

# One Final Test

## Revelation 20:7-10

### I. Introduction: Jesus Will Fulfill ALL of His Promises

1. We open our passage today with another reference to the thousand year reign of Christ in what we call, the millennial kingdom. **As discussed previously, there are 3 dominant eschatological interpretive frameworks since Bible times.** These include premillennialism, postmillennialism, and amillennialism.
  - A. Dispensational premillennialism, **the theological framework we use**, offers the most literal interpretive approach while holding to the use of figurative tools (**such as allegories, metaphors, simile's, personifications, and hyperbole among others**) as being used in the Bible to reveal actual truths.
2. As a dispensational premillennialist, I believe that God will literally fulfill the Abrahamic covenant (**Gen 12, 15, 17**) and its related land covenant (**Deut 29, 30**) along with the Davidic covenant (**2 Sam 7, Ps 89:34-37, Lk 1:32**) and the new covenant we read of in **Jeremiah 31 and Ro 11:1, 15, 25**. **What's more, the prominence of Israel in the millennial kingdom is evidenced in many Old Testament passages such as Ezekiel 20:34-38, Hosea 2:19-20, and Jeremiah 32:36-41.** Thankfully, Jesus is faithful in fulfilling all His promises to Jew, Gentile, and Aikenite alike.
3. In the timeline of Revelation 20, we have come to the end of the millennial kingdom described in great detail in **Psalm 72**. **The church has been raptured, the dead in Christ** (including the church, the restored nation of Israel, and those that died in the tribulation period) **have ruled and reigned with Him, and the earth has been repopulated by the living believers** (who are still children of Adam) **coming out of the tribulation**.
  - A. Please note that while the narrative does NOT indicate how much time passes from the end of the 1,000 year period to

when Satan will raise up his last armies before being vanquished for all eternity, it “feels” as though it is happening pretty quickly.

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## II. Revelation 20:7-9: One Final Battle

1. We first note that Satan will NOT escape, but will be set free. This speaks of God's sovereignty AND purposefulness.
  - A. As to why, Scripture suggests he will be set free to (a) reveal the depraved hearts of mankind persist even after judgments are experienced and ideal living circumstances are established, (b) to establish the foundation of evil's unrepentance for eternal punishment, and (c) to further reveal God's holiness, righteousness, and sovereignty.
2. Next we note that Satan does what he is...he is a deceiver and he successfully deceives many across the globe...again.
  - A. This speaks of the depravity of the human heart. Some of them had witnessed history and the rest will have certainly known the stories of history's fulfillment. They will have lived under Christ's rule for 1,000 years - many out of love, but many because Christ ruled with a rod of iron (Ps 2:9). Many temptations will have been removed. The blessings will have been uncountable and the experiential knowledge of the Lord would have flourished. Yet, their wickedly proud hearts wanted what Satan was offering and so they gathered as sand on the seashore to make a final rebellious stand against Jesus.
  - B. Here I note that the amillennialists (and even “historic premillennialists” with their emphasis on prophetic passages being symbolic) position of the kingdom being “spiritual” precludes the literal rebellion we are reading of here in Revelation 20. Despite many of the events clearly NOT aligning with the battle described in Ezekiel 39 & 39, they will harmonize them to being one and the same. Note: differences include where the armies are drawn from, how they are

*destroyed (earthquake vs fire from heaven), and the events following the armies destruction.*

- C. While some believe this is a revived Russian nation, we cannot know for certainty who Gog and Magog refers to here in verse 8. **What seems clear is that they represent the same anti-Israel, anti-God character and objectives found in Ezekiel 38 & 39, which we see as happening some 1,000 years earlier in the tribulation period.**
- 3. Finally and while we don't know for certain, it seems reasonable that the "beloved city" in v9 is Jerusalem. **Satan, never one lacking for courage, determined to bring the fight to the seat of Jesus' earthly power.**

The curtain is closing on the final act. **God is done with His longsuffering.** Just as the end of the tribulation was anticlimactic, so too is the end of Satan's brief rule at the end of the millennial kingdom. **This time though, there will be no need for the birds to come and feast in cleaning things up.** With the exception of Satan himself, God simply cremates all transgressors with heavenly fire.

