

# THE ENEMY'S LAST DEFEAT

## A SERMON

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“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.” Revelation 20:9

SUCH is to be the last attempt of the adversary, when the limitations under which he now is shall be in a great measure taken away; but those limitations are to be taken away only for a little season. And so, you will find that there are two kinds or two orders of little seasons, standing one over against the other. The one is that the triumph of the wicked, the triumph of the adversary, is but for a little season, is but for a moment and therefore, however many circumstances of the kind we may have during, our life, they cannot last long, they are but for a little season. And just so, on the other hand, the tribulations of the people of God are but seasons of tribulation, and those little seasons. “If need be, you are in heaviness for a season,” and “these light afflictions, which are but for a moment, shall work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.” So that, whatever may be the nature of this ultimate attempt of the adversary; or whether, as I said last Lord’s day morning upon the subject, there will be any bloodshed or whether there will not, this chapter is not clear upon that, and therefore we will not assume anything, but remain within the range of positive testimony, and then we shall be safe. After describing, as we did last Lord’s day morning, the camp and the city, we have this morning to notice, first, *the invasion of the adversary*; “They went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city;” and then, secondly, *the destruction of the adversary*; “And fire came down from God out of heaven and devoured them.” We have, then, but these two things to notice, the invasion of the adversary, and the judgment of God upon that adversary. There is something in our subject to encourage the man who is a lover of the truth of God, and of the Christ of God, and of the people of God; something to encourage such; and something just to throw a little warning in the way of those, and in the paths of those, that are adversaries, in any shape or form whatever, unto the people of the living God. He has given the declaration, “Touch not my anointed, and do my prophets no harm;” and any man who is determined to run counter to that scripture will meet the very doom which the latter part of our text describes.

Now, in noticing *the invasion of the adversary*, this ultimate invasion of the adversary at the end of this thousand years, that is, the end of this present gospel dispensation, we must notice, first,

that which he invades, namely, the earth: "They went up on the breadth of the earth." We are not, of course, to understand the earth here as meaning the earth we inhabit, as meaning the globe at large, there would not be any sense in that: "They went up on the breadth of the earth." We must, therefore, see if we can find a scripture that will explain to us what is meant by the earth, and what is meant by the adversary going up on the breadth of the earth. We come to the 8th of Isaiah, and there we get an explanation. Hence, it is there said, relative to the invasion of the Assyrians, "The stretching out of his", the king of Assyria's armies, "the stretching out of his wings shall fill the breadth of your land, O Immanuel." So that the Assyrians were to come into Canaan, and they thus were to fill the breadth of the land, which did literally come to pass. And you see how Hezekiah committed himself and the people into the hands of the Lord, and you see how the judgment of God fell upon Sennacherib's army; you see how the Lord protected and took care of his little few. There you have an illustration of our text. We must, therefore, take the land, not in the literal but in the antitypical sense; and what the land of Canaan was to the Jews literally, the Lord Jesus Christ and gospel standing by him are unto us spiritually. We must, therefore, trace this out in the first part very carefully, in order to understand what that is that the adversary so deceives men about as to get them to attempt the destruction of the same. Now the earth, therefore, has an allusion to the land of Canaan, and it means Christ Jesus, and that which we have by him. Just take, for instance, as a kind of sample, four characteristics of the land of Canaan. First, it was a land of rest; it was the place where the Israelite was to rest. And Jesus Christ, in allusion to this, says, "Come unto me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." You will, therefore, see that the land here, the earth here, means the new earth; it is called in another place the new earth, the kingdom of Christ, and that it is a land of rest. Now just take the Israelite entering into that rest, and then apply that to our circumstances spiritually. What a beautiful illustration it is of eternal things. Here is the Israelite; he is, released from Pharaoh, he is released from slavery. Just so now; here is a poor sinner under the dominion of Satan; here is a poor sinner under the powers of darkness; but the soul of this poor sinner is made alive, and he feels the bondage, he feels the wretchedness. The paschal lamb was introduced, and by that paschal lamb their victory over Pharaoh was obtained; for though Pharaoh pursued them after that, he could not touch them after that, he never did touch them after that. Just so now, we are brought unto the knowledge of Jesus Christ, and by faith in his precious blood we have victory over the adversary. The adversary would hold us in slavery and in bondage; but by the precious blood of Jesus we are released from all bondage and are made eternally free. This is one part of that from which the Israelite was released; and so now we are delivered from the powers of darkness; and the powers of darkness, which once made us blind to what Christ has done, cannot make us blind any longer to what Christ has done; the powers of darkness, that kept us in blind enmity against what Christ has done, the powers of darkness, that once caused us to turn, not our faces, but our backs towards the Lord, saying, "Depart from us; we desire not the knowledge of your ways", the adversary cannot now get us into that position; we want to go back to Egypt no more for ever; we have bid it one eternal farewell; we see a better country; we behold the land that is good, the land that is pleasant, and we see that rest is good, and into that rest by precious faith our souls shall come, for there remains a rest to the people of God; and the people of God are a people that receive the Christ of God, that overcome the adversary by the blood of the Christ of God, and sing, even as they pass through this valley of tears, "The righteous shall hold on his way."

