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# BIBLE TALK

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This week the question is: **What is the binding of Satan?**

The Book of Revelation speaks of Satan being bound:

## **Revelation 20:1-3**

<sup>1</sup> Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.

<sup>2</sup> He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is *the* Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years;

<sup>3</sup> and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while.

People assume that when Satan is bound, there will be no evil on the earth. Since there is evil occurring right now on the earth, the conclusion by many is that Satan is now currently bound.

But what we need to be asking is this: Is Satan being bound in every sense, or is he being limited in only one certain sense?

You will notice at the end of Revelation 20:3, the text says, "*after these things he must be released for a little while.*" Now, I invite your attention to verses 7-9:

### **Revelation 20:7-9**

<sup>7</sup> Now when the thousand years have expired, Satan will be released from his prison

<sup>8</sup> and will go out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle, whose number *is* as the sand of the sea.

<sup>9</sup> They went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them.

You will notice that after Satan is released, he deceives the nations of the earth to gather against the saints of God—the church. So:

- While Satan was bound, he could not deceive all the nations of the earth to band together to oppose the Lord's church.
- But after he is released from his bondage, he is then able to deceive all the nations of the earth to band together and oppose the Lord's church.

I would suggest to you that the "*binding of Satan*" means Satan is limited in how much opposition he is able to coordinate against the Lord's church.

The binding of Satan is limited to a specific sphere of activity. While he is bound, he cannot deceive all the nations of the earth to simultaneously oppose the preaching of the gospel being done by the Lord's church. Throughout history one nation might oppose the preaching of the gospel, but at the same time another nation

might open its borders to allow the gospel to be preached. You might imagine the frustration of Satan by observing those who work for Satan. While the Bible is being outlawed in American schools and government, many African nations welcome the Bible and those teaching the scriptures.

The preaching of the scriptures is how God appeals to men and women to repent and be saved (2 Thessalonians 2:14). This mission of preaching the scriptures is assigned to the Lord's church (Matthew 28:19-20). The members of the church are to witness for the Lord everywhere they go (Acts 8:4). The reason the world has not come to an end yet is because God is gracious and is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9). But one day the preaching will not be appreciated. One day in the future, after all nations have had an opportunity to adequately hear the gospel, the time will come that Satan will be released. When he is released, the prophecy says he will deceive all the nations into simultaneously opposing the preaching of the gospel. One by one all the nations will ban the scriptures and gospel preaching. When this happens and when true believers are so few in number, it will appear the devil has won.

**Revelation 20:9**

<sup>9</sup> [The nations] went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. ...

The nations of the earth are called "Gog and Magog" in this prophecy. They have all been deceived now. Simultaneously they have all banded together and they all stand in unison. The preaching of the gospel is forbidden and opposed in all the nations. The number of saints have shrunken to just a handful of faithful witnesses and this small "camp" finds itself surrounded by

the unbelieving nations of the earth. Their complete extinction appears to be certain. This is when the Lord will return and this is when the earth comes to an end.

**Revelation 20:9-10**

<sup>9</sup> [The nations] went up on the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city. **And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them.**

<sup>10</sup> The devil, who deceived them, was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophet *are*. And they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

**Q:** What is the moral of this story?

**A:** The lesson to be learned is that men and women must obey the gospel while they have time and opportunity—for the time is coming when it will be too late.

**Matthew 24:37-39**

<sup>37</sup> "But as the days of Noah *were*, **so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.**

<sup>38</sup> "For as in the days before the flood, they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark,

<sup>39</sup> "and did not know until the flood came and took them all away, **so also will the coming of the Son of Man be.**

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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