

# The Voice of Truth # 532

## The Imprisonment of Satan

The tribulation period comes to a close with the imprisonment of Satan. In chapter 19 we saw the revelation of the Son of God, the King of kings and Lord of lords, when he came riding forth from the open heaven with the armies of heaven following him upon white horses and clothed in fine linen. We saw him meet the Antichrist, the false prophet, and their chiefs of staff on Mount Olivet, where they had encamped with our armies in the valleys around the city. These great dignitaries of the earth stood on the very spot where Christ had ascended back to heaven, the spot that the prophet Zechariah said he would return, Zechariah 14:4, and Acts 1:11.

According to Isaiah 10:32, get it now, the Antichrist stood there shaking his fist at the Lord Jesus Christ as he descended from heaven. Then we beheld Christ meeting them in open battle array. We saw him take the beast, the Antichrist, and the false prophet alive and cast them into the lake of fire, alive. I knew Christ was coming back to Mount Olivet, and I believe right there's where the Antichrist and the false prophet and his dignitaries would be, right there on Mount Olivet where Christ went back to heaven. Because they knew from prophecy that's where he's going to put his foot upon this earth when he comes back. And so in Isaiah 10:32, in my study of the Antichrist and the prophetic word, I found that there's where the Antichrist, according to prophecy, would be, and the scripture says he'll stand there shaking his fist at the Lord Jesus Christ as he descends from heaven. Then we saw that it didn't faze the Lord Jesus, he's had folks who shake his fist at him before, and so he descends upon the mountain and takes him alive and throws him, literally, throws him, the scripture means there, it says he cast him, but literally it means he hurls him. He throws him, he hurls him into the lake of fire. That's what that means. And then we saw him slay the remnant with the sword of his mouth, which is the sword of judgment, and clear the battlefield of all the slain by the vultures of the air devouring their dead bodies. I wish you

would read and reread the 19th chapter of Revelation again before we go into the study of the 20th chapter. The battle of that great day of God Almighty, Revelation 16:14, does not end in the destruction of the armies of the nations of the world and the casting of the beast and the false prophet into the lake of fire alive. This in itself is a glorious victory for the Son of God, but the crowning event of the age-long victorious conflict, the promise every saint has been waiting for is reserved for the climatic display of the righteous judgment and the wrath of the lamb at the close of the battle, when the lamb proceeds to deal with Satan the culprit, his arch enemy and diabolical leader behind all the hatred and malice and rebellion of the kings and their armies against the Lord Jesus Christ. Yes, the trinity of hell must be disposed of, and without trial he cast the Antichrist, the scripture literally means, he thrusts them, he throws them into the lake of fire. But he makes a special disposition of Satan. Let's notice what he does. Revelation 20:1, listen. **And 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, which 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 upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years should be fulfilled, and after that he must be loosed a little season.** The Lord does not cast Satan into the lake of fire with the beast and the false prophet at the close of that battle. He imprisons him in the bottomless pit or the abyss, the place prepared for the beast and the false prophet until they are raised from the dead and came forth to lead the nations against the Lord Jesus Christ. Now that's where the beast went to be, with old Judas Iscariot who was raised as a false prophet, in the abyss. Satan's arrest and imprisonment are told in three verses, but that's sufficient. Without trial, Satan is confined in the abyss under a thousand-year imprisonment sentence. Notice that these two men, the Antichrist and the false prophet, are not slain as their followers were, but they were thrown, or cast, into the lake of fire. Satan, the anti-god of hell's trinity, is cast into the bottomless pit. They are not driven to their doom, but they are cast alive or thrown alive into it. Finally, notice that the beast and the false prophet were seized red-handed in their crime, grasped by the hand of the omnipotence, and cast or thrown into the lake of fire, while an angel, a "lone angel", lays hold on the dragon and binds him and casts him into the bottomless pit or the abyss.

First, we want to look at the names by which Satan is called here in Holy Writ, verse 2. Listen, **and he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil and Satan, and bound him a thousand years.** These four names, dragon, serpent, devil, and Satan, describes the evil one in all of his diabolical characteristics that he has presented himself in his relationship to mankind throughout the centuries. Now, if you'll read Revelation 19:11, there about our Lord, He has four names.