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### III. Revelation 20:10: The Deceiver Deceives Himself

- 1. All the way back in **Isaiah 14:14** we read of Satan's intention to be God. **A desire and deception so great as to lead to cosmic wars and countless numbers of people lost – eternally separated from God.**
- 2. In v10 Satan is cast into the lake of fire and brimstone...the permanent home he will share with the beast and false prophet (**who were cast there at the end of the tribulation period**) and his/the devil's angels (Mt 25:41) for all eternity.
  - A. There are those that say that God will never torment those made in His image forever and ever. **They say it is inconsistent with His grace, mercy, and love.** They say that the beast and the false prophet were never actually people, but systems

under Satan and man's domain. They say no human body can continually burn. They say the saved could never enjoy heaven knowing of eternal torment in hell. They say "eternal punishment" is NOT eternal, but to the end of the age (something less than forever and ever) – yet, in what is hard to square, they also say "eternal salvation" is forever and ever. They say that while the lake of fire is forever and ever for Satan, his angels, the beast, and the false prophet it is NOT for people that are cast into the same lake. Yet Christ Himself said:

**And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."**

- Matthew 25:46

- B. Some of "they" say that mankind can or will be saved out of hell. Others of "they" hold to annihilationism – or that after some God-determined time, people will simply cease to exist. The annihilationist has to deal with many texts (e.g., Jude 6, Mt 8:12., 25:30; 2 Thes 1:8-9, Re 2:11, 14:1, 20:14, 21:8; Lk 16:22-28) that indicate deprivation and not extinction. Scripture teaches the soul is eternal. Even physical death leads to a different mode of still being (not ceasing)...until one is united with their resurrected physical body.
- C. Yet, because the thought of eternal torment is so repulsive to our senses, many make what I believe to be an error in rejecting the plain reading of Scripture. God's holiness demands God's justice so who are we, finite creations of an infinite God, to tell Him what He means and doesn't mean?!

In some sense, rejecting the eternal torment of hell seems to diminish the costly grace poured out at the cross by the Son of God; He died to offer everlasting life or for non-everlasting death.

- D. Finally, I suggest the golden rule of interpretation is a great guide: "When the plain sense of Scripture makes common sense, seek on other sense, lest it result in nonsense."

#### **IV. Closing: Reject the Horror of Hell**

1. May the love of Christ draw us to Him. **May the desire for His presence burn in our hearts...**so much so that we reject the alternative of a beyond-describable-horror of hell.

# Revelation 207-10

## Discussion Prompts

Don't be shy or embarrassed, this is a safe place to talk, learn, and grow. All of us should walk with an attitude of grace and Godly love in encouraging one another to contribute to our shared growth in the Lord.

***For more discussion questions helping your faith to grow, please download the sermon documents typically posted the day after each sermon on the watch tab of our App or website.***

1. How can each person guard their hearts from the deceit of the enemy? In addition to pride, self-deception, and emotions, what are the doorways in our lives making us vulnerable to deception?
2. Pastor Jim noted that "God's holiness demands God's justice." How does understanding God's holiness help us understand the severity of sin and the necessity of judgment?
3. Does or should the nature of the lake of fire being temporary or eternal shape one's witness of Christ? If yes, how? Why do you suppose this issue (annihilationism or conditional immortality) has re-emerged in evangelical circles in recent years?

## **Revelation 20:7-10**

### **One Final Test**

#### **I. Introduction: Jesus Will Fulfill ALL of His Promises**

- Literal fulfillment of the 2<sup>nd</sup> coming and millennial reign of Christ on earth.

