

An Old Way of Life

Revelation 20:7-10

(preached Pine Grove 10/15/17; Sunday AM)

Introduction

Take your Bibles and turn to Revelation 20...

We are going to be looking at verses 7-10 this morning, but I want to begin reading back in verse 1 and read down to verse 10...

If you are visiting with us or haven't been here in a while, we are looking at the book of Revelation verse by verse..

We began in Revelation 1:1 on October 16th a year ago and we have now made it to the Revelation 20:7-10...

So let's read this passage and then we will go back and look at it in a little more detail..

20 1 Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding the key of the abyss and a great chain [a] in his hand. 2 And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; 3 and he threw him into the abyss, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he would not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years

were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time.

4 Then I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was given to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of [b]their testimony of Jesus and because of the word of God, and those who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received the mark on their forehead and on their hand; and they came to life and reigned with Christ for a thousand years. 5 The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were completed. This is the first resurrection. 6 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 for a thousand years.

7 When the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison, 8 and will 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 [c]seashore. 9 And they came up on the [d]broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the [e]saints and the beloved city, and fire came down from heaven and devoured them. 10 And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and [f]brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

Let us pray.

Evan Ebel is a name that you do not know or probably have no desire to know.

Ebel grew up in a well to do family in Colorado in the 1980s and 1990s, but was a troubled kid.

He was sent to camps designed to help these kinds of teens, but in 2003 at the age of 18, Ebel held a classmate at gunpoint and stole their wallet..

Soon after, Ebel committed 3 more armed robberies and ended up in prison for 8 years...

Yet prison did not rehabilitate him either as Ebel joined a prison gang and beat up other inmates and then assaulted a prison guard...

The assault on the guard resulted in 4 years being tacked onto his sentence..

However, in January of 2013, Ebel was released 3 years early because of clerical error in the prison system..

Once he got out of prison, Ebel intimidated a woman into buying a gun for him...

And in March, only two months after being released from prison, Ebel murdered a pizza delivery guy in order to steal his uniform.

Ebel dressed up in the pizza delivery outfit, went to the home of the head of the Colorado Department of Corrections and shot him dead when he answered the door...

He then fled the scene and was spotted 2 days later in Texas where he shot a cop before going on a high speed chase where he was eventually killed in a shoot out with cops..

Once the dust settled, the public was outraged...

How could a clerical error allow a prisoner to get out free?

And how could the prison system be so ineffective in rehabbing its inmates that one of them would go on a killing spree right after his release?

Well, the sad reality is this..

Some people simply belong in prison the rest of their lives..

Some folks are simply beyond rehabilitation...

The drive to sin in their lives is so bad that they dont need to be a part of the general population ever...

Well, that is certainly the case for the great enemy of our souls...

Satan, the devil, the serpent, the dragon are all names for the evil one who has been the enemy of God ever since he was filled with pride and wanted to be like God and was kicked out of heaven...

We have talked about Satan's fall before which is described in Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28...

And ever since Satan was expelled form heaven with a 1/3 of the angles who showed allegiance to him, He has been on the loose in the world...

And Satan knows but one thing..

Sin and destruction and violence and evil..

This is what he does and he does it well and often..

Now the hope is that 1000 years in chains in the abyss would encourage him to change his ways...

But as soon as he is released, he - like some prisoners- go right back to committing the evil they always have...

And so that is what we are going to look at this morning in verses 7-10...

If verses 1-6 describe a New World Order that is coming in a 1000 year reign of Christ...

Verses 7-10 describe an Old Way of Life for the great enemy of our souls...

And so let's look at these verses, and I want us to think of what we are seeing in terms of sin....

What do we learn about sin in light of this final rebellion, this final war against God...

Well, the first thing we learn about sin is found in verses 7-8...

I. Sin Focuses on Deception (7-8)

Now as we come back to the book of Revelation, I want to remind us all of where we are at in terms of human history when we get to Revelation 20...

And though I realize that people disagree about this, the best interpretation of Revelation 20 is to see it as a description of events that are coming in the world..

For instance, we now live in what I call the church age...

This is the period of time after the cross....

And in terms of world history, we live in the period of time waiting the next major event of world history which will be the rapture of the church...

If you look at this slide, here is list of what is coming next...

