

The Revelation – Heavenly War is Brought to Earth

Today we will continue our study of The Revelation by looking at the twelfth chapter, which says:

- (1) And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars:
- (2) And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.
- (3) And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads.
- (4) And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.
- (5) And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and *to* his throne.
- (6) And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred *and* threescore days.
- (7) And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels,
- (8) And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven.
- (9) And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.
- (10) 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 Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.
- (11) And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.
- (12) 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 that he hath but a short time.
- (13) And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man *child*.
- (14) And 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 a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.
- (15) 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.
- (16) 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.
- (17) And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Once again we have a section of Revelation which appears to be sort of an aside, giving us a picture so that we can understand the remainder of the book. We begin this chapter

with a look at a vision of a woman. Clearly this is not a literal woman, but is a figure of something much greater. Is she Israel according to the flesh? Is she the Church? Is she the redeemed of all ages? These are questions which are hard to be explained. Now I realize that there are those who will make arguments for each of these. I believe, though, that we lose focus if we focus on the woman. The real focus should be upon her seed, as I'll talk about a little more before.

The next character that we have is none other than the serpent himself, Satan. We're going back in time at this point to see where Satan was cast down from Heaven to Earth. Clearly this resulted in an escalation of the war. No longer could Satan take the fight directly to God, but he would fight him here on Earth.

Satan specifically focused in on the seed of the woman. You see, Satan wanted to devour Jesus from the very beginning. His attempts failed and he became even more angry. He began a persecution of the Church during the first century AD.

God's protective power is clearly indicated in this Scripture. It appears that during the final Tribulation period that Satan will wage an all out war against the saints of God. The time will come when the person who kills you will think that he does a service to God (John 16:2). You see, the god of this world will not allow anyone to live who will not worship him. This is the true Tribulation, the time that Jesus calls Great Tribulation. This is also the time when God is protecting his people.

As Satan see's that he can't touch Jesus he begins to make war with the remnant of the woman's seed. Now the woman only had one child, so the remnant of her seed can only mean those who have put their faith and trust in Jesus Christ. Satan is making war with the body of Christ on Earth, the Church. It does not appear, though, that Satan makes any headway against the saints. You see, God's protection is upon his people during this time.

Now I'm not saying that there will not be Christians who are put to death during the Tribulation period. I believe that it will be entirely the other way – many Christians will be beheaded. After all, Jesus told the martyrs under the altar that they would have to wait for other martyrs who would come after them. I do believe, though, that such death will be easy for the true believer.

There may be many Christians who do not head the call of God to come out of the wicked land. These will certainly be the first to suffer the consequences. When we see the abomination which brings desolation in the holy place we are to know to listen to the Lord's call to flee Satan's snares. We are to await the final battle.

In the end Jesus Christ will come to Earth and win the final battle. It is my prayer that you are on the winning side. If not, I encourage you today to call upon the name of the Lord before it is too late.

Yours in Christ,

Bro. John Rich