



BELIEVERS CHAPEL

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Sermons of S. Lewis Johnson

Systematic Theology

TRANSCRIPT

“Old Nick Wiped Out, or the Future of Satan and His Hosts”

[Message] Tonight, our subject is, according to our schedule, “Old Nick Wiped Out, or the Future of Satan and His Hosts.” And we’re going to turn to two passages of Scripture for our Scripture reading and so, first of all, will you turn with me to Luke chapter 10 verses 17 and 18. And then, we’re going to turn and read the 20th chapter of the Book of Revelation or at least the first ten verses of it.

Luke chapter 10 in verse 17 and verse 18. And the Evangelist writes:

“And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, ‘Lord, even the demons are subject unto us through thy name.’ And he said unto them, ‘I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.’”

Now, let’s turn to Revelation chapter 20. And we will begin reading, I think, maybe I will read a few verses of the 19th chapter since we’re going to refer to that too. So, let’s begin with the 19th chapter in the 17th verse. And just a moment for the context, remember, that the 19th chapter verse 11 through verse 16, the Apostle John has seen the vision of the heavens opening and the man on the white horse coming from heaven whose name is “The Word of God.” And it is John’s vision of the second advent of Our

Lord, Jesus. And now, here in verses 17 through 21 of the 19th chapter, we read of the details of the catastrophe that befalls those who are opposing themselves to the lamb.

“And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, ‘Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and enslaved, both small and great. And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. 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. 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, who 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.”

By the way, let me stop and just make this comment. It is quite obvious from reading these texts how different the restraint of Satan is from the restraint of our Lord Jesus. You’ll remember that they set a seal upon the sepulcher, but he tore the bars away on the third day and came forth from the grave. Satan is in the abyss with a seal upon it for a thousand years and he would still be there were it not for the fact that he is to be

released in the future in order that he might have a little season of further rebellion. Now, verse 4:

“And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of the Messiah, and shall reign with him a thousand years.”

And by the way, I’d like for you just to notice we’re not going to say anything about this tonight for this is not our subject – The kingdom – but it is sometimes said that the kingdom of our Lord is only referred to in one passage in the Bible, Revelation chapter 20. But let me hasten to say simply this that the kingdom of our Lord is referred to throughout the whole of the Bible. The only place that the length of the kingdom is given specifically is the Book of Revelation chapter 20. But, about five or six times we have reference to the thousand years here. And, furthermore, you will notice that the vision is given to the Apostle John and the thousand years is recorded in the vision. That might lead someone to say, we are to take it symbolically for it is in the vision. But when the interpretation of the vision is given in the 6th verse, the thousand years is mentioned again. So, we are taught by this that the thousand years is not to be taken symbolically. For it is not only in the vision, but in the interpretation, which is given to the Apostle John. Now, let’s read on with verse 7, for we are interested in the history of Satan tonight.

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“And when the thousand years are ended, 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, Gog, and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever.”

Now, for some of you who have not been here with us through the spring series in Systematic Theology, by the way, some of you I am glad to greet again after a long absence from Bible classes, we have been studying this spring, the doctrine of Satanology or angelology and the doctrine of anthropology, spending most of our time upon angelology and the story of Satan as it is recorded in the Bible. And this is our last topic, the thirteenth of the topics in angelology. And our subject is “The Future of Satan and His Hosts.”

We have followed the story of Satan from his original sin in heaven through the warfare of the ages into the present age. And I hope we have at least learned that he exists as a person and that he is to be feared.

I read a story this week of a wife who called her mother long-distance and said, “Mother, I don’t know what I’m going to do about John. He doesn’t believe in a personal devil.” And his mother-in-law said, “Well, honey, don’t worry about it a bit. I’ll come to visit you next month and I’m sure between the two of us we can convince him that there is a personal devil.” [Laughter]

There is a personal devil and he is to be feared. We smile about him; we sometimes laugh about him. But it really is no laughing matter. He is a roaring lion who goes about seeking whom he may devour. And that person may be you or me.