Second, the Israelite was released also from Sinai. He came to Sinai, and he entreated that that voice should not be spoken to him anymore. Ah, when I hear a man mix up law and gospel;

carnalize the law, and legalize the gospel, and preach as though salvation was, in whole or in part, by the doing of the creature, I can recognize the fact that that man is dead and blind to his condition as a sinner. He has never been brought to Sinai; he has never known really and truly the voice of God's law; if he had, instead of preaching that to others, he himself would entreat that that voice may not be spoken unto him anymore; for, with his enfeebled, depraved nature, he cannot endure that which is commanded. But when the Great Law Fulfiller steps in as the end of the law, that Jesus Christ is the end of the law unto every one that believes, such a one will say, "Lord, I believe; help you my un-belief." This is what I want; to go away from that which I cannot endure, that I might live in that which I can endure. I cannot endure the commandment of the law, but I can endure Calvary's cross. I can endure the promise and the precept of the gospel. I cannot endure God's wrath, but I can endure his love, I cannot endure his eternal indignation, but I can endure his eternal mercy, and rejoice that that mercy endured forever.

Third, the Israelite was released, not only from Egypt and Sinai, but also from the wilderness. And so, after our release from the powers of darkness and from Sinai, there is a great deal of wilderness work. You will experience much solitude, and much barrenness, and much deadness, a rough and thorny road, fiery flying serpents, and many things you will meet with to alarm you before you get really acquainted with that liberty that is in Christ. But now the Israelite steps out of the wilderness into the promised land. And this is a type not only of death; we may hold it also as a type of that gospel liberty into which we are brought. Now, some of you perhaps can recollect the time when you stepped out of your wilderness wretchedness into the paradisaical blessedness of Christ, and you realized peace and realized rest, realized what you wanted. Ah, you say, wilderness, wilderness, I thought that you would have destroyed me; but now I have found the promised land, and I have found the promise too; for the promise of God is yea and amen in Christ Jesus; and now I am in that sense, though still in the wilderness, that is, still in the world, though not of the world, and still in a wilderness nature, still that is not my portion; I have a better country in which to live, namely, Christ Jesus the Lord. There we become released; there we come into a land where there is the pure river of water of life flowing on in winter and summer, and flowing on when days and nights shall cease; this river shall flow on to eternity; a tree whose very leaves must be very fragrant and excellent, for they are for the healing of the nations; and whose fruit is immortal. It is, then, into this land that the soul is brought.

