

Satan Will Be Released from His Prison and Will Go Out to Deceive the Nations

20: 7-10

DIG: Why do you think Satan will try again to deceive the nations? Why will God release him from the Abyss? How does the battle here relate to the battle in Ezekiel 38-39? What is the final fate of the beast and the false prophet?

REFLECT: What comforts you in this section? What disturbs you? Why? What is your biggest spiritual battle today? What is the outcome so far? What is the hope in this passage for you?

During the incredible messianic Kingdom, any crime or overt wickedness will be stopped before it gets started. Although ample time will be given for the lost to repent, if they have not accepted **the Messiah** by the time they are one hundred years old they will die (**Isaiah 65:20**). In addition, they will be exposed to the Gospel and **the King Himself**. They will probably be able to see **Him** personally if they wish, and talk to the gloried believers who will be serving as priests over them. They will be diligently taught about the necessity of a substitutionary sacrifice for their salvation and each nation will send representatives yearly to Jerusalem to celebrate the Festival of Sukkot (**Zechariah 14:16-19**).

Yet with all those privileges, with every possible incentive to believe in **Christ**, there will be millions upon millions who will reject **Him**. In a way, this should not surprise us, since even the perfect conditions of the garden of Eden were not sufficient to keep sinless Adam and Eve from rebelling against **God**.⁴⁴⁵ All the Gentile nations who will enter the millennium will be saved, but their descendants, for the most part, will at first avoid overt acts of sin and rebellion. But their self-control will be out of fear and not out of love.

These unbelievers will be born and raised in an ideal environment. All they will ever know is peace, prosperity and righteousness. But eventually, stories told to them by their parents, grandparents, and the believer priests will sound more and more fanciful as the centuries go by. At some point, those ancient tales of a sinful lifestyle will begin to seem freeing, glamorous and even exciting. Many people, especially the teenagers, will begin to inwardly resent the loving constraints under which they must live. Eventually, they might even become angry that they will be unable to sin. Although **Satan** will be bound and there will be no external temptations to doubt **God** or disobey His will, their sin nature will still be yearning to reveal itself. With the lost, the issue of salvation is never lack of information (**Romans 1:18-20**), it is always the love of sin (**John 3:19**) And make no doubt about it, their hearts

will still be **deceitful above all things and beyond cure (Jeremiah 17:9)**. Thus, without personally suffering the consequences of their sin, and with every material need provided, it may be even more difficult for them to see the need for a Savior than it had been for their descendants before them.

When the thousand years are over, Satan will be released from his prison in the Abyss (20:7). His legions of demons will be released from Babylon (**Isaiah 13:20-22**) and Edom (**Isaiah 34:9-15**) where they were held captive for a **thousand years**. Thus, all the millennial generations will be confronted with a clear-cut choice about their sin nature. This will be mankind's greatest test. In the former times, people had used external problems, such as poverty, pornography, war, intellectual pressures, and sickness as excuses for rejecting **Christ**. But during the millennial Kingdom, sin will be suppressed for a thousand years. Believer priests will rule and reign with **the Messiah** to make sure sinful acts do not take place. As a result, there will be no more excuses. It will be proved once more that mankind's sinful human nature, apart from the grace of **God** and a new birth (**John 3:5-7**), remains at heart only evil and hostile toward **ADONAI**.⁴⁴⁶

Once released, **Satan** will pick up right where he left off. Millions and millions will rally to **his** cause.⁴⁴⁷ **He** has always been the great deceiver and even a **thousand years in the Abyss** will not change **his** character or **his** goals. Once again **he** will set out to destroy **Yeshua Messiah** using **his** proven age-old strategy. **He will go out to deceive the Gentile nations in the four corners of the earth (20:8a)**. This time, however, **his** chances are even greater than before because the human population will have reached its highest number in history. As a result of a **thousand years** of longevity and a perfect environment, mankind will finally **fill the earth (Genesis 1:28)**. The population will be virtually innumerable.