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Now, we have also learned something of his nature and work. Enough, I hope to keep us from two extremes. One extreme is Satan is the author of all crime and immorality. I think this is the belief of the average man in the streets of Dallas, Texas, today. Satan is the author of all crime and all immorality. And it can be traced back to him. The other extreme is he’s not the author of these, but he works to distort and corrupt the pure faith of Christianity.

Now, I think the true view somewhere between them. His primary activity in relation to God is to counterfeit his word and to counterfeit his works. He doesn’t want to set up a kingdom of crime and violence. And when we say crime and violence in the streets or on our campuses or in our cities, we are not necessarily to attribute that to Satan. He is not interested in that. He does not want a confusion in the earth. He wants a very orderly kingdom, but he wants to be its head. And so, he is setting out to counterfeit the kingdom of God. And he would like to have a very orderly arrangement. He would love to have law and order. So would I, of course. But he would like to have law and order with Satan as president in the kingdom.

So, we must not think of Satan as a person who is desirous to bring to the earth violence and crime and complete confusion. And we, of course, have also learned that we should not for one moment think that Satan is not religious. He is very religious. In fact, remember Paul says in 2 Corinthians chapter 11, I think I gave you the translation a few weeks ago, when you’re looking for Satan be sure and look in the pulpit.

Now, you won’t find that text exactly that way in 2 Corinthians. This is what you will find. Paul writes in 2 Corinthians chapter 11 in verse 13, “For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.”

Now, you must not for one moment think that the dangerous man to Christianity is the man who attacks it. I’ve said this over and over this spring that Bishop Pike is no real danger to Christianity, for you know where he stands. He stands opposed to the truths of the word of God and it’s plain and clear.

The man who is dangerous is the man who claims to be a Christian and who stands in the Christian pulpit and claims even to believe the Bible but who does not really believe it and who does not really proclaim the truths that are contained within it and particularly the essential doctrines that concern the person and work of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul says in verse 14, “And no marvel that Satan has his apostles for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.” Satan’s ministers are ministers of righteousness not unrighteousness. So, his primary activity is to counterfeit the word of God, to counterfeit the work of God, to set up a kingdom upon the earth with Satan as its head.

His primary activity in relation to the world is deception. He loves to deceive. In 2 Corinthians chapter 4 verses 3 and 4 Paul writes, “But if our gospel be hidden, it is hidden to them that are lost: In whom the god of this age (that is Satan) hath blinded the minds of them who believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.” So, his primary activity in relation to God is to counterfeit his word and his works. In relation to the world, it is to deceive the world, to blind it.

I read of a snake that had the power to shoot its poison fifteen feet. And the keeper of a zoo who had one of these snakes in the prison said that he could never enter the cage without goggles on for the snake shot for the eyes and when the venom hit the eyes, you were blinded. And then it bit you. Now, that is the way Satan works. He blinds and then he bites with death.

And, finally, rarely does Satan ever incite the sexual immorality. When we see sexual immorality, we see the operation of the flesh, not primarily Satan. Now, we do have a text that says that Satan is involved in this and it is 1 Corinthians chapter 7 in verse 5, but very rarely does the Bible lay any stress upon the fact that Satan has anything to do

with sexual immorality. As a rule, the doctrine of Satan is idolatry. That is what he is interested in. Satan is interested in defeating the work of God; if he can just defeat and forestall the operation of the plan and program of God, establishing himself in God’s place then he should be successful in what he is doing.

Now, we have followed Satan to the present time and well it’s been five or six weeks ago, but two studies before we studied the activity of Satan in relation to God and relation to the world. Just as I’ve been summarizing it here now. But, what about the future of Satan? We know that he is very active. That he goes about as a roaring lion. That he counterfeits. That he deceives. That he does incite to disobey God. But what about his future? Now, the Bible sets forth considerable information about the future of Satan. There are three periods to it and I put them up here in our outline.

Satan shall be cast out of heaven for he has access to heaven at the present time. Then Satan shall be cast into the abyss following the coming of Jesus Christ to the earth. Satan shall be cast into the lake of fire and that shall be his eternal habitation.