Fourthly, when the Israelite was brought into the land, he rolled away the reproach of Israel. They were reproached before, first, as being slaves. Why, you are only miserable slaves. And then they were reproached as wandering about and having no city to dwell in. Why, what a poor moping thing you are; why did you not remain in the world where we are, and be contented with the leeks, and onions, and fleshpots of Egypt? See how happy we are. Ah, so I see how happy the rich man was too, when he was placed where you advise me to be placed, and I see what he was at last, when he lifted up his eyes in hell; and God forbid that that should be my fearful end. And so, the reproach is now rolled away; it can be no longer said of the Israelite that he is a slave; it be no longer said of him that he has no city to dwell in. It is true, it may be a little humbling to our pride, but it is very blessed to our souls and very glorifying to our God, that we have got this land of release from slavery, from Sinai, from the wilderness, from reproach; we got it certainly not into possession by our own sword, neither did our own arm save us; for if it waited for that, we never should have succeeded; but your right hand, and your arm, and the light of your countenance, and because you had a favor unto us. Such, then, is one feature of the land of the gospel. So then, poor

sinner, if you would obtain rest from the old dragon, from the old serpent Satan, it must be by this precious faith in the overcoming blood of the Lamb. If you would obtain release from Sinai, and I may just throw in a digressive remark here; that remember this: if you are not brought to Sinai; that is, if you are not brought unto judgment while you are in this world, and made to feel your need of Christ, you will be brought unto judgment at the last great day, when the door of mercy will be closed, and closed forever; it will indeed then be said, "And the door was shut." So that everyone that shall be saved shall be brought, while in this world, to know their need of Christ as the end of the law for righteousness. So if you would, in accordance with the law, and justice, and holiness, and counsels, and word of God, obtain freedom from the law of God, it must be by faith in Jesus Christ, who is the end of the law for righteousness; and if you would obtain freedom from a wilderness state it must be by an entire exchange of things. As they exchanged the wilderness for the promised land, you must undergo a complete exchange of things; you must renounce all confidence in the creature, and Christ must become your all and in all. And here you may rest. Satan cannot reach me here; the law will not attempt to reach me here; the wilderness shall not reach me here; the people shall go across the Jordan, but the wilderness shall stay on the other side: and reproach cannot hurt me here, for there is no reproach in Christ; reproach is gone, and he shall present us without blame, unblameable, unreprouchable in his sight. But I must not give way to this too much, my favorite subject, lest I enlarge too much upon one point. The land then means this land of release. Then, secondly, the land of Canaan was a land of plenty to the Israelites; their garners were full, affording all manner of store, and when they kept in covenant with their God no breaking in, no going out, there is no complaining in our streets. Now, if a person is ill it is very natural to complain; or, if you have not much to eat and drink it is very natural to complain; or if you are annoyed in any way it is very natural to complain. And so, when it is said there is no complaining, it indicates a state of health and a state of plenty, and not an adversary nor an evil occurrent from Dan to Beersheba, it is said on one occasion. And that temporary state of things is a type of that perfect peace we have in Christ Jesus the Lord. "You shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God that has dealt wondrously with you, and my people shall never be ashamed." Then, third, it was a holy land. And so, this gospel state of things is a holy state. Sanctified of God the Father. He takes us by the great act of eternal election into oneness with Christ, and there God the Father holds us. That is the origin of sanctification, that is sanctification relatively. Secondly, the Lord Jesus Christ took the sins of those that were given to him thus by the Father, and that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate; makes it a holy land. Third, the Holy Spirit brings life into the soul, and separates us from an ungodly world, and consecrates us, body and soul, to God, and we become thus manifestively and evidentially a holy people, and we stand in Christ Jesus, and we rejoice in holiness; we rejoice in the downfall of all the departments of the adversary, and rejoice in the prevalence of mediation in all those departments essential to our welfare

And then, fourth, it was a pleasant land, called the pleasant land; and so it was, especially when in that state I have just now referred to, in Solomon's day; a pleasant land literally, not an adversary or evil occurrent. And so, in this gospel land, in Christ. Oh, "how fair" in Christ Jesus, "and how pleasant are you, O love, for delights." And how fair and how pleasant is the blest Redeemer, and how good and how pleasant it is for Jesus Christ and his brethren to dwell together in unity; and how fair and how pleasant is Zion. Zion is beautiful for situation; she is situated in God's love, in God's salvation, and in God's presence; her very name is Jehovah Shammah, "the Lord is there." Such, then, is the new earth, such is the land, the rest, the plenty, the holiness, and the pleasantness.