Additional Scripture References: Gen 12, 15, 17; Deut 29, 30; 2 Sam 7; Ps 89:34-37; Lk 1:32; Jer 31; Rom 11:1, 15, 25; Ezek 20:34-38; Hos 2:19-20; Jer 32:36-41; Ps 72

#### **II. Revelation 20:7-9: One Final Battle**

- Three reasons set was set free include (1) revealing the depraved hearts of mankind persist...even in ideal living conditions, (2) establishing the foundation of evil's unrepentance for eternal punishment, and (3) to further reveal God's holiness, righteousness, and sovereignty.

Additional Scripture References: Ezek 38, 39

#### **III. Revelation 20:10: The Deceiver Deceives Himself**

- In the ultimate act of deception, the Deceiver has convinced himself that he is or deserves to be God.
- Godly people may come to a different conclusion on these important, but non-essential matters, but it seems the "golden rule of interpretation makes good sense: When the plain sense of Scripture makes common sense, seek on other sense lest it result in nonsense.

Additional Scripture References: Is 14:14; Mt 25:4, 46; PLUS other texts the annihilationist has to deal with such as Jude 6; Mt 8:12, 25:30; 2 Thes 1:8-9; Re 2:11, 14:1, 20:14, 21:8; Lk 16:22-28.

#### **IV. Closing: Jesus is Trustworthy**

## 5-Day Devotional

### Revelation 20:7-10

### One Final Test

#### Day 1: The Faithfulness of God's Covenants

Reading: Gen 12:1-3, 2 Sam 7:8-16, Jer 31:31-34

**Devotional:** God's faithfulness transcends time and circumstance. The Abrahamic, Davidic, and New Covenants reveal a God who keeps His promises without fail. When God speaks, He acts. Throughout history, He has demonstrated unwavering commitment to His people, even when they faltered. Jesus Christ embodies the fulfillment of every divine promise—our assurance that what God declares will come to pass.

In your life today, what promises from Scripture anchor your soul? God's character guarantees that His Word will not return void. Take comfort knowing that the same God who promised Abraham descendants like the stars and David an eternal throne has promised you eternal life through faith in Christ. His faithfulness is your foundation.

#### Day 2: The Persistent Depravity of the Human Heart

Reading: Jer 17:9-10, Rom 3:10-18, Eph 2:1-5

**Devotional:** Even in ideal circumstances—a thousand years of Christ's perfect rule—the human heart proves desperately wicked apart from divine transformation. This sobering reality reminds us that external religion, favorable environments, or moral improvement cannot cure our sin condition. Only regeneration through the Holy Spirit can change us from within. The multitudes who rebel after experiencing millennial blessings demonstrate that knowledge of God without love for God produces only temporary compliance. This should drive us to grateful worship, recognizing that our salvation is entirely God's gracious work, not our achievement.

Examine your heart today: Do you follow Christ from genuine love or mere obligation? Ask the Spirit to cultivate authentic devotion that endures beyond comfortable circumstances.

#### Day 3: Satan's Defeat and Deception Exposed Reading:

Isa 14:12-15, Jn 8:44, Rev 12:7-12

**Devotional:** Satan's final rebellion reveals the ultimate futility of opposing God. The deceiver who promised equality with God ends in eternal torment, his lies exposed, his power obliterated. His brief release after the millennium demonstrates that evil, given any opportunity, will always choose rebellion. Yet God's sovereignty reigns supreme—Satan is released only by divine permission and destroyed with effortless divine power.

This truth should embolden your faith today. The enemy who whispers doubts, tempts toward sin, and accuses your conscience is a defeated foe. His destiny is sealed. Stand firm in Christ's victory, resisting the devil's schemes with Scripture and prayer. Remember: the One in you is infinitely greater than the one in the world.

