



The Dragon, The Child, and The Woman

Revelation 12:1-17



The Revelation of Jesus Christ Dragons, Children, and The Woman Revelation 12:1-17

Main Idea: God's victory is secure and nothing can stand against Him.

Throughout the bible, we gain the perspective from earth of God's intervention and rescue plan for mankind. Throughout the entirety of scripture, God remains the star as He saves those receive Him. Yet, for the most part, this is told through the perspective of the physical. In Revelation 12, John is given a glimpse of the spiritual story. We gain great detail as to the consequences of the devil's rebellion in heaven, how he came to earth, and ultimately what he will endure. Some parts of this chapter seem to be almost a flashback of events from the past while others still are to come. Often times, from the perspective of man, it seems as though the battle is still ranging onward between God and man. We worry about what we face and that the trials and temptations of the world will be the end of us as the devil tempts us. However, we must remember that Satan, for all his accusations, has no reign or power outside of what God allows him to. The church, no matter what, will be eternally safe against the attacks of Satan as long as the church remains and pursues the One, True Savior.

The Great Dragon

One of the more common terms for Satan is to refer to him as the accuser. He stands before God pointing out our sins and flaws to God in an attempt to remind God of the law He created. Sometimes the accusations will be lies and, being fully fair, sometimes the accusations will be accurate representations of our sinful nature. Satan levies accusations against mankind in an effort to bring death to the beloved creation made in the image of God. Yet, God's intention is not to punish His children but do everything in His power to ensure they can be in continually relationship with Him until eternity. What good is an accusation of sin when the blood of the lamb paid the consequences fully. Man is saved by the blood of the lamb and the word of our

testimony. We confess openly that when Jesus Christ died on the cross that the actions counted for us and that Jesus Christ is our Lord and Savior. No accusation can overcome the fact that the consequences of a guilty sentence has been fully paid by Jesus Christ. When the church understands the true nature of the Great Dragon, we can rest assured that, for however strong the Great Dragon may be, no victory awaits it. Nothing, whether the Revelation of Jesus Christ is intended as literal or as figurative depict, can unseat God from the throne as we stand in the presence of God, saved by the blood of the lamb and the word of our testimony.

Furthermore, the text makes it clear that the devil has a full understanding of His fate. John describes the dragon as understanding that his time is limited on earth. The first portion of his judgment resulted in Satan and those who follow him resulted in being cast out from heaven. With the sweeping of his tail, one third of the stars in the sky, likely angels, fell with him. While we tend to understand this as a cosmic battle, this could not be further from the truth. The battle is already won and the fate of Satan is secured. As the child is born, even though the dragon attempts to destroy the child, the attempts do not succeed. Upon that realization, the dragon then turns its attention to the church. The dragon cannot overcome the lamb because the blood of the lamb has achieved the victory. Satan, then, seeks to destroy the church, by causing them to doubt their faith, become irrelevant or ineffective, and overall seeks to encourage their own destruction. Chaos and death becomes the goal when ultimately, the dragon understands his fate will send him to the bottomless pit.

The Woman

There is some debate as to what the woman represents in this depiction. For some, they believe it to be Mary, the mother of Jesus. Others see it as a representation of the church and still others as a representation of the Jewish people and Israel. It is the opinion of this author that all of these contain an element of truth and each presents an element of interpretational difficulty. What is clear, however, is the fact that Jesus comes in the line of true believers from their midst. Some would assume that the

protection of the woman for the 1260 days is indicative of the time that Mary and Joseph fled for their protection, but the dates and times here would not make sense. Nor would it be consistent with the idea of the three and a half months previously mentioned in chapter eleven (likely a connection to the prophecy in Daniel). Furthermore, to imply that, with the imagery of sun and stars being a reference to only the nation of Israel would discount a fair amount of the New Testament and Gospel extending to the whole of mankind. As Paul writes to the church in Rome "For not all who are descended from Israel belong to Israel (Romans 9:6, ESV).

Throughout the course of human history, there runs a string that ties and connects the true believers of God. During the Old Testament, this mainly stayed with the people of Israel (although others came in here as well). During the New Testament, however, the true believers included those from Israel and beyond. Christ came in the midst of the church. Everything before the birth of Jesus pointed towards the coming of Christ and everything after demonstrated a transformed faith through the power of God having become incarnate. It is likely the woman represents the church in both Old and New Testaments. There is dignity from being clothes in the sun and stars, the Savior comes from their midsts as one of them (rather than as an outsider) and ultimately protects them during the time of persecution.

Discussion Questions

- How does this chapter reveal the character and person of God?
- What will ultimately happen to the dragon? Does the dragon understand this? Why do you think so?
- Do you find any hope or encouragement about Satan knowing his days are numbered and finite? Why?
- When have you needed encouragement to resist temptation or face persecution for your faith? How does God provide this?
- What does it mean that we are saved by the blood of the lamb and the word of our testimony? How does the blood of the lamb save us?
- Who should our testimony point to? What is the difference between a testimony about God and a testimony about ourselves?
- In what ways do we join with the believers who have come before us? What does it mean that we are united in the faith of those who have come before us?