I can hardly go on now without one more word, and that is this; the more you can enter into this rest that is in Christ, and the more you can live upon the bread of eternal life, the fruits that are immortal, and the more you drink of the river of God's pleasure, drink into his Spirit, that is the idea and the more you are consecrated to him, and the more pleasant these eternal things are to you, the happier you will live, and the happier you will die. What David said to Jonathan will apply to a much higher source, with a correspondingly increased force; "very pleasant," if David said this of Jonathan as a friend, especially as a friend in the faith as well as a friend naturally, how much more shall we say it relative to Jesus, "Very pleasant have you been unto me; your love is wonderful." Here, then, my hearer, is that pleasant land all centering in Christ Jesus.

Now, the adversary has from age to age tried to spoil our rest, and tried to rob our threshing-floors; and he did rob the typical threshing-floor; but he cannot rob the antitypical threshing-floors, except rob them of the chaff, he might run away with hypocrites, perhaps, and the sooner the better; but he will never be able to rob the floor of any of the wheat, no. Though they be sifted among all nations, as corn is sifted in the sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall to the earth. He will gather the Wheat in and if he gathers it in who can take it out? You must take it out of his hands, and I would not have you try to do that, for you will never succeed. He has taken us out of death's hand, and Satan's hand, and sin's hand, and the law's hand, and adversity's hand; but none can ever take us out of his hand; "No one shall ever pluck them out of my hands."

I believe that every grain to him is that that he will never part with, that he will never lose. He will gather the wheat into his garner. "Happy is the people that is in such a case; happy is the people whose God is the Lord." Here, then, affording all manner of store; no breaking in and no going out. Such is the land which the adversary has ever stood opposed to. He does not like to see us rest in the Lord, does not like to see us living upon these eternal things; he would rather see us with the swine, trying to be satisfied with his husks; he does not like to see us consecrated to God, and he does not like to see the things of God made pleasant to us. I will say one thing for Satan. He has done all that he could do in all ages to make the truth of God unpleasant to the people of God; he has in all ages reproached the truth and slain the prophets. And Jesus Christ was very pleasant to the disciples. Ah, they said, what a person is this; look at his testimony, look at his miracles, look at his life, look at his love, look at him altogether. Very pleasant, so pleasant, that when he gave a hint of parting from them, though only for a time, sorrow filled their hearts. Ah, says Satan, I will make him appear very unpleasant to you; he shall be reviled, his reputation shall be taken away, and the main body of the people shall by the craft of the devil be turned against him; he shall be crucified between two thieves, and everything done that can be done to make him unpleasant. But with all their doings they could not make the disciples hate Jesus Christ. The poor disciples staggered, it is true, but they could not hate him; with all their faults, they could not do that.

Well, now, the time will come when Satan will make his last attempt. It does not mean he never has made the same kind of attempt. Perhaps the manner of his invasion may be fourfold; a word upon that presently. Now he is called in this chapter Gog and Magog. Magog, as you learn in the 10th of Genesis was one of the sons of Japheth; and it is, therefore, a kind of paternal name that has descended to many of the nations of the Gentiles, Scythians, and many ancient nations stood under that character, or were nominated by those terms, as you see in the 38th and 39th of Ezekiel, Gog and Magog pointing to those nations that came against the people of God. And the word.

