

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

The War With the Dragon

Rev. 12:7-12

INTRODUCTION:

Just as we are about to enter into a new year, the passage of scripture this morning is going to enter mankind into a new age, a new dispensation.

All Stand and Read Scripture

Revelation 12:7-12 (NASB)

⁷ And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. The dragon and his angels waged war, ⁸ and they were not strong enough, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven. ⁹ And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. ¹⁰ Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying,

“Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, he who accuses them before our God day and night. ¹¹ And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death. ¹² For this reason, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them. Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he has *only* a short time.”

Prayer

Understanding Revelation 12 all depends on what criteria you use to establish **when** it will (or has) taken place. But once you know **WHEN** this prophecy is taking place, you can learn a powerful message about God's faithfulness.

ILLUSTRATION:

Modern day Americans are used to time zones. We even put up with having to reset our clocks twice a year for Daylight Savings Time. But back in the early 1800s, America had 1000s of time zones. Back then, every city set their clocks based on when the sun was at “High Noon”. One city might have their clocks set at 12 Noon, while another city a few miles away might say the time was 12:08 or 12:22.

Now that wasn't much of a problem until the railroads came along.

In 1869 the US completed the first transcontinental railroad line connecting the country from coast to coast. But they soon had a headache with scheduling because there were more than 300 local sun-times to choose from. It led to a lot of confusion. Railroad managers tried to address the problem by establishing 100 railroad time zones, but this was only a partial solution to the problem.

Operators of the new railroad lines needed a new time plan that would offer a uniform train schedule for departures and arrivals. So, the Railroad companies divided the nation into four times zones and basically forced all the local cities to set their clocks by Railroad time on November 18, 1883. That way everybody knew exactly what time it was, and no one had to guess as to when the next train was going to arrive.

The railroads learned firsthand how impractical it can be for people to have their “own” time zones.

When it comes to reading the book of Revelation there’s a multitude of different views on what the book is saying - and many of those views depend upon folks using their own “time zones”. It is important that we let the scriptures talk to us. We must be careful not to force the scriptures to meet our preconceived belief.

Many teachers are so committed to their own personal “time zone” on prophecy that they are often willing to completely ignore context to make Scripture fit their theology.

BODY:

I. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A NEW AGE.

Revelation 12 is very clear as to WHEN this prophecy was fulfilled. Verse 12 is literally God’s clock that tells us what time zone we’re in. Notice what it says:

Revelation 12:10 (NASB)

¹⁰ Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying,

“Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, he who accuses them before our God day and night.

So, if you could figure out when the salvation, power, kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ would (or did) come, then you’d be able to piece the rest of the prophecy together.

Well, you’re in luck! Scripture does tell us of the timing. And they have already come.

I first want to go back to the prophecy in Daniel that prophesied about the kingdoms to come including an eternal kingdom that would reign over all.

Daniel 7:13-14 (NASB)

¹³ “I kept looking in the night visions, And behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming, (As we learned in Revelation 1:13 a few weeks ago, it is important to note that the only time that "coming with the clouds of heaven" and "Son of man" are used together in the Old Testament is here in Daniel 7) **And He came up to the Ancient of Days And was presented before Him.**

Where is the Ancient of Days dwelling? The Ancient of Days is God. He is in HEAVEN!

So here is the question. Where did the clouds of the Son of man take Him? HEAVEN!

Whenever we read "**And behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming,**" what do we immediately think of?

Christ's second coming, right? Jesus coming from the heavens to the earth.

But Daniel says "No!" "**Coming in the clouds like a Son of man**" is coming from the earth and going to Heaven!

Isn't that what it says? Let me read it again.

"I kept looking in the night visions, And behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming, And He came up to the Ancient of Days And was presented before Him.

The clouds take Him to the presence of the Ancient of Days in Heaven! Then we read verse 14. **This is the point!** Every time that the phrase "**Coming in the clouds like a Son of man**" is used it is used as kingdom language. Listen to verse 14.

14 "And to Him was given dominion, Glory and a kingdom, That all the peoples, nations and men of every language Might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion Which will not pass away; And His kingdom is one Which will not be destroyed.