So, these are the great events in the future of Satan. And, we shall see as we read Revelation chapter 12 that Satan apparently knows something of this himself. So let’s turn now to Revelation chapter 12 and we’re going to read how Satan shall be cast out of heaven. And I shall seek to set forth the time of it, the program that he attempts to develop when he is cast out of heaven, and then we’ll say just a word about the doom of that program. Revelation chapter 12 in verse 7. Now, we have just been given the sign of the woman clothed with the sun and then the woman brings forth the male child. And the woman after the son is caught up to God the woman flees into the wilderness where she has a place prepared by God and there they feed her a thousand two hundred and threescore days or three and a half years. The woman represents Israel. The man-child and the Greek text specifically says a man-child represents our Lord Jesus Christ. And so, this is a picture then of our Lord Jesus who comes of the seed of David according to the flesh of the tribe of Judah. He is Israel’s messianic king. Satan is very anxious to prevent

the coming of Christ but he cannot do it. Christ has come, he has overcome Satan, and he has now been caught up to the throne of God.

And then, we skip in verse 5 on to the time of the great tribulation period when Israel shall be upon the earth. And verse 7 now says and we’re talking about the future now,

“And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, who deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, ‘Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Messiah: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, who accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the lamb.’”

Not by the philosophy of existentialism, not by the theology of a Rudolf Bultmann, or even the theology of a Pannenberg, but by the blood of the lamb. It’s rather old fashioned, isn’t it? But, it’s Biblical.

“And by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth (Look at that), he knoweth that he hath but a short time.”

Apparently, he is given information or else he can read the Bible. That he “has but a short time.” Isn’t it amazing? You, of course, have a great deal of difficulty in understanding how Satan, knowing his time is short and that he is sure to come to defeat,

can persist in his rebellion. But that, of course, means that you do not yet understand what the depravity of Satan really is. And this is not the first time that men have known that judgment is coming. But, they have preferred not to repent and turn to the God who is the Father of the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.

So, here we read then of Satan cast out of heaven into the earth. The time of it? Let’s just say, without getting into detail or discussing the details of it, in the midst of the tribulation period. You will notice that Michael, the archangel, is involved as we read in the 12th chapter of the Book of Daniel. When Daniel says at the time of the great tribulation that it is Michael who shall stand up for the people of God, the nation Israel. And so, it is at this time that Michael wars with Satan and his angels and by the power of God he overcomes and Satan is cast out.

Now, he knows his time is short, and so, he plans. He has a good deal of sense. We, Christians, know our time is short but we often do not plan. He knows his time is short and he’s going to plan. And you will notice that he has particular antipathy for the woman. He hates the seed of the woman and the woman. He hates Israel. For it is through Israel and particularly the seed of Abraham that he was defeated. And so, we read in verse 13, “And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman who had brought forth the male child. And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle.”

Now, that is not the American Airlines [Laughter] Nor, is it even the United States of America. Now, this is a vision that John is seeing and the type of transportation that is given the woman so that she escapes from Satan is not described for us here. “To the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for three and a half years from the face of the serpent. And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his

mouth.” Nothing that Satan could do can destroy the Nation Israel. “And the dragon was angry with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed who keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. And he stood upon the sand of the sea.”

Now, the Greek texts at this place read, many of them, “and he stood.” Your English text reads “and I stood.” If the form “I stood” is genuine it’s a reference to the Apostle John. “I stood in my vision upon the sand of the sea and this is what I saw in vision.” If it is “he stood” and most of our critics feel that “he stood” is correct, then the reference is to Satan. He has been seeking to destroy the woman, he has cast out the flood after her and this has been nullified by God, and now you see him standing on the sea shore and it’s almost as if he is pondering the future. And this text and if it is, “and he stood” should be of course included with the preceding chapter. It should be the last sentence of chapter 12, “And he stood.” And I think that’s what it should be.