Magog itself signifies “a covering,” and it does very nicely to characterize the adversary; he wants to cover the whole truth up, to hide it, put it out of sight. Put that Jesus Christ out of sight, put that election out of sight and put predestination out of sight; let us cover the whole of it up; but we shall not accomplish this unless we destroy these high-doctrine people, for as long as they live they will bawl about the decrees; and as John Wesley said of us, he called us bawlers about the decrees and as long as they live, we shall not be able to cover these doctrines up. Now Satan has succeeded to a very great extent in covering these things up. And so here is his final attempt, when at the time there will be very, very few Christians upon the earth, when the enemy shall thus fill the breadth of the land. Gog and Magog, therefore, are figurative terms that will apply to all gone by and to present and to future foes. There may, perhaps, be four ways in which they may come against the church. First, by fraud. What a system of fraud is Arminianism; it defrauds the soul of the truth. What a system of deceit is duty-faith-ism; it adulterates the gospel, casts in the leaven of hell, and corrupts the truths of the new covenant. What systems of fraud are Popery, Mahometanism and all false systems; and they are framed according to the nation in which they are. When Satan sees that one system of fraud is too gross, he immediately adopts one more refined. Why, when we look at Catholicism, for instance, we do not know what Catholicism is in this country; they are obliged to behave themselves here; but if we could witness it as it is in foreign countries, we should stand aghast. They cannot be here what their religion is capable of, because happily the laws of the land do not allow it. Hence we all rejoiced, at least I did, five or six years ago, when a parcel of monks and apostate Protestants went over to Rome and were running about our streets without shoes and stockings on, and our Queen very properly sent out a proclamation, and told them, to go decently along the streets or not at all and they have been obliged to be a little decorous since that, and put their shoes and stockings on. Fraud is the object to work upon the ignorance and the superstitious feelings of human nature, and to introduce their fraud to the notice of the people, familiarize the people with it, till they cease to hate it, and then down with Christ, and down with the truth, and up with the devil. Now, perhaps, then, at the last, when this great attempt shall be made, it shall be first by fraud; and then, secondly, by authority. What, will you attempt to question the authority of a fire-shovel hat, and a parson with an apron on? There is the authority, sir. But what authority shall the Christian own but the authority of heaven. Call no man on earth master; for one is your master, even Christ. Call no man on earth in these things father; for one is your Father, which is in heaven.

So, I say, they may come against the church, as they have done before, by fraud and then by ecclesiastical authority; and then they get some besotted idiot, or drunken sort of king and they get him to use his secular power, his political power, to enforce their fraud and ecclesiastical authority; and if these three will not do, then in comes the military. Hence, Charles the Fifth of Germany, more than 300 years ago, what a number of battles he engaged in to make all people think alike! And at last he got so sick of killing people, that he abdicated in favor of his son, retired into private life, and turned watchmaker, Charles the Fifth of Germany. And he was determined to make every watch go alike, and he kicked them about his house because they would not, and that made them go worse still. And one day he thought, What a strange thing it is I can't make these watches go alike! I thought I was one of the most ingenious fellows in the world, could do anything, and have made a great noise and havoc. Ah! what a fool I have been in my time! How many have I killed to make people think all alike, and I can't make half a dozen watches go alike! Yes, I can't make two go exactly alike. And so, he thought, Now, the best way is, in order to get these watches to go alike as near as possible, to so deal with them as not to hurt them. Let me regulate them, and treat them

kindly, and that may coax them into some approach to each other; but I find knocking them and kicking them about will only make them go the worse. And so, it has been in an ages. If you would bring conviction into a man's mind, you must deal with him as an intelligent creature, as a responsible being; you must not attempt to step between God and man, but you must show him God's word, and leave the man in the hands of the Lord; and if, by this means of working conviction into the minds of men, we do not bring about unity, it can be brought about in no other way. The Lord does not bring about ultimate unity in his people by violence. No; he convinces one and all of his people of their state as sinners; they one and all confess their state; he convinces, them, one and all, that they must be saved by Jesus Christ, and by Jesus Christ only; and they all, therefore, confess Jesus Christ, and crown Jesus Christ Lord of all. He makes them, one and all, know that they are saved, from first to last, by his grace; and the top stone shall be brought home with shouting of grace, and grace unto it. He makes them all know this, and so there shall be unity. Now, the devil deceives people. Ah! he says to the king of Assyria, Go and fill the breadth of the land. And so, he did. So here they filled the whole breadth of the land, that is, the whole compass of God's truth; rob us of the rest we have in Christ.

