, we will gain a renewed appreciation for the covenant love of Christ for not only individuals but for the nation of Israel and for the nations of the world who will be brought to Christ as the Spirit of God feeds the nations of the world with the Gospel of Jesus Christ in unprecedented success and glory. Such a view of the prophetic future is not one of idle curiosity, but is rather one of certain confidence in our sovereign God who from all eternity has decreed the victory of Christ over the nations and has given the nations of the world unto Christ as His inheritance to rule over them for a figurative thousand years (Psalm 2:8-12 [“the heathen” are literally “the nations” in verse 8]; Revelation 20:4-6). Dear ones, because all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Christ (according to Matthew 28:18), we can be assured that “all nations” will be disciplined according to the Great Commission in Matthew 28:19. For the Lord’s covenant love is not limited to one nation (Israel), but God’s covenant love for the nation of Israel in converting that unworthy, Christ-despising nation to Christ is a paradigm of what the Lord will accomplish for all the nations of the world in the future millennium upon the earth. Dear ones, when we see with the eye of faith the power of God’s covenant love manifested in the future conversion of the ungodly nations of the world (including the nation of Israel), we are filled with a renewed hope that there is no heart that

cannot be broken and brought to Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit. Thus, dear ones, faint not in bringing those loved ones to Christ in prayer, for He who will draw the nations to Himself is able to draw the most resistant and rebellious sinners to Christ (e.g. Manasseh in 2 Chronicles 33 and Paul in 1 Timothy 1:15-16).

This Lord's Day, we continue to examine the interpretive system of Partial Preterism in light of Revelation 20. If you want to review where Partial Preterism fails to do justice to the restoration of the nation of Israel in Romans 11, where Partial Preterism errs in its interpretation of the binding of Satan in Revelation 20:1-3, and where Partial Preterism misinterprets the living and reigning with Christ for a figurative thousand years in Revelation 20:4-6, I refer you to the previous three sermons for review. Our focus today will be upon the "little season" after the termination of the figurative thousand years (in Revelation 20:7-10) in which Satan is released from Christ's Divine restraint so that he once again goes out to deceive and mislead the nations of the world into false religion and to lead the nations in a worldwide attack upon the pure and faithful Church of Christ.

**I. Partial Preterism and Revelation 20:7-10.** Let us first read this portion of Scripture and then examine it more closely.

A. **The first question to be answered:** Does the "little season" in which Satan is released continue the blessings of "the first resurrection" in which God's people live and reign with Christ?

1. The Partial Preterist interprets this "little season" of Satan's resurgence in the nations of the world in attacking Christ's faithful Church as happening simultaneous with "the first resurrection" and the living and reigning of God's people with Christ. For remember that the Partial Preterist claims that the living and reigning with Christ in

the first resurrection is the regeneration of God's elect upon earth and the enjoyment of all spiritual blessings by God's people in heaven and on earth (since the first century). And since the blessings of spiritual regeneration and the blessings of heaven for God's people cannot come to an end (whether in heaven or on earth), but rather continue from age to age, the Partial Preterist argues that when the figurative millennium ends and the "little season" begins when Satan is released, God's people continue to enjoy the blessings of "the first resurrection" in heaven and on earth in living and reigning with Christ. However, is that what the inspired text declares? Let us see.

2. With the Historic Postmillennial interpretive system, I maintain that the Scripture (as found in Revelation 20) cannot be used to support this interpretation proposed by the Partial Preterist. Why? For the following two reasons.

a. First, because it is clearly the intention of the Holy Spirit to teach that the blessings of "the first resurrection" in living and reigning with Christ are temporally limited by a stated period of time, namely, a figurative thousands years ("and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years" Revelation 20:4; "and shall reign with him a thousand years" Revelation 20:6). In other words, when the figurative thousand years come to an end (when the "little season" begins and when Satan is released to deceive the nations once again), the blessings of "the first resurrection" in living and reigning with Christ also come to an end. Thus, since the spiritual blessings of regeneration and the blessings of heaven are not and cannot be temporally limited by a figurative thousand years, the blessings of "the first resurrection" in living and reigning with Christ for a period of time that is temporally limited to a figurative thousand years (Revelation 20:4-6) cannot be identical to the spiritual blessings of regeneration and the blessings of heaven as is maintained by the Partial Preterist.