So, he’s planning and what diabolical scheme will the dragon manufacture as he ponders the fact that he has just a short time in which to oppose the plans of God? Well, he knows that God is a Trinity. He knows that God is one God. We’re going to talk about this at eight o’clock when we talk about Isaiah chapter 48 in more detail. But he knows that there is one God who subsists in three persons: Father, Son, and Spirit. And if he is the great counterfeiter and if he wishes to be the father of his trinity then, of course, he will need one who shall correspond to the son the second person and he will need one to correspond with the third person, the Holy Spirit. And so, in the 13th chapter, we read of the ministry of two beasts; the first of which is the anti-Christ and the second of which is called the false prophet, later on the un-holy spirit. And the dragon is the anti-god or the anti-father. So what we have is not an eternal trinity but an infernal Trinity: Satan, the anti-father; the first beast, the anti-Christ; the false prophet, the unholy spirit.

Chapter 13 records the human activity as well as the spiritual activity of this infernal trinity. It is the dragon who gives his power to the first beast. And, as a matter of

fact, that first beast has something that corresponds to the death and resurrection of the Lord, Jesus. Did you notice it as you read through the Book of Revelation? He is smitten with a deadly wound to death and by the miraculous power of Satan, given by God, allowed by him, it is as if the beast rises from the dead. And the whole world ultimately comes to worship the beast. For who is like unto the beast? Who has ever had an experience like that, except Jesus of Nazareth? And he’s gone hundreds and thousands of years ago.

And then we read of the ministry of the unholy spirit who acts as the lieutenant of that beast. And finally, he causes an image to be set up to the first beast and all the world has one religion. It is the worship of the anti-Christ as directed by his priest, the false prophet, all of which is directed from the invisible world of the dragon, the old serpent, the devil. It’s a magnificent scheme. As a matter of fact, all the world with the exception of those faithful ones referred to there in the end of chapter 12 and referred to in some other places. The whole world worships the beast through the leadership of the false prophet. The world can never be unified except once, I could say twice if we said Jesus Christ, under Jesus Christ. But only once for you see, the one thing, as I have said so often to you, the one thing that we all have in common in which we are completely united is the one thing that prevents us from ever being united, and that is our sin. That’s why Marx could never get along with his friends. That’s why Lenin could never get along with his friends. That’s why today in the Communist world there can be no unity. There can be no unity in the human race, except finally in the unity of all directed against the Lamb of God.

And finally in the 17th chapter of the Book of Revelation, we read of the kings of the earth who give their authority to the beast and together they seek to overthrow the lamb. What a tremendous battle that is? A wild beast for that’s the meaning of the Greek word *therion*, which is used of the beast, a wild beast pitted against a lamb. Who would

win that battle? Why, the wild beast. But this is the Lamb of God, and of course in chapter 17 the victory of the lamb is recorded.

So, the time of Satan’s casting out of heaven is the time of the tribulation. His program is to counterfeit the kingdom of God, seek to gain the kingdom for himself by the infernal trinity, and the doom of the program takes place when Jesus Christ returns from heaven. And, that’s what we read in Revelation chapter 19, remember? In verse 17 and following where we read of the supper of the great God? There’ve been lots of suppers in the word of God. But this is the supper of the great God which is the overthrow of all of the hosts of Satan at the second advent of the Lord Jesus. The great God.

You know I have a friend, I have several friends but I had two real good friends who used to work in the Solomon Islands as missionaries. One was Dr. Northcoat Deck, and what a magnificent missionary of Jesus Christ Dr. Deck was. That mission, the South Seas Evangelical Mission, went out to the Solomon Islands and they established a work there a number of years ago. And as a result of that work, the testimony to Jesus Christ was spread all over those islands. And some of the most interesting, and I think some of the most effective Christian work that has ever been done by missionaries, was done on those islands. In fact, during World War II when our men were out in the South Seas and in the Solomon’s and many of them were converted through the testimony of the natives that they came in contact with on those islands.

Now, they speak in pidgin English and I remember Dr. Deck saying that their term for God was not the great God, but they had a term for God that went like this. They said he is “big fellow, master too much, who boss both heaven and ground.” That was their term for God in Pidgin English. So this is the great supper of “big fellow, master too much, who boss both heaven and ground.” And he bosses Satan, too. And the result is the defeat of Satan.

