

Revelation #33**April 2, 2023****Series Title: The Revelation of Jesus Christ: Behold I Am Coming Soon****Today's Message: God Saves His People!; Revelation 12:13-17**

While thinking of how to briefly review what we have studied so far in Revelation 12 I had what seemed to be a random memory come to the forefront of my mind. I heard a preacher say, "When Jesus went up, the Holy Spirit came down, and the Church went out." So, when Jesus ascended to Heaven, the Holy Spirit was sent down to indwell believers, and the believers, being filled with the Spirit, went out into the world to begin fulfilling the Great Commission.

So, how does that relate to Revelation 12 and our study so far? Well, in this chapter we have the dragon going up into heaven to hurl accusations against the brothers— Satan goes up. Then, the dragon is hurled down to the earth— Satan goes down. Then, in his fury he goes out into the world to persecute the tribulation saints consisting of both Jewish and Gentile believers. That is Revelation 12 in a nutshell.

The takeaway from last week for me was that no accusation can stick to a believer no matter how true it may be. We are washed clean before God through faith in the shed blood of Jesus Christ. So, perfectly cleansing is His blood, so perfect is His righteousness, which God imputed to us, that there is now, therefore, no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus! And the tribulation saints will overcome the accusations and the torments of Satan in the last hours of tribulation in the same way we do: by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony.

But that doesn't mean that there is not an ongoing conflict. And Revelation 12:13-17 takes us to the very events of the last half of the Great Tribulation. The attacks are no longer being waged in Heaven because the dragon, Satan, has been hurled to the earth. No, Satan turns his rage and wrath against the remnant Jewish believers and against Gentile believers who come to faith during the tribulation and who have survived the previous seals and trumpets. And, you know what? Regardless of the intensity of the threat of death and torture, these remnant believers have courage to the very last! For, "they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death!" (Rev. 12:11c)

In these last verses of Revelation 12 three major attacks are initiated on earth by the dragon . Two that are directly against the woman. And one that is mercilessly directed against "the rest of her children."

Let's get to it.

I. (12:13-14) The First failed attack by Satan against the woman.

A. First, what are some reasons for these attacks

1. Satan having been cast out of heaven and hurled to the earth permanently loses access to heaven.
 - a) Presumably, this occurs at the sounding of the seventh trumpet (11:15, 12:7)
 - b) And he is filled with fury because his time is short (12:12:c)
 - c) **And He wants to destroy God's credibility by preventing God's promised salvation to Israel.**
 - (1) If Satan decimates the earth and crushes the hopes of the remnant Jews from patiently waiting for their King to sit on David's throne, then he can discredit the power and promises of God.

B. The First attack

1. (12:13) Having been hurled to the earth Satan sets his sights on the woman.
 - a) Woman: symbolic for Israel
 - b) "He pursued the woman."
 - (1) Literally, hunted her down.
 - (2) Her child (symbolic of Christ) was "snatched up to God and to His throne" (12:5b)
 - (3) Nevertheless, Satan hunts, hotly chases after.
2. (12:14) The woman takes to flight
 - a) She was given two wings of an eagle (no doubt symbolic)
 - (1) Wings speak of deliverance to safety
 - (a) Ex. 19:4: "You yourselves have seen what I did to Egypt and how I carried you on **eagles' wings** and **brought you to Myself.**"
 - (2) The wings describe the Lord's protection.
 - (a) Psalm 57:1: "Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me, for in You my soul takes refuge. I will take refuge **in the shadow of your wings** until the destructive storms pass by."
 - (b) **Lesson: God's people are under His protection even in the midst of the storms of life and of Satan.**
 - b) She escapes to "a place in the desert where she would be taken care of for a time, times, and a half time out of the serpent's reach."
 - (1) Where in the desert? Daniel 11:41 gives a clue:
 - (a) "He (Antichrist) will invade the beautiful land. Many countries will fall, but Edom and Moab and the leaders of Ammon will be delivered from his hand."

- (i) This leads many to think this would mean that she will find safety east of Jerusalem in the area once known as Edom. In this area was a famous fortress city called Petra, which was carved in the cliffs of Edom.
- (2) God will supernaturally provide for the fleeing remnant!
 - (a) Surely God can still provide “manna from heaven!”
- (3) “Time, times and a half time”
 - (a) 1 year + 2 years + 6 months= 3 ½ years
 - (b) Rev. 11:2: 42 months, or 3 ½ years
 - (c) Rev. 11:3: 1,260 days, or 3 ½ years
- c) Kept out of the reach of the serpent
 - (1) God keeps the remnant tribulation saints from every plan, device, attack– Satan can not reach them to harm or kill them!
 - (2) **Lesson: God will take care of you.** You may feel the pressure of persecution and many storms of life, but it cannot swallow you up!