Satan, in his character as The Dragon, he exercises authority and power over the kings and sovereignties and political world powers of the earth. World powers in the scriptures are spoken of as Dragon Powers. Satan influences, dominates, and directs all world powers. He is the king behind the throne, the unseen individual who molds, directs, and puts into effect the policies working through the kings and sovereigns of the nations and heads of state. It is with satanic wisdom and alertness that the sovereigns of the earth put over their programs and enlist mankind to follow them under the permissive will of the Lord God of heaven. The average individual will not admit it, but that's so. We know it is so, first, because God's Word says it, and second, because the spirit and policies of the world are in definite contrast with the principles that form the basis of the Christian's walk. So when these kings and armies fall, the dragons power ceases. And when Satan returns 1,000 years later, he is not called the dragon. As you notice in Revelation 20:10, he is spoken of only by two names, Satan and the devil. Never again does he get hold of the sovereigns of the nations of the earth. He goes up and down the land deceiving individuals of the nations, but never the kings.

In Revelation 12:2, he is further called the Old Serpent. That word old means ancient. It strikes me with the idea that he has been in existence ever since the beginning of human history, and we have seen his serpentine crawl over the pages of human history, leaving his slime and venom in and over every heart and life of humanity. The word serpent refers to his subtly crookedness, his deceitfulness, subtle poison, and deadly malignity. Through the serpent, he beguiled and deceived Eve, seduced Adam and Eve both into sin and death. He poses now as the serpent to deceive souls and lead them away with false doctrines and with the sin of unbelief. As the serpent, he corrupts the church and leads men into false and perverted wisdom, making men think they're wise when

they're fools. After his imprisonment in the abyss, he is never again referred to as the old serpent, as his serpentine manifestation ceases with this present order of things when he is imprisoned in the abyss. Let me suggest a study that is the trail of the serpent across the pages of history, tracing his slimy crawl from the first day he appeared in the garden until he's cast alive into the abyss and later into the lake of fire.

The third name given him here is The Devil, which means slanderer, or a malignant liar. This has been one of his outstanding characteristics from the very beginning. In the Garden of Eden, he slandered God and Eve, and by his ruinous falsehood he brought about the downfall of the human race through Adam and Eve. Christ spoke of him in these words, John 8:44. **He was a murderer from the beginning, an abode not in the truth, because there's no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own, for he is a liar, and the father of it.** He is a murderous liar, the author of every untruth. He cannot speak the truth. He cannot tell the truth. In quoting scripture, he can never quote it correctly. He always misquotes it. It seems that his deepest nature is diabolical, that is, murderous, treacherous, slanderous, that is The Devil. In my dealings with the devil, I've come to know his slanderous tongue, and I hate him. My only victory over him is through Christ and his atoning blood, and I'll overcome him by the blood of the Lamb. I know he is a defeated foe because Christ said the prince of this world is judged, and we are more than conquerors through him, Christ, that loved us.

The last name used here is Satan, which means adversary or opposer, enemy. As the adversary, he lies in wait to trap the individual. He's always ready to oppose the truth, render the individual disabled, and bring him to destruction. He accuses God to man and accuses man to God. He's always opposing God and every believer. He accused Job to God and sought to destroy him in every way. When Christ came upon this earth, Satan opposed him, questioned his divine sonship and authority, and ever sought to kill him. It is this in his character as well as his slanderous character as the devil, that he represents himself toward mankind when he is loosed out of the prison house of the abyss after a thousand years.

So we see that in these four aspects of this great evil spirit, Satan makes war against Christ when he comes forth from the open heaven riding the white horse, a white war stallion. It is in these four characteristics of his being that he's operated with respect to the human race from the day he persuaded Adam to surrender the headship and the authority of the human race to him, until he produces his Christ, the Antichrist, gives him his throne and authority, and operates through political powers of the earth to lay down every vestige of authority at his feet. So we see, behind all the world's history has been the work and influence of Satan, the archenemy of God. Therefore, Christ leaves Satan until the last to deal with him in judgment. And when we see Satan stripped of his army and all those he has deceived, then we see how really weak Satan is. The Lord Jesus Christ does not even condescend to touch him, for he says here, **and 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.** Christ calls forth a lone angel as the sheriff to arrest him, bind him, and cast him into the bottomless pit. It does not say a mighty angel, but an angel, just a lone angel. This shows how weak Satan is apart from his followers, when Christ strips him of all of his power and authority. I know we've come to look upon Satan as a powerful enemy, and he is, but he has no power except as God gives it to him, and as you and I cooperate with him. The scripture says, resist the devil and he'll flee from you. Remember Satan is a living personality and he is now operating with great power to bring this whole world under a delusion to ripen it for judgment, according to God's will.