#### **Day 4: The Reality of Eternal Judgement**

**Reading: Mt 25:31-46, Lk 16:19-31, Re 20:11-15**

**Devotional:** Hell's reality confronts us with uncomfortable truth: God's holiness demands justice. While our hearts recoil at eternal punishment, we must not reshape Scripture to fit our sensibilities. The same Jesus who spoke tenderly of God's love warned more about hell than anyone else. This doctrine isn't cruel—it honors human choice and divine holiness. God respects our freedom to reject Him, even unto eternity. Yet this sobering reality should ignite urgency in our hearts. People around you face this destiny without Christ.

Let this truth move you to compassionate witness, fervent prayer, and bold proclamation. God desires none to perish but all to come to repentance. Will you be His instrument of rescue today?

#### **Day 5: Choosing Christ Over Eternal Separation**

**Reading: Jn 3:16-21, Ro 10:9-13, 2 Pe 3:8-9**

**Devotional:** The contrast could not be starker: eternal life with Christ or eternal separation from Him. God's love draws us toward salvation, offering freely what we could never earn. The gospel invitation remains open today—confess Jesus as Lord, believe in His resurrection, and receive eternal life. This isn't merely fire insurance; it's entering relationship with the God who created you, loves you, and desires your presence forever.

If you have already believed, let gratitude overflow into worship and witness. If you are still uncertain, today is the day of salvation. Do not harden your heart. The same God who will judge all rebellion extends mercy now through Christ's finished work. Respond to His love. Choose life. Choose Jesus.

## Small Group Study Guide

### Revelation 20:7-10

### One Final Test

**Opening Prayer:** Begin your time together by asking God to open your hearts to His Word and give you wisdom to apply His truth to your lives.

**Opening Question:** What is one promise God has kept in your life that strengthened your faith?

**Sermon Recap:** This sermon explores the final rebellion at the end of Christ's millennial kingdom. After 1,000 years of Christ's perfect rule, Satan is released and successfully deceives nations across the globe. Despite living under ideal conditions and witnessing Christ's reign, many choose to rebel, revealing the persistent depravity of the human heart. The rebellion is swiftly ended by fire from heaven, and Satan is cast into the lake of fire for eternal punishment, joining the beast and false prophet.

**Discussion Questions:** Did the Holy Spirit prompt any questions with you? Start with those.

1. Why do you think God releases Satan after the millennial kingdom? What purposes does this serve in God's redemptive plan?
2. What does this final rebellion reveal about human nature? How is it possible that people living under Christ's perfect rule would still rebel?
3. How does this passage challenge or confirm your understanding of the millennium? What questions does it raise for you?
4. The sermon mentions that many followed Christ "because He ruled with a rod of iron" rather than out of love. What is the difference between external compliance and heart transformation? How can we examine our own motives for following Christ?
5. How does the reality of eternal punishment affect your urgency in sharing the gospel? Does it change how you pray for unsaved loved ones?
6. The sermon addresses various views on hell, including annihilationism and universal reconciliation. Why is it important to hold to what Scripture plainly teaches, even when it's difficult to accept? How do we balance God's love with His justice?

7. Read Matthew 25:41, 46 together. How does Jesus Himself describe the duration and nature of eternal punishment? What weight should Christ's own words carry in this discussion?
8. The closing emphasized that "the love of Christ should draw us to Him." How can we cultivate a faith motivated by love rather than fear? What practices help you grow in your love for Christ?
9. If the reality of eternal separation from God is true, how should that change:
  - a. How we live daily?
  - b. How we prioritize evangelism?
  - c. How we pray?
  - d. How we view our own sin?
10. What comfort do you find in knowing that God will ultimately fulfill all His promises? How does the faithfulness of God in prophecy strengthen your trust in His other promises?

### **Key Takeaways:**

1. God's Sovereignty is Absolute - Satan doesn't escape; he is released according to God's purpose and timing.
2. Human Depravity Runs Deep - Even after 1,000 years of perfect rule, many hearts remain rebellious when given the opportunity.
3. Deception Remains Powerful - Satan's nature as deceiver doesn't change, and hearts not truly surrendered to Christ remain vulnerable.
4. Eternal Consequences are Real - Scripture consistently teaches that hell is a place of eternal, conscious separation from God.
5. God's Justice Reflects His Holiness - We cannot diminish the reality of hell without compromising God's holiness and justice.