Even **the Adversary himself** may be astonished by **his** success. **He** will find the same old human nature, but even more ripe for the picking. For example, some nations will begin to neglect their duty to go to Jerusalem for Sukkot. As **his** demons go out to do **his** bidding, **he** will be pleasantly surprised with the quick response. The believer priests will resist, but not even they will be able to stem the tide of evil of those who will be eager for a chance to escape their bondage of righteousness. The age-old deceptions will again accomplish their deadly mission and gullible masses will soon return to the evolutionary faith of their forefathers, rejecting the obvious fact that **God** is their **Creator** and **Savior**. They will prefer instead to believe that mankind is deity and worthy of worship.⁴⁴⁸

Needing human leadership for his worldwide takeover, **the devil** will find fertile soil in which to sow **his** seeds of rebellion. Chief among them will be **Gog and Magog**, the ancient enemy of **ADONAI**. Russia will **gather** millions together **for battle against the LORD and His holy city Jerusalem (20:8b)**. Babylon, of course, will have been completely destroyed during the Campaign of Armageddon (**18:1-24**). But Russia will become strong once more and will be

ready to take the lead again in opposing **God**. It seems that after several generations, the younger unregenerate Russians will become obsessed over the history of the destruction of their forefathers in **the mountains of Isra'el** (see **Bn - I Will Bring You from the Far North and Send You Against the Mountains of Isra'el**). They will especially resent the Jews, because it was in their country that **Gog's** empire had been destroyed and because the Israelites will be the center of Gentile attention during the messianic Kingdom. Therefore, those unregenerate Russians will be ripe for rebellion.

Because of the reappearance of **Gog and Magog** here, many see this as being the same battle that took place in **Ezeki'el 38 and 39** (see **Bh - The Northern Alliance and the Invasion of Israel**). They are similar in that they both involve **Satan's** work of deception and both end up being an invasion of **Isra'el**. But that is where the similarity ends because they are both separated by at least a **thousand years**. In **Ezeki'el** the armies attacking **Isra'el** come from several specifically named countries around **Isra'el**; in **Revelation**, they come from countries all over the world. In **Ezeki'el** they are destroyed by a great earthquake, various diseases, torrents of rain, hailstones and burning sulfur; in **Revelation** they are destroyed by fire out of heaven. In **Ezeki'el** the destruction is followed by seven years of burying the weapons of the invaders and seven months of burying their bodies; in **Revelation**, the destruction is followed by the great white throne judgment, the second death, death and Hades will all be thrown into the lake of fire, the earth will be renovated. Then the New Jerusalem will come down out of heaven and the Eternal State will begin.

The ancient serpent's worldwide army will march **across the breadth of the earth** to attack Jerusalem. The Bible does not say how long the rebellion will occur after **Satan** is released. But it seems that **the devil's** deceptions found a quick and ready acceptance in rebellious hearts and minds throughout the world. It will be an easy sell. Since no weapons will be allowed during the millennium (**Micah 4:3**), we don't know if their weapons will be primitive or sophisticated, but we do know that they will be potent enough to compel them to action. In amazing numbers, they will swarm from every direction to **surround the camp of God's people, the City that He loves (20:9a)**. Energized by **the great Adversary, the tempter**, they will foolishly prepare for one last great assault on **the Messiah and His children**. But **ADONAI**, the **God of Isra'el**, has promised to **protect their camp and deliver their enemies to them once again (Deuteronomy 23:14)**.

Like the Campaign of Armageddon **a thousand years** earlier, this "battle" will in reality be an execution. **Fire will come down from heaven like Sodom and Gomorrah and devour them (20:9b)**.⁴⁴⁹ After ages of grace, patience and mercy, **God's** long suffering will come to an end. With mankind so quick to rebel against **Him** after providing every material blessing and even the personal presence of **Christ Himself**, there will be nothing more that **Ha'Shem** will be able to do.