Now, coming to the next step in the program of Satan’s future, Satan shall be cast into the abyss. And we read of this in chapter 20 in the Book of Revelation verses 1 through 3. We have already read in chapter 19 in verse 20 that when Jesus Christ comes to the earth, the beast and the false prophet are cast into the lake of fire. But Satan is reserved for special treatment. And so, in chapter 20 verse 1 John in his vision sees an angel come down from heaven who has the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he lays hold on the dragon, and he binds him in the abyss for a thousand years. He has been cast out of heaven and someone has said, he must be cast out of the earth now. And so, he has moved from heaven to earth during the tribulation period and now he is cast into the abyss. That’s the second stage in his future.

Now, isn’t it striking, if you have followed us in the study of Satanology or angelology, you will be struck immediately by the fact that John says, “I saw ‘an’ angel come down from heaven with a key and a chain. And ‘an’ angel laid hold of Satan and bound him and put him in the bottomless pit.” Now, doesn’t that strike you as strange? Well, it should, you know why? Because Satan was “big fellow, master too much” who bossed the angels in ages past, remember. He was the anointed cherub that covereth. He was the chief of the angelic host. And this is the irony of God that an angel, just one little angel, is enough now to lay hold of the dragon and bind him in the bottomless pit. I think there’s a great deal of drama and divine irony in that little word “an.” An angel that’s all it takes for the one who was Lucifer, the “son of the morning.”

Now, some stumble over the great chain and they say, “You know, how can a great chain bind Satan?” Now, just remember when you are reading the Book of Revelation you are reading of visions, for the most part. These are visions that John saw. This is not an iron chain. It does not say it’s an iron chain. It says it’s a great chain. It does not tell us what kind of material it is. It’s a chain that may bind a spiritual being. I don’t know what kind of chain it is. I surely do not know its chemical makeup. But, this is a vision so don’t stumble over it. He doesn’t say an iron chain. Even if he did say an

iron chain, we should understand it as in the vision. The reality of this is beyond our comprehension. Does it hurt you every now and then to say, this is something because I’m a man I cannot know? Well, if it hurts you to say that then you need to learn a little normal human humility because there are lots of things we cannot know and we may as well admit it. We are not God. So, he has a great chain in his hand and he lays hold of the dragon, the old serpent, and he binds him a thousand years.

I have a friend when he comes to this he always says, “This is the most sensational arrest in all of history.” When I grew up I can still remember the newspapers and the accounts that were given of the chase and the capture finally of John Dillinger back in the 30’s. You realize I was just two or three years old then. [Laughter] But I can still remember that. And it was on everybody’s mind and it was on the front pages, John Dillinger, when finally he was caught after he’d gone into the movies, I remember. Why that made the front pages, and then Baby Face Floyd, and then coming down to our day Lee Oswald. But this is a much more sensational arrest than any of those.

Now, Satan is bound for a thousand years in the bottomless pit. Now, we do not know where the bottomless pit is. The Bible does not tell us. It, apparently, is in some dimension that we could not grasp fourth, fifth, or sixth? Or however many God may have. But it appears to be related to the lake of fire like the county jail is to the state penitentiary. It’s a stopping off place on the way to the lake of fire. And so, he is bound in the bottomless pit.

Now, our English text says bottomless pit and I’ve been saying abyss because bottomless pit is a kind of translation that poses all kinds of problems. Remember, the boy, Spurgeon, who stumped his grandfather preacher, when he said, “What happens when after you fall into the bottomless pit, you fall out on the other side?” And he didn’t know how to answer it because he hadn’t looked at the Greek text which simply says “abyss.” Now, the abyss is located somewhere in space. Where? We do not know in

some dimension. But we know that it is a real place. Dust has been the serpent’s meat throughout all the centuries, as Isaiah says. And here it truly is.

But there is one little statement there in the last part of verse 3 that is tremendously important for your philosophy of history. Did you notice that it says, “And after that he must be loosed a little season.” It does not say he “shall be loosed.” It is not simply a prophecy. The Greek word expresses logical necessity. There is a logical necessity that Satan be loosed from his one thousand year incarceration.