Now, then, with regard to this invasion ultimately, as to the extent of suffering on the one hand, and the inroads made on the other, I know not. He shall go up upon the breadth of Gods truth; but, as the king of Assyria, how far did he come? Up to the city, and there he was stopped. He could come no further. He could fill the breadth of the land, put a negative upon all the truth of God; but, ah! these high-doctrine people have a stronghold somewhere, and that is their beloved city, Jerusalem. If I forget Jerusalem, my stronghold, my city of eternal safety, the city of my God, let my right hand forget her cunning, and let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, if I do not prefer this happy, this heavenly, this free, this eternal Jerusalem, above my chief joy. Here, in the gate of Jerusalem, we speak with the adversary, despise all his powers. And I will tell you how the adversary was met, as a type of how he shall be met in the future. This message came: "The daughter of Zion," whom Hezekiah. calls "the remnant," and so, just as the world shall end, there will be but a remnant of believers then, very small remnant. That I have shown before, instead of being what people call a vast number. Why, this chapter represents the end of the world, or that period, as being filled with Gog and Magog, that is, the enemies. They are in the four quarters of the earth, while the people of God are represented as a camp, to denote their fewness; and, secondly, as a city, to show how they are shut up. So much for the evangelization of the world. But here is a remnant. And "the great king," "the great king!" "Thus, says the king of Assyria, the great king." And so those men set the name of Sennacherib over against the name of God; and in their estimation, the name of Sennacherib was greater than the name of God. And how did the daughter of Zion meet him? "The daughter of Zion has despised you." A daughter despises me! What, a poor, weak thing like that despise me? What, despise the king of Assyria? Yes, a thousand kings of Assyria. What, despise all my armies? Ten-thousand armies. Well, I hope she has not been light and trifling over it then. Well, I will tell you this, She has laughed you to scorn, and has shaken her head at you. The daring little hussy! Has she done that? The daring little hussy! I hope she will never be married then. She is married, sir, and her Maker is her husband; the Lord of hosts is his name, her Redeemer; the God of the whole earth shall he be called. It's no use for you to forbid the banns of marriage now; the business is done and cannot be undone. Ah! say you, that's the reason that makes her so saucy then. Of course, it is. She has despised you, and laughed you to scorn, and shaken her head at you. And just as the daughter of Zion had thus honored God with her cheerful confidence, an angel came with a blast, and a hundred and fourscore and five

thousand, nearly a quarter of a million of the Assyrian army were destroyed in a moment, without an Israelite lifting a finger. They lifted up something better than a finger; they lifted up their hearts in prayer to God, and God heard and answered, and fire came down out of heaven and devoured the adversary. And so, shall it be at the last. This is the land, then, that I have described, and these are the powers, and this is the invasion, and here is the judgment. I have a great many things more to say; I will just mention two or three, and then you see, in the 10th chapter of Leviticus, that fire came down from heaven upon the adversaries of the priesthood, and devoured them. They came with strange fire, that is, strange doctrines. You see that the adversaries of the prophet Elijah, and they were adversaries to God's truth, fire came down and devoured the two fifties. You see, as we have already seen, that Sennacherib was an enemy to the land, and to the city, and how he was blasted. It is a fearful thing to be an enemy. I will say nothing of Ham, who published the faults of Noah his father. Noah was a man that found grace in the eyes of the Lord, and Ham found a pleasure in publishing his father's faults. I will say nothing of the curse that came upon Ham and his posterity, and rests upon them to this day. I will say nothing of Jezebel, that threatened the prophet, and how she came to the dogs, as everyone who would injure God's people must. I will say nothing of Alexander the coppersmith, that did Paul much evil, and was rewarded according to his works. But I will say this, it is a great mercy to be delivered from the spirit of antipathy and enmity against the truth and the people of God; to feel too much love to them to hurt one straight or crooked hair of their heads and to feel we would rather forgive and bury a thousand faults, than be the means of injuring them through any infirmities and faults they have. "If you forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your heavenly Father forgive you your trespasses."