II. (12:15-16) The Second failed attack by Satan against the woman.

- A. The serpent (symbolic of Satan) spewed water (also symbolic) to drown the woman.
 - 1. To sweep her away; to cause her to disappear!
- B. But God! He causes the earth to help by swallowing the river (symbolic).
 - 1. Just like in the first attack God provided supernatural provision and protection, so here God provides supernatural swallowing up of the armies of Satan.
 - a) Think back to when Israel crossed the Red Sea and the Pharaoh and his armies were swallowed by the sea (Ex.14:26-28)
 - (1) In the song of Moses in Ex. 15:12, he sings, “You stretched out your right hand and **the earth swallowed them.**”

C. Lesson: God has always fulfilled His saving promises. He has, He is, and He will!

III. (12: 17) The Third failed attack by Satan against the rest of the children of the woman.

- A. Enraged by his failure the dragon (Satan) turns away from the woman (Israel) and turns his wrath against the rest of her children.
 - 1. Who are “the rest of her children”.
 - a) First, the word “rest” should remind us of:
 - (1) Christ of Revelation 12:5: “...a son, a male child, who will rule all the nations with an iron scepter.”
 - (a) But he was snatched away to the throne in heaven.
 - (2) The believing Jewish remnant hidden away from harm.

- b) The “rest” would include everyone who is living at this time who name Jesus Christ as both savior and Lord!
- c) Furthermore, these tribulation believers are faithful:
 - (1) They obey God’s commandments
 - (a) The Greek word used for commandments here is frequently used by John in His Gospel and his epistles in reference to the commandments given by Jesus.
 - (i) See John 14:12, 15,21;15:10, 12; 1 Jn 2:3-4; etc.
 - (2) They hold to the testimony of Jesus
 - (a) His Person
 - (b) His teaching
 - (c) His Saving Work: His victory over sin and the devil, and the salvation of His people through His death on the cross. This would also include His resurrection and the gift of the Holy Spirit.
 - (d) His Lordship of the believer
 - (e) His coming to reclaim a Kingdom for Himself. This includes the final judgment and eternal incarceration of Satan and his angels.
 - (f) His right to judge the living and the dead.

B. Lesson: The attack against “the rest of her children” is described in the following chapters. But, one thing we know, our great God and Savior will see to it that those He has saved will not be lost! This is true for the future tribulation saints, and it is true for us, the Church on earth today. As James wrote to the Church, “Be patient until the Lord comes!” (condensed from James 5:7-8).

IV. Application

- A. Satan hates Jesus Christ. By unleashing a furious assault his intent must be to nullify the prophetic promises of God for the salvation of Israel and prevent the remnant believing Jews from coming to faith! If he can thwart God’s promises concerning the Jews...
 - 1. Through Zechariah God says about the Jews, “They will look upon **Me** (Christ), the One they have pierced, and they will mourn for Him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for Him as one grieves for a firstborn son.”
 - 2. Paul writes in Romans 11:25-26 that “all Israel”, that is, the believing remnant of Israel will be saved— each and every one.
- B. It must be Satan’s intent to discredit God. **For** if during the savage attacks of Satan upon the elect Jews, God loses one, or one whom God has chosen— even one, chosen before the foundation of the world fails to come to faith, it would be God’s saving power failed!
 - 1. It must be the design of Satan to nullify the promises of God. Think of it:
 - a) Jesus promised, “...I shall lose none of all that He (the Father) has given Me, but raise them up at the last day!” (John 6:39)
 - b) **If Satan can prevent even 1 of God’s elect from God’s remaining in God’s saving purpose Satan discredits the power and word of God!**
 - (1) **God has elected His people according to His eternal decree.**

(a) This includes the remnant of believing Jews who came to faith or will come to faith during the tribulation.

(2) For God to lose even one to Satan's fury and wrath would mean that no one is safe!

(a) Not even you!

c) But if you have come to faith in Christ you are safe in Him.

(1) God's promises are sure! If you've trusted in Jesus to save you from the penalty of sin. If you've trusted in Jesus to be your righteousness— your purity before holy God you can be sure that He will keep that which He's committed to keep: even your soul!

(2) Jesus promised: "All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and whoever comes to Me I will never drive away." (Jn 6:37)

(3) READ Ephesians 1:2-11

(a) 2:11 KJV: "**In whom we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things after the counsel of His own will.**"

d) Jesus is our Perfect Savior. He has no flaw.

(1) Jesus declared in John 14:30: "I will not speak to you much longer, for the prince of this world is coming. He has no hold on Me"

C. So, as we come to the Lord's table, in light of Revelation 12:13-17 rejoice that we have a faithful God who has saved us, is saving us, and will keep us saved no matter what Satan may try to do.

D. And it is wonderful to think that though Satan should throw all his fury and wrath at the remnant believers of the Great Tribulation, **Christ has regarded their helpless estate** and will keep them!

1. We made the point a moment ago that if Satan can prevent even **1** of God's elect from coming to salvation through faith, or if can snatch **1** from the hand of the Father and of the Son then God loses all credibility.

a) John 10:28-30: "I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; **no one can snatch them out of My hand.** My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; **no one can snatch them out of My Father's hand.** I and the Father are one!"

2. And, God is a jealous God! He will finish what He started before the foundation of the world. He will save His people from their sins through Jesus Christ.

a) Matthew 1:21: "You shall call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins."

3. Do you know Him today?

- a) For, “Everyone who calls on the Name of the Lord shall be saved!”
(Romans 9:13)