- #1 - The Current World
- #2 - The Rapture of the Church
- #3 - The 7 Year Tribulation Period
- #4 - The Second Coming
- #5 - The 1,000 Year Reign of Christ on Earth
- #6 - The New Heavens and the New Earth (Eternal State)

For all of you visual learners, here is time line of the same events...

And what I want you to see first of all is that most of the events that we have been reading about in the book of Revelation are future to us...

In fact, after Jesus spoke to 7 churches of John's day in Revelation 2-3, the whole book shifts to the events of the very end of time...

And so contrary to what a lot of people preach and teach, the majority of the book of Revelation is futuristic to us...

Now, we have completed a lot of the events on this timeline so far in our look at this incredible book..

In fact, I did a copy of this slide and simply filled in the chapters in Revelation that describe events in each of these periods of time that are coming...

Currently, we are are over here in the far left..

We are to the right of the cross but to the left of the rapture, which is the event that we are waiting for where the Father sends the son to take the church to heaven prior to the 7 year tribulation period..

And it is important to remember that the rapture is not the Second Coming...

In the Second Coming, Jesus puts his feet upon the earth..

In the rapture, we meet Jesus in the air and are snatched to heaven..

The after the rapture, we spent chapters 4-19 describing the tribulation period..

Then in chapter 19 of Revelation, we saw the Second Coming of Christ...

And then the last 3 weeks, we have been looking at the 1000 year reign of Christ in Revelation 20:1-6...

And if I zoom in a bit on this section of the timeline, you will see that the beginning of the 1000 years is marked by Satan getting a chain, and Jesus starting his reign...

And we also talked about conditions in this 1000 year period as well..

Let me review that by showing you this chart that speaks of the people who enter that 1000 year reign of Christ...

Now, the first thing to see about the first group to go into that kingdom is that they are all believers when the 1000 years begin...

You will have the five groups you see on the screen up here...

- 1) Believers from Church Age (2 Cor 5:10)
- 2) Believers from OT (Daniel 12:1-3)
- 3) Believers killed in the Tribulation (Rev 20:4-6)
- 4) Gentile Believers who survived the Tribulation (Ez 20:34-38)
- 5) Jewish Believers who survived the Tribulation (Matt. 25:31-46)

A second element to consider about these people ready to enter the 1000 year kingdom is this...

They are not all in the same kind of body...

Look at this slide..

So as the 1000 years begins, every believer of all time enters the kingdom, but not every believer has the same kind of body..

You see, the believers who survive the 7 year tribulation period have never died so they have never been given a new and imperishable body...

Yet, God's plan is for them to go into the 1000 year reign of Christ right alongside believers in imperishable bodies...

And so the kingdom will begin with all believers but some of those believers will be married and in natural bodies, so there will be childbirth in the 1000 year kingdom...

Now we know that life expectancies will be much greater in the 1000 year kingdom...

In fact, Isaiah tells us that living to 100 will be very normal and dying early will be unheard of...

So the 1000 year kingdom's population will grow real fast..

Now, the 1000 year kingdom will also be in a renovated earth...

The judgments that came during the tribulation period will have caused much destruction upon the earth, but after Jesus' Second Coming, the world will be restored in preparation for the 1000 years beginning..

And so the 1000 years will be a redeemed people on a restored earth for 1000 years..

We talked about some of those conditions last week like global peace, global joy, global justice, global worship, global fellowship all taking place on a earth that has been freed from the curse of sin...

However, we now come to Revelation 20:7 and those 1000 years are ended or right at their end and Satan is released...

Verse 7-8...

7 When the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison, 8 and will 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 [c]seashore.

Now, who releases Him?

Well, certainly it is an act of God...

God bound him and God must be the one to let him go...

And as soon as he gets out, he gets right back to work at what he does best and that is deceiving the nations..

Satan is a deceiver and a liar...

In fact he is father of all lies and deception...

He is an accuser of Christians and an enemy of God...

God is truth and Satan is lies..

God is honest, and Satan is dishonest..

God wants peace and Satan wants war..

And the reason he deceives at this future point in history is to gather the nations for war...

Gog and Magog are the names of a leader and its army...

Gog and Magog are mentioned one other place in Scripture and that is in Ezekiel 38 and 39, where Ezekiel describes a war that is coming involving Gog and Magog against the people of God and the God of heaven..

My personal opinion is that the battle of Gog and Magog of Ezekiel and the Gog and Magog you see here are the same battle...

And so Satan leaves his chains and gathers his gangs of followers at the end of the 1000 year reign...