We are told that this angel has the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand, literally resting upon his hand. Many have laughed and said, how can an evil spirit be bound with an iron chain? Let me say again, my friend, in understanding the book of Revelation, it is not what we read in it, but what we read into it, that causes confusion. The scripture does not say an iron chain, or a metal chain, or even a material chain. Whatever kind of chain the angel brings with him, it's a literal transaction. The battle of Christ with the Antichrist, the kings and the armies of the earth is literal. Christ casting the beast and the false prophet into the lake of fire is literal. Christ slaying the kings and their armies is literal. Satan is a personality, therefore he is literal. And when he is defeated, his binding is literal. The chain God gives the angel to bind Satan with is one of God's

making. It's a spirit chain, just as the horses of the celestial army are spirit horses. So we might say the chain is of such spiritual character that it can bind spirits, hold angels in bondage. Whatever they're made of, and how they serve to hold in prison spiritual natures, we are not told. But we know that they are real and literal. Shadows cannot bind individuals. They are literal chains. Notice that it is a great chain. Not an ordinary chain, but the mighty chain of God's own weaving, designed to hold the greatest created being of all of God's hosts, the Old Dragon, the Serpent, the Devil, and Satan. When Satan is bound, then the bottomless pit is open and he is cast into the bottomless pit. The Greek word for bottomless pit is the abyss. And that's a literal place. My friend, remember, God does not deal in figures and shadows. God deals in realities. The spirit world is a reality. Satan is a reality. The bottomless pit, which is the abyss, is a reality, and the chain that binds Satan is a reality. The salvation I have in Christ is a reality, because one day I had to face reality, the reality of sin, the reality of judgment, the reality of hell. My friend, the reason Christ isn't real to the average individual today is because he's never learned to spell Hell with a capital H. Judgment and Hell, are they real to you? Is Christ real to you? My Lord is real, yes, real to me. My Lord is real, yes, real to me. My soul demands reality. My blessed Lord is real to me. After the angel casts Satan into the abyss and shuts him in, that is, he opened up the shaft that leads to the abyss and thrust Satan in, he was locked in. And as the scripture says in verse 3, set a seal upon him. God placed a seal upon the door of that pit which no man could break. No man on earth could break it, sea or sky. When the Lord Jesus Christ was buried in Joseph's tomb, the Roman government set a seal upon it, but that seal was broken. When Daniel was cast into the lion's den, the king had a seal placed upon the stone rolled to the door, but that seal was broken. This seal is the seal of the Lord God himself, and it secures Satan for 1,000 years in the prison. Now, why is Satan shut up for the thousand years? It says that he should deceive the nations no more till a thousand years should be fulfilled. Satan, you remember, is the deceiver, and according to 1 John 5:19, the whole world lies in his lap asleep, deceived and blinded by him. The question has often been asked me, why didn't Christ cast Satan into the lake of fire with the beast and the false prophet first? Because the lake of fire is the final abode of the damned for Satan, his angels, and all of his followers, and all who forget God. At this moment, there is no one in that lake of fire, and the beast and the false prophet are the first ones to be cast into it. God is not through with Satan. He