b. Second, because even as the blessings of “the first resurrection” in living and reigning with Christ are temporally limited to a figurative thousand years (Revelation 20:4-6), even so the Divine restraint of Satan is temporally limited to the exact same figurative thousand years (“And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should not deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season” Revelation 20:3). But note that after the figurative thousand years have ended when the Divine restraint of Satan has ceased, then Satan shall be released so that he goes out to deceive the nations once again (“And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth” Revelation 20:7-8). So here is the point: If Satan is bound for a temporally limited period of time (namely, a figurative thousand years) and shall after the thousand years no longer be bound, then likewise the blessings of “the first resurrection” in living and reigning with Christ (which are also temporally limited to the exact same figurative thousand years) shall after the thousand years no longer continue. In other words, the “little season” that begins after the figurative thousand years have expired brings to an end both the Divine restraint of Satan (Revelation 20:1-3) and “the first resurrection” in the living and reigning with Christ (Revelation 20:4-6) contrary to the view of the Partial Preterist. Why would the Holy Spirit use the exact same temporal limitations of time (namely, a figurative thousand years) for both the Divine restraint of Satan and the blessings of “the first resurrection” in living and reigning with Christ if they did not both cease when the figurative thousand years were ended?

B. **The second question to be answered:** Who are “the rest of the dead” that lived not again until the thousand years were finished (Revelation 20:5)?

1. The Partial Preterist (at least one popular version held by the Partial Preterist) identifies “the rest of the dead” as “the rest of all the spiritual dead” who come to life when they are physically resurrected in the General Resurrection (Revelation 20:12-13). Since the General Resurrection (in Revelation 20:12-13) occurs after (though not immediately after) the thousand years (Revelation 20:4-6), the Partial Preterist argues that that is the time in which the spiritual dead come to life. Thus, the Partial Preterist maintains that the FIRST resurrection is spiritual and is enjoyed by only those who are regenerated on earth and reign with Christ in heaven for a figurative thousand years (Revelation 20:4-6), while the SECOND resurrection is physical and though experienced by the just and the unjust (there is special attention attached to the physical resurrection of only the unjust in Revelation 20:5). But does this interpretation of “the rest of the dead” by the Partial Preterist do justice to the inspired words of the Holy Spirit? I think not.

2. With the Historic Postmillennial interpretive system, I maintain that the Scripture (as found in Revelation 20) cannot be used to support this interpretation proposed by the Partial Preterist. Why? For the following reasons.

a. The first reason why the interpretation of the Partial Preterist in maintaining that “the rest of the dead” are all of the spiritual dead coming to physical life at the General Resurrection is not faithful to the inspired text is because a FIRST RESURRECTION implies by good and necessary consequence a SECOND RESURRECTION of like kind to follow (NOT a SECOND RESURRECTION altogether different in kind from the FIRST RESURRECTION). But that is precisely what the Partial Preterist does not have (namely, a second resurrection of like kind to follow the first resurrection). To the contrary, the two resurrections of the Partial Preterist are anything but alike. For the Partial Preterist maintains a **spiritual resurrection** of all the elect in the FIRST RESURRECTION and a

**physical resurrection** of all the wicked in the SECOND RESURRECTION. However, the Historic Postmillennialist maintains the same kind of resurrection for both the FIRST RESURRECTION and the SECOND RESURRECTION : namely, a **figurative resurrection** of the faithful martyrs and faithful witnesses of Christ in their spiritual descendants (who come in the spirit and power of the faithful martyrs and faithful witnesses of Christ) to fill and to govern the nations of the world for a figurative thousand years in the FIRST RESURRECTION (Revelation 20:4-6), and a **figurative resurrection** of the unfaithful wicked in their spiritual descendants (who come in the spirit and power of those nations previously deceived and misled by Satan before the millennium) to fill and govern the nations of the world for a “little season” as Satan goes out to deceive the nations once again (Revelation 20:7-10). As we have noted in previous sermons, resurrection language is used a number of times by God when a nation (like Israel) or nations that appeared to be dead and buried by enemies come to national life once again (Isaiah 26:15-19; Ezekiel 37:12-14; Hosea 6:1-3; Romans 11:15; Revelation 11:11-12,15). And although John 5:25 and John 5:28 do address a spiritual resurrection and a physical resurrection, neither of these two resurrections are referred to as “the first resurrection” implying a second resurrection of like kind to follow (as is true in Revelation 20:4,5). Nor do the resurrections in John 5:25 and John 5:28 follow the pattern of resurrections in Revelation 20:4 and Revelation 20:5, for the FIRST resurrection in Revelation 20:4 refers only to the righteous (i.e. the figurative resurrection of the faithful martyrs and witnesses of Christ during the millennium) and the SECOND resurrection in Revelation 20:5 refers only to the wicked, “the rest of the dead” (i.e. the figurative resurrection of the wicked after the millennium when Satan is released). But according to the Partial Preterist, the FIRST resurrection refers to righteous, and the SECOND resurrection refers to those who are spiritually who will be raised physically on the Last Day. This is clearly

contrary to what is revealed concerning the two resurrections by the Holy Spirit in Revelation 20:4,5.

b. A second reason why the interpretation of the Partial Preterist in maintaining that “the rest of the dead” are all of the spiritual dead coming to physical life at the General Resurrection is not faithful to the inspired text is because “THE REST of the dead” (in Revelation 20:5) are mentioned previously as having been slain by the Lord in Revelation 19:21: “And THE REMNANT were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.”