And Satan's goal is clear...

Let's rid the universe of God...

Now the question that people have is this...

Where do these people come from to join Satan's army?

Remember this...

There will be children born in the 1000 years and though Jesus will be king, he will not force faith in Him on everyone...

Though he will rule with a rod of iron and enforce outward obedience in His kingdom, these children will resist Christ in the only place that it matters and that is in their heart..

So for years the children will be born and grow in adulthood in the 1000 year kingdom and yet never give their heart to Christ...

And when Satan is released, their evil hearts almost explode to join his army..

Now get this...

They will have seen the Lord Jesus Christ in the flesh, yet they will still refuse to believe in and obey Him..

This my friends is the power of sin to deceive...

The first example in verse 7-8 is the devil Himself...

Though he has been bound for 1000 years, he has not been rehabilitated...

He is still as evil as when he entered the abyss in chains...

The second example in these verses is even more shocking...

Here you have a huge group of people as numerous as the sand on the seashore joining Satan's army when he is released..

These people have seen the goodness of Christ up close and personal..

They have lived in a perfect society for decades and even centuries...

They have seen the love of God and the love of their fellow man extended to them...

They have been in the garden of Eden, but just like and Adam and eve, a perfect environment does guarantee a true love of God...

Because given the chance to sin, they sin and sin all the more...

The world's greatest deception of all time is that sin is better than anything God has to offer...

And the deception is so powerful that people in a perfect world under the rule of a perfect king will choose Satan over God...

We may be shocked, but we better learn just how desperately wicked people are...

And if not for the grace of God, any of us are capable of falling into that deception....

Man is not good...

His heart is not bent toward doing good....

The heart is desperately wicked and the deception of sin so strong that man will join with Satan in hopes of defeating God even after a 1000 years of God demonstrating his goodness to the world...

Please stop talking about how good people are..

Please stop thinking that if we could make the world a better place that people would come running to get saved...

Please stop blaming everything and everyone else for all of the world's problems...

The greatest problem in the world is human heart and the only cure for the evil human heart is the gospel of Jesus Christ...

And nowhere in the Bible is that truth more clearer than right here in Revelation 20:7-8....

A second note to make about sin is found in verse 9...

II. Sin Seeks Destruction (9a)

Once Satan gets out and builds his army, there is but one mission...

Go and destroy God and the people of God..

Verse 9a..

9 And they came up on the [d]broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the [e]saints and the beloved city..

We know from other places in the Bible that Jesus will rule from Jerusalem in the 1000 year kingdom, so Satan sets his sights on where Christ is...

So he leads his final army to Jerusalem...

And they surround the saints of God who are gathered there..

No there will be people all over the globe during the time of the 1000 year kingdom, but many will be in and around a restored Jerusalem...

I hope I have a job near there...

First of all, I have always wanted to go to Jerusalem but never been to Israel, but more importantly, it would be nice to work near where Jesus calls home....

So many people will be settled in or near Jerusalem in the 1000 year reign...

And Satan will lead his army there...

And it is possible that the rest of the world goes to Jerusalem for this event...

I mean we will have imperishable supernatural bodies at this point...

But either way it doesn't matter....

All we know is that Satan will gather a final army and come to surround Christ and his people in Jerusalem..

But this last battle will have the same outcome as all the battles before...

Satan will lose...

And before we see what happens next, let me remind us all that sin has no purpose in this world but to destroy...

Sin looks harmless but it only seeks to destroy those who commit it..

Sin promises a good time, a little pleasure, a little easy living but delivers trouble, drama, disease and death...

Because the aim of sin is to destroy those who refuse to put it down..

And when Satan gets out prison, his sinful nature makes him set his heart on destruction...

And it is no different than any of you who play with sin..

It is not fun...

Like the kid who plays with fire often gets burned, the one who plays with sin goes to the grave...

Sin destroys and it destroys completely...

If you are sitting here toying with sin...

Remember this...

Sin wants to destroy you, the church you attend, the Lord you say your love, the family you say that matters and the job that you say is a blessing...

Sin is not looking to be a passing pleasure but a lifetime of agony...

Stay away. Stay very far away...

One more dangerous truth about sin is found in the last half of verse 9 and all of verse 10...

Make no mistake about it, sin deceives because it promises wealth and pleasure and good times, but it delivers trouble, and problems and death...