Here, then, is the answer for the ages. It ends the false theory that mankind, under a perfect environment will willingly serve ADONAI who created him and paid for his sins.⁴⁵⁰ After a thousand years of utopia, the first opportunity they get to rebel, they turn to the wicked one and rebel against God. How many will there be? The Bible tells us that in number they are like the sand of the seashore (20:8c) - a figure of speech used in the Bible to describe a vast, uncountable number (Genesis 22:17; Joshua 11:4; Judges 7:12; First Samuel 13:5; First Kings 4:20; and Hebrews 11:12). It will prove that our environment, or our circumstances, is not to blame for the wickedness in our hearts. It is our sin nature that drives us to rebellion. Without faith/trust/belief in the Lord Jesus Christ there is no hope for mankind.

And the devil, who deceived them, will be thrown into the lake of fire, where the beast (see my commentary on [Isaiah Do - All Your Pomp Has Been Brought Down to the Grave](#)) and the false prophet had been thrown. This lake of fire is synonymous with Gehenna, which Jesus referred to as the eternal home of the wicked. Hell was planned not for men but for the devil; but those who follow him must share his destiny. Ultimately, death and hell will be thrown into the lake of fire (20:14, 14:10), where Satan will be tormented day and night forever and ever (20:10). It will be the final destination of the forces of evil that have plagued mankind since the garden of Eden.

Those who refuse to believe in hell must remember that Yeshua believed in hell, for He will say: **Depart from Me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his fallen angels (Matthew 25:41).** Fire is a very weak symbol of the reality of what it means to be lost, to be separated from God for all eternity. You cannot reduce these descriptions to something less than the reality, because the symbol is always a poor representative of the real thing. Nor can you dissolve this into thin air and make believe it doesn't exist. The reality far exceeds the description, and human language does its best to describe the dreadful reality of it. It is a place of both mental (Dani'el 12:2; Matthew 8:12, 13:42, 22:13, 24:51, 25:30; Luke 13:28) and physical torment (Revelation 14:10-11; Matthew 25:41; Mark 9:43-44, 48; Luke 16:23-24). The lake of fire is a real place of constant suffering.⁴⁵¹

With this final revolt thwarted, the messianic Kingdom will come to an end, and there will be a transfer of authority: **Then the end will come, when Jesus hands over the messianic Kingdom to God the Father after the Lord has destroyed all Satanic authority and power. For Christ must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. For He "has put everything under His feet" (as seen in Psalm 8:6). Now when everything has been subjected to the Son, then He will subject Himself to God the Father, who subjected everything to Him; so that ADONAI may be everything in everyone (First Corinthians 15:28 CJB).**

If **Revelation** were written like a spy thriller, **Satan** would play the despicable and crafty villain who is planning to dominate the entire world by going out to **deceive the nations**. While **he** thinks **he** has arranged a decisive confrontation between **his** followers and "the good guys," it is only because someone else is writing the script. It will be **the LORD** who lets **him** out of prison in the first place. According to the way **Revelation** describes **him**, **Satan** is truly powerless; **he** is no more than a "fall guy" who has been set up to bring about **God's** ultimate victory. What a script!

As with Jesus in the desert (**Matthew 4:1-11**), we need to recognize that **Satan** is permitted to tempt us from time to time. If **He** was tempted, we know that we are going to be tempted also. We don't really have to understand the reasons why. Our task is simply to resist **the devil**, and watch **him flee** from us (**James 4:7**)! We don't have to fear **the devil's** tactics, because **Yeshua** will not allow us to be tempted beyond *our power to resist* (**First Corinthians 10:13**). We must remember that **He** has given us that power; with **His** grace, and the wonderful gift of our free will, we can say *no* to sin, and *yes* to **God**.

If you are failing in certain areas, ask yourself whether it is because you are relying on yourself too much. Perhaps you need to spend more time in prayer, but wind up on the computer instead. Perhaps you try to get along better with someone, but if they push your buttons you end up losing your temper. Have you tried calling on **Jesus** for help? **He** has already defeated **Satan** and **His** strength is all you need! I know this sounds simplistic, but it's true nonetheless. **He** has promised never to leave or forsake you, and **He's** always ready to meet your need. If you choose **God**, you can join those who are **more than conquerors** in **Him** (**Romans 8:37**).⁴⁵²