(1) The KJV has given two different English words, “the REST of the dead” (in Revelation 20:5) and “the REMNANT were slain” (in Revelation 19:21), for one and the same Greek word used in both verses: λῠιποῖ. Although the Greek word, λῠιποῖ, may be translated as either “remnant” (as it is in Revelation 19:21, “the REMNANT were slain”) or as “rest” (as it is in Revelation 20:5, “And the REST of the dead”), nevertheless, the same Greek word ought to be translated exactly the same way in these two verses because they refer to the same dead and occur just a few verses apart. Listen to how *Young’s Literal Translation of the Holy Bible* translates these two verses: Revelation 19:21, “And the REST were killed”; Revelation 20:5, “And the REST of the dead”. Again, it is no accident that the Holy Spirit has carefully chosen to use the same Greek word for those slain by Christ in Revelation 19:21 and for those who will live again after the thousand years are expired (Revelation 20:5). For Christ smites the nations of the world that had been deceived and misled by Satan into false religion (Revelation 18:21; Revelation 19:15), and He binds Satan so that he cannot deceive and mislead these nations into false religion any longer for a figurative thousand years (Revelation 20:1-3). This is the death of the wicked who filled and governed the nations of the world under the power of Satan. And although there will be those who are wicked and rebellious during

the millennium (Isaiah 64:20; Zechariah 14:17-19), they will feign and pretend submission to Christ during that time, but will figuratively live again in the nations of the world after the thousand years when Satan is released and goes forth to deceive the nations of the world once again (Revelation 20:7-10).

(2) Moreover, the verb “lived not again” (in Revelation 20:5) as found in the Authorized Version and in the Greek text of the *Textus Receptus* implies that “the rest of the dead” had previously lived, died, and shall live again. When had this group (identified as “the rest of the dead”) previously lived and died? I would submit that Revelation 19:21 gives us the clear answer to that question.

(3) Thus to summarize: There are two figurative resurrections alluded to in Revelation 20. There is the figurative resurrection of the faithful martyrs and witnesses of Christ (the FIRST resurrection) who are figuratively raised to life in their spiritual descendants who come alive by the power of the Gospel in the spirit and power of the faithful martyrs and witnesses of Christ (just as John the Baptist is said to have come in the spirit and power of Elijah, Luke 1:17) to fill and to govern the nations of the world while the wicked under Satan are defeated and restrained from their rule for a figurative thousand years (Revelation 20:4-6). After the figurative thousand years have ended (Revelation 20:5,7-10), there is also the figurative resurrection of the wicked (the SECOND resurrection) in their spiritual descendants who come alive by the power of Satan in the spirit and power of those wicked who were previously slain by Christ (in Revelation 19:21) to fill and to govern the nations of the world while the faithful Church of Christ (now greatly diminished in numbers) once again faces the onslaught of these wicked enemies and nations “in the four quarters of the world (who are figuratively designated by the names, “Gog and Magog” in Revelation 20:8, cf. Ezekiel 38:2 and Ezekiel 39:1). But the Lord returns as a “thief in the night” (Matthew 24:42-43) with fire from heaven (Revelation 20:9; 2



Thessalonians 1:8: Hebrews 10:27) to catch Satan and the wicked unaware, just when they seem to have the destruction of Christ's faithful Church within their grasp. Satan will then be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where "he shall be tormented day and night forever and ever" (Revelation 20:10).

c. A third reason why the interpretation of the Partial Preterist in maintaining that "the rest of the dead" are all of the spiritual dead coming to physical life in the General Resurrection is not faithful to the inspired text is because we are told the precise time when "the rest of the dead" will come to life: "But the rest of the dead lived not again UNTIL THE THOUSAND YEARS WERE FINISHED" (Revelation 20:5). But when is that? Revelation 20:7 begins with these words: "And WHEN THE THOUSAND YEARS ARE EXPIRED." And though it may appear according to the KJV that there is a difference between the words used in Revelation 20:5 ("the thousand years WERE FINISHED") and in Revelation 20:7 ("the thousand years ARE EXPIRED"), the Greek words are identical in spelling and in order in both cases. Thus, when we are told in Revelation 20:5 that "the rest of the dead lived not again until THE THOUSAND YEARS WERE FINISHED" (τελεσθῆναι), and when we read in Revelation 20:7 that "when THE THOUSAND YEARS ARE EXPIRED" (τελεσθῆναι), we are clearly told when it is that "the rest of the dead" were to come to life: namely, in the "little season" after Satan is loosed to deceive the nations. Admittedly, it would be easier to make the right connection if the English version used the same English words in both verses as does the Greek. For instance, listen once again to *Young's Literal Translation of the Holy Bible*: Revelation 20:5, "And the rest of the dead did not live again TILL THE THOUSAND YEARS MAY BE FINISHED"; Revelation 20:7, "And WHEN THE THOUSAND YEARS MAY BE FINISHED." Why would we not seek to find the second resurrection of "the rest of the dead" in the "little season" of Revelation 20:7-10 when we are clearly told that that is the precise time (according to Revelation 20:5) that we should await the resurrection of "the rest of