III. Sin Ends in Defeat (9b-10)

As soon as the army of Satan gets together and gets to Jerusalem, they get burned to a crisp...

End of verse 9...

“..and fire came down from heaven and devoured them.”

Along these same lines, as soon as Satan got out of a 1000 year prison, he was thrown in an eternal lake of fire....

Verse 10...

10 And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and [f]brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

We have talked about this before, but for all who want to make hell a temporary place of tribute before God eventually sends everyone to heaven...

Or for all of those people who save that hell just simple puts someone out of existence...

Verse 10 tells you that hell is forever and ever...

In fact, the beast (who is the Antichrist) and the false prophet are still in the lake of fire when Satan is thrown in..

They have already been there 1000 year, but they are still being tormented in hell today as they were after a 1000 years...

Simply put, if God never goes out of existence, then the place for those who reject God will never go out of existence either...

The final hell is a lake of fire that burns forever and ever..

And Satan will be the 3rd person to be a member of it...

I know this is probably obvious, but sin has but one end and that it will be destroyed by God...

Sin destroys but sin and sinners will also be destroyed...

Satan goes to the lake of fire and the ones in his army will head there next week, which we will see in verses 11-15..

But can you see where you are headed without Christ?

Sin leads to a lake of fire...

It is one of the saddest truths of this world but there are plenty of people who claim they have 20/20 vision but never see the end of the road of sin...

They always feel like they are in control of it and can lay it down at any moment and get saved..

One day, your car will not just come to a dead end, it will fall off a cliff into a lake of fire..

Conclusion

Let me end today with a couple thoughts...

#1 - Sinners don't need a new environment, they need a new heart.

There is such a misconception in Christianity that the world is our greatest enemy...

Churches spend millions of dollars each year trying to change the world in hopes that more people will get saved..

I am not saying that we shouldn't serve others, but we need to realize that the greatest enemy of the gospel is not the conditions of the world but the fallen condition of the human heart...

Let me give you a real world example...

There have many incredible believers who did much for the Lord and the church who were raised in sin filled homes...

And likewise, there have been many kids raised by Christian parents who have done much harm...

You see the problem for a person is not the environment that surrounds them but the heart that lives within them...

So many people blame so many things for their sin but never blame themselves...

They point finger here and there...

It was the way my parents raised me...

It is the TV's fault for all the bad shows..

It is my employer's fault for making me work so much..

But as they point a finger in all those directions, there are 3 fingers pointing back at them...

You see the heart is man's biggest enemy...

And how do I know this?

Revelation 20:7-10..

Even in a perfect world with Jesus as king, man will still rebel against God...

Even without ungodly TV shows and movies...

Even in a perfect government and surrounded by perfect people...

Even in the a pristine environment of God's kingdom for a 1000 years, the human heart is so bad that it will fall into sin...

That is why the only cure for the heart is not a better environment but a better heart..

And a better heart can only come through repentance and belief in the gospel of Christ...

The second thing to take with you from Revelation 20:7-10 is this...

#2 - Satan fights a lot of battles but loses the war.

You cannot miss the importance of the promise fulfilled right here in Revelation 20:7-10...

Satan's schemes and lies and attacks will come to an end..

The chain of 1000 years will give way to a lake of fire for all eternity...

Ever since Satan entered the serpent and found his way into the garden of Eden, believer have been ready for his exit..

And that day is coming...

The angel of God who became the enemy of God will come under the punishment of God for all eternity..

And his lies and deceptions will leave the world once and for all..

And though we may have heard that and taught that, this is where the Bible affirms that truth...

Satan will make his last stand at the end of the 1000 year reign of Christ but he quickly fall to his knees and submit to the judgment of God forever and ever...

And all the church said Amen and amen...

We may sing what a day that will be when our Jesus we will see...

But I would also add...

What a day that will be our enemy will flee...

And all I can say is thank you Christ for securing Satan's defeat by offering your life on the cross...

Because the only way Satan heads to a lake of fire is because Jesus went to a cross of shame...

And through that cross of shame, Jesus freed His people from sin while sending Satan to an eternal punishment...

Revelation 20:7-10 remind us that sin is deceptive and filled with destruction, but it also reminds us that sin will end and the author of sin destroyed...

Today is not the day to remain in sin and under the control of Satan...

Today is the day to come to Christ...

Turn from sin..

Trust in Him and experience victory over sin now and forever....

Let us pray.t65