**Practical Applications:** Query the group for applications first...you may explore one or more of those.

1. Spend time this week reading through the passages mentioned about eternal judgment (Jude 6, Matthew 8:12, 25:30, Luke 16:22-28, Revelation 14:11). Journal your honest thoughts and feelings, bringing them to God in prayer.
2. Examine your heart: Are you following Christ out of love or obligation? Ask the Holy Spirit to deepen your love for Jesus.

3. Make a list of three people in your life who don't know Christ. Commit to praying for them daily this week.
4. Look for one opportunity this week to share the hope of the gospel with someone, motivated by love rather than fear.
5. Have a conversation with another believer about the hope of Christ's return and the reality of judgment. Encourage one another toward faithfulness.
6. Consider: Is there someone in your life living in rebellion against God? Reach out to them in love this week.
7. Spend time thanking God for His faithfulness in keeping His promises throughout Scripture and in your life.
8. Praise God for His holiness, justice, and mercy demonstrated through Christ's sacrifice on your behalf.

**Closing Prayer:** Pray together for...

- Hearts that burn with love for Christ
- Boldness to share the gospel with those who need to hear
- Unsaved loved ones to come to faith
- Gratitude for God's faithfulness and mercy
- Understanding and acceptance of God's perfect justice

## **Discussion Questions**

### **Revelation 20:7-10**

### **One Final Test**

1. How does the reality that human hearts remain depraved even after 1,000 years of Christ's perfect rule challenge our assumptions about what it would take for humanity to choose righteousness?
2. What does Satan's release and subsequent deception of countless people reveal about the nature of free will and humanity's ongoing need for God's transforming grace?
3. If people who witnessed or knew of Christ's millennial reign still chose rebellion, what does this teach us about the insufficiency of ideal circumstances alone to change the human heart?
4. How should the doctrine of eternal punishment in the lake of fire shape our urgency in sharing the gospel and our gratitude for salvation?
5. Why do you think God allows this final rebellion at the end of the millennium rather than immediately ushering in the eternal state after the tribulation?
6. What comfort or warning do you draw from the fact that God's promises to Israel through the Abrahamic, Davidic, and New Covenants will be literally fulfilled?
7. How does the anticlimactic nature of Satan's final defeat demonstrate God's absolute sovereignty and the futility of rebellion against Him?
8. In what ways does Satan's self-deception about becoming like God mirror the temptations and deceptions we face in our daily lives?
9. How should the reality of eternal torment affect the way we think about God's holiness, justice, and our finite understanding of His infinite nature?
10. What does the progression from Satan's binding to his brief release to his eternal punishment teach us about God's patient but certain justice?

## **Dinner Conversation Starters**

### **Revelation 20:7-10**

### **One Final Test**

1. The sermon describes a future moment when Jesus will fulfill all His promises during the millennial kingdom. How do promises and their fulfillment play a role in our own lives and relationships?
2. Discuss the idea of a "final test" for humanity as mentioned in the sermon. Why do you think it's important for people to face challenges or tests, even when living in ideal circumstances?
3. The preacher talked about literal versus spiritual interpretations of biblical passages. How do we decide when to take something from the Bible literally or interpret it as a metaphor? Can you think of examples where this distinction matters?
4. In the sermon, Satan is described as a deceiver released for one last stand. What lessons can we learn about trust and deception from this narrative, especially in our personal lives?
5. Considering the ultimate judgment and eternal consequences discussed in the sermon, how do these concepts influence our understanding of justice and mercy? How do they affect the way we make decisions and treat others?