What is the logic of it? Why must he be loosed? Why does not the Scripture say, “he shall be loosed?” Well now, if you understand the answer to that question then you understand something of the philosophy of pre-millennialism. Let’s notice the next step now. Satan shall be cast into the lake of fire. And I think we will see from this why he must be released. Let’s now turn to chapter 20 in verse 7. This is the last phase of God’s demonstration of human depravity. That’s why the Bible says he must be loosed.

You see, one of the great thing that God has been doing down through the ages is demonstrating the sin of man. No man is ever saved. No man is ever brought to Jesus Christ who does not realize that he is lost. Now, the hardest thing that God has to do, in my opinion, is to convince men that they need a savior. Only the Holy Spirit can do it, as a matter of fact. And, even he must come in irresistible grace to overrule our own objections and self-righteousness. And finally convince us that we are lost. Oh, show me a person who knows that he is lost, and I will show you a person who has been the object of the work of the Holy Spirit.

Now, God throughout the progress of divine revelation from the Garden of Eden has been over and over trying to show men that they are sinners and that they need a savior. That’s why the Ten Commandments was given. “By the law is the full knowledge of sin,” Paul said. That is why the cross took place. For, there is the final and complete revelation of the sin of man. If you want to know how wicked men are just take a look at the cross of Jesus Christ. The only good man, the only innocent man who ever lived

was nailed to a cross by Romans and Jews who represented “us.” And they acquiesced in his death. That’s the revelation of sin as well as the revelation of the grace of God.

So, he must be loosed. Why? Because, you see the age of the kingdom was an age in which Satanic activity was null and void. Man has had all kinds of excuses for his sin. And you can just see him as he said to God, “If Satan were not around; if he were not bothering us, if the old dragon were not here, we would not have sinned.” And so, we have a kingdom for one thousand years in which the Lord Jesus, rules and reigns personally upon the earth. And now, we shall see what man’s nature is really like.

After one thousand years of an ideal environment, you learn of course that the kingdom is not the full consummation of God’s purpose, the kingdom on the earth is the stepping stone to the eternal state. That is the consummation of God’s activity. Righteousness rules during the kingdom but it does not dwell in the earth and during the kingdom men are born who have within their heart rebellion against the king who reigns in person. Isn’t that amazing? That in the midst of a perfect environment, in the midst of a renewed earth, in the midst of an environment in which Satan is bound, men still within their own hearts react negatively to the Messiah who rules and reigns in perfect justice and equity.

Two things are accomplished during the kingdom, human depravity is demonstrated, the leopard’s spots cannot be changed. The sin nature is still present, it’s still propagated. By the way, I want to take a few minutes and say something about this. There are quite a few people who think that the kingdom on earth is by its very nature a carnal idea. That Jesus Christ should rule and reign on the earth just seems to be a hankering after material things rather than spiritual things. I think that this is pure prejudice.

I have a friend who was a very fine teacher of the word of God. Some years ago he was in a seminar on social ethics. And he said during the course of the seminar the professor had said that if only two goals could be reached, the abolition of war and the

attainment of social justice, the world could enjoy a virtual millennium. He said he ventured to say a word to the professor that was precisely what the Bible proposed through the coming Messiah. That the Messiah would come and he would establish justice in the earth as we have read in Isaiah chapter 42, and he would conclude all war. And the professor said that that was not a very good way to solve human problems that we should solve them ourselves. [Laughter] He was not through however. He said to the professor, he said it would seem to me perfectly reasonable, however, to allow for some supernatural help here and there for us. And the professor remained unshaken in his position.

Now if that were really true, if we should not accept any supernatural help then we should kill off all of our geniuses because our geniuses solve problems which you and I who are common people, well at least which I am a common man. I’m not sure I want to speak for you, cannot possibly solve. So, if that were true, if we should not accept help from anyone then we should kill off all of our geniuses. As a matter of fact, Jesus Christ is really one of us anyway, in his human nature. He is the divine son of God but he is also the son of man and one of us.

And I think about this, I think about the remark that Robert Louis Stevenson made when he was told of the death of Matthew Arnold who was not a believer. He said, “That’s too bad. He won’t like God.”