the dead”? It’s like the Holy Spirit was saying, “I will tell you when ‘the rest of the dead’ will live again. They will live again after the thousand years have ended. And when the thousand years have ended, Satan will go forth to deceive the nations once again, thus bringing to life once again the old enemies that war against the faithful Church.” Why would we entirely skip over Revelation 20:7-10 and go to Revelation 20:12-13 to find the resurrection of “the rest of the dead” when there is such a clear temporal and grammatical connection between what is said in Revelation 20:5 and what is said in Revelation 20:7; and when there is no temporal or grammatical connection with what is said concerning the physical resurrection of all of the dead (both righteous and wicked) in Revelation 20:12-13? Dear ones, these then summarize the reasons why I believe the interpretation given by the Partial Preterist in Revelation 20:7-10 fail to do justice to the inspired words of this prophecy.

Dear ones, Revelation 20:7-10 reveals to us the following truths concerning which we need to be continually reminded.

Satan and the wicked who oppress and seek to destroy the faithful Church of Christ will in due time be destroyed themselves once and for all. We become weary and exhausted in warring spiritually against the enemies of our soul and of the faithful Church. At times we see some significant victory over these enemies in our lives and in history, only to see again how these enemies seem to be resurrected to come against us and the faithful Church once again. What is true of the faithful Church which reigns over its enemies for a figurative thousand years and then is besieged once again after the figurative thousand years have ended when Satan goes out to deceive the nations of the world is also true of our own spiritual battle with the adversaries of our soul and of the faithful Church presently. How often has it happened to us all that we are graciously delivered by the Lord from a besetting sin or from a dangerous

temptation and for a time we enjoy such a conspicuous victory of grace over sin, just to find out once again that the battle is not finished when we fall once again into that sin and then rise up again to renew our repentance, faith and new obedience? We are instructed by the Holy Spirit (as we consider how Satan goes out to deceive the nations once again after the faithful Church has reigned in victory over her enemies for a figurative thousand years) that we must never think that those spiritual victories over our adversaries are totally and finally accomplished until Satan is cast into the lake of fire. Yes, we must rejoice in all of the victories Christ wins for us over our spiritual enemies, but we must not become careless, indifferent, or proud in thinking we are now invincible to the attacks of the enemy. We must constantly watch and pray that we enter not into temptation (Matthew 26:41), and take heed lest when we proudly think we stand (like Peter walking on the sea), we fall (1 Corinthians 10:12). Thus, dear ones, we ought not to expect an easy road or a comfortable road in standing for Christ and His truth. Count it not strange when you face opposition from family and friends who want you to join them in attending unfaithful Churches that have turned away from the doctrine, worship and government delivered to us by the Apostles and our covenanted forefathers, when you face opposition from co-workers for not following them to their drunken parties or in laughing with them at their immoral jokes, when you face opposition from employers for not working on the Sabbath, when you face the opposition of the civil government because you will not join ranks with all those who tolerate false religion, covenant-breaking, abortion, sexual immorality, and no-fault divorces. Dear ones, the martyr spirit that is to live and abide within us presently, just as it will come to life in the nations of the world during the millennium, is summarized in Revelation 12:11: “And they overcame him [Satan—GLP] by the blood of the Lamb [i.e. they received and rested in the finished work of Christ on their behalf in the Covenant of Grace—GLP], and by the word of their testimony [i.e. their

testimony for Christ was not a silent testimony for Christ, but was also a verbal testimony for Christ and His truth—GLP]; and they loved not their lives unto the death [i.e. nothing in this world was more important to them, not even their own lives, than Christ and His truth—GLP].” May we earnestly and continuously seek to obtain in prayer by God’s grace that the spirit and power of the faithful martyrs and witnesses of Christ come alive in our lives and in His Church throughout the world. For that is what Christ will bring to pass in the millennium. Amen.

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