makes the wrath of man to praise him and uses Satan to work out his purpose in mankind. At heart, every man is a rebel, and God uses Satan to discover who those rebels are. The only thing rebellious humanity needs is a leader. Therefore, after one thousand years, under the direct personal reign of the Lord Jesus Christ as King of kings and Lord of lords, when no one is allowed to come out openly and manifest their rebellion against him, Satan is loosed out of his prison. He goes up and down the land and gathers together under the permissive will of God every rebel who, in his heart has not submitted to the Lord God of heaven, and they surround the camp of the saints, that is, they surround the capital city of Jerusalem, still believing in their rebellious hearts, after a thousand years, they can conquer the Lord God of heaven. Fire comes down from heaven and kills this army of rebels, and Satan then is cast into the lake of fire where the beast and the false prophet are. Revelation 20:10. It is not until then that God is through with him. Let me throw this thought in here. It was the Lord Jesus Christ who took the beast and the false prophet and cast them alive into the lake of fire, but he sends a lone angel to bind Satan and cast him into the abyss. Christ holds Satan in such contempt until he does not even lay hands on him. He will not even meet him. But to show his contempt, he sends a lone angel, probably one of the lesser angels of all the created hosts, to take him. He holds Satan in such utter contempt, because of his old rebellious nature that has been manifested throughout the centuries opposing Christ and his kingdom. Satan is a midget in God's sight. Christ conquered him on the cross, and he said to his disciples, fear not, for I have overcome the world. Satan is a conquered foe with respect to every believer, and the weapon we use against him is the blood of the Son of God by which he conquered him. And they overcame him by the blood of the lamb. That is the weapon God put in my heart to fight Satan with. That's the weapon I fight him with. The scripture says that he was cast into the bottomless pit, which means the abyss. This is a place that was opened up in Revelation 19:1, and the earth was filled with a plague of locusts which came forth. This is the same abyss that Satan is cast into and the abyss from which the beast arose, Revelation 17:8. Now the question arises, what is the difference between the abyss and the lake of fire? The answer is, one is the prison house and the other is the final place of punishment for Satan, his angels, and all of his worshippers. The abyss is spoken of as hell, but it is also the pit or place of imprisonment. It is one of the compartments of Hades in the spirit world of the departed spirits of the damned.

The average individual has a very hazy idea of the world of spirits. The spirit world of the damned and the spirit world of the redeemed. The average individual doesn't understand. My friend, there's such a thin veil between. Listen. The Hebrew word Sheol is used 65 times in the Old Testament. It is translated hell 31 times and the grave 31 times in the King James Version. It is called the pit three times. The word Sheol in Hebrew is the same word Hades in the Greek and means the same thing. Both denote one and the same thing, but they're never used to refer to the lake of fire or the final punishment. And they're never used correctly to denote the grave, which is the place of the body after death. And it's never used to denote the abyss.

Now I want you to face this fact. Up to the time of the resurrection, the Lord Jesus Christ from the grave, the damned spirits, as well as the saints, went to the same place called Hades, at death, that is, in the earth. There was one compartment for the spirits of the damned, another compartment for the spirits of the redeemed. When our Lord Jesus Christ died on the cross and gave up the ghost, he went into the paradise below, that is, the Hades, and that is the place he met the thief on the cross. The rich man and Lazarus both went to Hades when they died, but the scripture tells us in Luke 16, there was a great gulf fixed between the two, neither could depart from the other. But when our Lord Jesus Christ went into Hades, or the paradise below, at his death on the cross, he went there not subject to death, but as the conqueror of death, and preaching to the spirits in prison there, according to 1 Peter, that he was victorious and that he had wrought out salvation on the cross for them that he had promised. When he came out and reunited with that body in the tomb, he brought a great change in the paradise below, in fact, he emptied it of all the saints, and many of them were resurrected with him, the scripture says. When he ascended to heaven, he carried all the redeemed into the paradise above, leaving the paradise in the heart of the earth empty. Therefore he said, I have the keys of Hades and death. So when the unsaved die now, those who do not know Christ, their departed spirits, according to Job 18:18, are driven by the demon spirits into Hades, the place for departed spirits in the heart of the earth. When the saints fall asleep in Christ, the angels carry their spirits into the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ in the paradise above, according to 16th chapter of Luke. To me, it's one of the greatest comforting thoughts as I walk day by day with my blessed Lord, knowing that his guardian



angels surround me, protect me, and lead me and that when I come to the end of my earthly life and fall asleep in Christ, they'll bear me away unto him who died for me, and I'll not have to cross Jordan alone.

Now, as we turn back again to our study of the word abyss, we find that the word abyss is mentioned nine times in the New Testament. The demons Christ cast out of the man at Gadara besought the Savior not to consign them to go into the abyss.

Now the lake of fire, which is the second death, is translated Hell, but the Greek word is Gehenna, which means a lake of fire. Then we're told in Peter that God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and the Greek word there is Tartarus, and delivered them in chains of darkness to be reserved unto judgment. Tartarus is no doubt a compartment of the prison house spoken of as the deepest hell. It's the place where fallen angels are held as prisoners, bound with chains, waiting for the final day of judgment. I see my time's up, but I wish I had time to go into that and show you the difference between Hades, the abyss, and Tartarus, and Gehenna. There's the four compartments in the spirit world of the damned that holds the different individuals. My friend, let me ask you one question in closing. Do you know the Christ? Do you know the Lord Jesus Christ? Do you know Him as your Lord and your Savior?