My friend, in one of his books, said that there was a propaganda advertisement which appeared in a radical, socialist publication and this is what it said, “Wanted: A new social order. A new sense of economic justice. A new approach to the problem of war. And a new political system. No Gods need apply.” May I just say one sentence? That is the philosophy of liberalism today. That is basically the philosophy of liberalism today. No ‘gods’ need apply. We should do it ourselves. We need no Christian help.

Now, we have the demonstration of human depravity in the release of Satan. We also have the demonstration of Satan’s incorrigibility. One thousand years in the abyss

does not change the nature of Satan. And so now in - B. The rebellion of the nations is described in verses 8 and 9, Satan is released and he goes out and he manages to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth and gathers them together to battle against Jerusalem, the holy city. But, there’s no fight this time. Fire comes down from God out of heaven and devours them and the devil is taken and cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and false prophet are. Now, here is the communion of the infernal Trinity. We talk among Christian circles of the communion of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Well, here is the communion of the infernal Trinity in the lake of fire.

It is also, by the way, the doctrine of the eternal security of Satan. For, he is eternally secure in the lake of fire. But did you notice, too, that the Bible when it speaks about the place of final judgment describes it as a lake. Have you ever wondered why? Well, the reason, I think, is this, a lake has one outstanding feature that is true of it. It has no outlets. That’s why Gehenna, that’s why the place of eternal judgment is called a lake of fire. There’s no escape. And by the way this is a verse for the annihilationists, and it’s a verse for second chancers, too. The verse says, “And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet are. After one thousand years, they are still there.”

Now, if you look at the English text you find that little word “are,” is not found in the Greek text but that is what should be supplied here. And the point is that after one thousands years they are still there. They were human beings. And then, notice “And shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.” There is no second chance for Satan. When we pass from this existence, having rejected Jesus Christ, we’re not annihilated. We’re tormented. And there is no second chance. Now is the day of salvation. Today is the accepted time.

Well, we may not have a complete solution to the problem of the existence of the devil. It is evident, however, that Satan in his activity is related to the program of the

ages. And it is through him that God reveals his great program for men and for the nations.

If you had a question to ask Satan, what would you say? Would you say to him perhaps, “Lucifer, you were the anointed cherub that covereth, you walked up and down in the garden of God in the midst of the stones of fire, every precious stone was your covering -- was it worth it? Was it worth it to rebel against God? Was it worth it to say, I will, I will, I will, I will, and finally, I will be like the most high. Was it worth it?” And then, I say to you, my dear Christian friends, that sin is just like that sin of Satan. It is the sin of unbelief that leads to rebellion and autonomous activity, independence of God. That’s what we say when we say it. We say we shall be God. We shall direct our lives rather than God.

Time’s up. We must stop. Satan’s story has been a good story. In the fall, the Lord willing, we hope to take up the doctrine of soteriology. And frankly, this is my favorite topic. And we shall discuss the *ordo salutis*. Aren’t you happy over that? [Laughter] He’s an Italian fellow who lives over in Naples. [Laughter] No seriously, the *ordo salutis* is the order of salvation. We shall take up the work of the Holy Spirit, the doctrine of election, the doctrine of irresistible grace, the doctrine of the atonement, the doctrine of the blessings of the believer, the assurance of salvation, eternal security all the way through to glorification. It’s a tremendous topic and if the Lord gives us the grace to be here and to teach, that’s what we’re going to study then.

Let’s bow in a closing word of prayer. We’re going to have a few minutes of refreshment and then in about ten or twelve minutes or so, thirteen, we shall study the 48th chapter of Isaiah, which will be our last study of Isaiah.

Let’s close in a word of prayer.

[Prayer] Father, we thank Thee for opportunity to study the word of God. And how wonderful it is to know that Thou hast given us a divine revelation, a revelation of

“Old Nick Wiped Out, or the Future of Satan and His Hosts” by S. Lewis Johnson
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Thyself first of all and we worship Thee, a great God who has manifested to us through the activities of Jesus Christ and Satan Thy grace and Thy mercy and also Thy justice.

And, O Father, deliver us from sin, independence. Enable us to learn the lesson of Satan and lean upon Thee.

For Jesus’ sake. Amen.