# Family Conversation Guide for Children & Early Teens

## Revelation 20:7-10

### One Final Test

#### AGES 5-7: SIMPLIFYING THE MESSAGE APPLICATION POINTS

1. **Trust and Deception:** Discuss the concept of trust and how it relates to friendships and family. Explain that just as Jesus is always truthful and keeps His promises, we should aim to be truthful in our interactions.

*Discussion Question:* Can you think of a time when you told the truth, even if it was hard? How did it make you feel afterward?

2. **Making Good Choices:** Reinforce the importance of making good choices by relating it to the idea of following Jesus' teachings, just like how some people chose to follow Him even in the story.

*Discussion Question:* What is one good choice you made today that made Jesus happy?

3. **Understanding Promises:** Talk about promises: making them and keeping them, much like the covenants mentioned in the sermon.

*Discussion Question:* What is a promise you've made to someone, and how does it feel when you keep your promise?

#### AGES 8-12: BUILDING UNDERSTANDING APPLICATION POINTS

1. **Learning from History:** Use history as a tool for learning about the future, much like the people in the sermon learned from Jesus' reign.

*Discussion Question:* Can you think of a lesson from history or your own past that helps you make better choices today?

2. **Standing Up for Truth:** Discuss the importance of standing up for what you believe is right—and how sometimes it means going against the crowd.

*Discussion Question:* Have you ever felt pressure to go along with a group even when you knew it wasn't right? How did you handle it?

3. **Responsibility Online:** Apply the idea of making wise choices to interactions online by encouraging reflection on what we share and consume digitally.

*Discussion Question:* How can you ensure what you read or watch online is trustworthy and aligns with your values?

## AGES 11-15: DEEPENING THE CONNECTION APPLICATION POINTS

1. *Influence and Peer Pressure*: Explore the influence of peer pressure and the strength needed to go against the flow, just as some individuals chose to follow Christ despite temptations.

*Discussion Question:* What strategies can you use to resist peer pressure in both real-life scenarios and online?

2. *Eternal Impact of Choices*: Discuss how choices can have lasting consequences and relate it back to digital footprints and relationship building.

*Discussion Question:* What are some examples of how your digital choices can impact your future? How do you ensure you're making positive ones?

3. *Justice and Mercy in Relationships*: Delve into understanding the balance between justice and mercy, especially in resolving conflicts with friends or family.

*Discussion Question:* How do you think justice and mercy can both play a role in resolving disagreements with your peers? Can you share a time you showed mercy or received it from someone else?

### **Tips for Parents**

- Be patient and listen: Give your child time to think and respond.
- Relate to everyday life: Use real-life examples and stories familiar to your child to make abstract concepts more tangible.
- Encourage questions: Let your son or daughter know it's okay to ask questions, even if things don't make sense right away.
- Share personal insights: Tell a personal story about a time you experienced these themes, adapting as needed for age appropriateness.

# Family Conversation Guide for Teens and Young Adults

## Revelation 20:7-10

### One Final Test

#### 1. Rejecting Deception and Embracing Truth

Biblical Application: Ephesians 4:25: "Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body."

Scenario: You notice a popular influencer spreading misleading information on social media, causing confusion among followers.

Discussion Question: How can you respectfully address deception in digital spaces, and what role does speaking truthfully play in building a trustworthy online community?

#### 2. Building Godly Relationships

Biblical Application: Proverbs 18:24: "One who has unreliable friends soon comes to ruin, but there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother."

Scenario: A friend is going through a tough time but hesitates to confide in the group for fear of judgment.

Discussion Question: What actions can you take to assure your friend that they are supported and can trust you, and how does this strengthen your relationship according to the verse?

#### 3. Standing Firm in Your Faith

Biblical Application: 1 Corinthians 16:13: "Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong."

Scenario: During a group discussion at school, a topic arises that challenges your deeply held beliefs.

Discussion Question: How can you respectfully express your beliefs in a way that remains true to this verse while fostering open dialogue and respect for differing opinions?