What is that describing? The establishment of the kingdom! God gave Christ dominion, Glory, and a kingdom when He came from earth and appeared before God in Heaven.

Now! I want to ask the question, when did Jesus go from earth to Heaven in a cloud? **(Repeat)** When did Jesus go from earth to Heaven in a cloud? **THE ASCENSION!**

When did Jesus' kingdom get established? **When He went to heaven in a cloud!**

It is very important to understand what Daniel is telling us here in order to make sense of Revelation. The kingdom was established by Jesus' death on the cross and his resurrection. John uses this passage in the Old Testament to describe the establishment of the everlasting kingdom that will not be destroyed.

Now let's look at it from the New Testament scriptures one step at a time:

• **Has salvation come?**

YES! Paul tells the Christians in Corinth -

2 Corinthians 6:2b (NASB)

2...Behold, now is "the acceptable time," behold, now is "the day of salvation"—

And again he writes to the Ephesians:

Ephesians 1:13 (NASB)

13 In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation— having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise,

Salvation exists... right now! You received it when you became a Christian.

• **So salvation has come... has power come? YES!**

Romans 1:16 (NASB)

¹⁶ For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the **power** of God for **salvation** to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

The power of God exists... right now through the gospel! The gospel tells us that Jesus came to earth, died, was buried, and rose again on the third day for our salvation.

• **Has the Kingdom come?**

(PAUSE) Again YES!

Colossians 1:13-16 (NASB)

¹³ For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

We are in the KINGDOM...**right now!** It is an eternal kingdom. And that Kingdom gives us God's **power** and His **salvation!**

• **And how about Christ's authority? Has He received it? YES!**

Ephesians 1:19b-23a (NASB)

¹⁹...*These are* in accordance with the working of the strength of His might ²⁰ which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly *places*, ²¹ **far above all rule and authority and power and dominion**, and every name that is named, not only in **this age** but also in the one to come. ²² And **He put all things in subjection under His feet**,...

Jesus has authority RIGHT NOW. When Jesus rose from the dead, He ascended into heaven and was seated at the right hand of God and NOW HE has AUTHORITY over all things.

So, the **salvation** and the **power** and the **kingdom** of our God and the **authority** of His Christ **HAVE COME!** And that means, that the prophecy of Revelation 12 has already taken place.

So, let's look at the prophecy.

II. **THE WAR IN HEAVEN.**

Revelation 12:7-9 (NASB)

⁷ And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. The dragon and his angels waged war, ⁸ and they were not strong enough, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven. ⁹ And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.

Who is the dragon?

Revelation 12:9 tells us that he is “the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world;”

We see Satan and his angels waging war against Michael and his angels in heaven. This is a war had been brewing for a long time.

The war represents the conflict...

- between Eve and Satan,
- between Israel and idolatry,
- between good and evil,
- right on through the time of Christ.

Satan was trying to establish himself as a power in heaven. As Christ rose victoriously and took up His throne in heaven, SATAN WAS CAST DOWN! So heaven was glad and rejoiced!

According to the vision, Satan knew Jesus was coming and he camped out in front of the woman when she was giving birth.

Revelation 12:4b (NASB)

4...And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she gave birth he might devour her child.

Did Satan actually do that? Oh yeah!

There were a couple times when Christ was born and several times during His ministry that Satan tried every trick he had to take Jesus out. He tried killing Him, deceiving Him, discrediting Him... but nothing worked.

When all else failed Satan unleashed his ultimate plan. He arranged to have Jesus crucified. Of course, what Satan didn't know was that that was part of God's plan all along.

It was in the crucifixion of Christ that Satan sealed his own doom.

Hebrews 2:14-15 (NASB)

¹⁴Therefore, since the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise also partook of the same, that through death He might render powerless him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, ¹⁵and might free those who through fear of death were subject to slavery all their lives.

Jesus died for our sins and freed us from the fear of death. This broke the back of Satan's power over us.

However, once Satan realized his ultimate plan had failed...Once he realized that Jesus had NOT STAYED in the grave but had risen from dead and ascended on high...the Devil apparently decided he could take heaven by force.

So there was a war in heaven. But he failed and was cast to earth.

III. THE WAR ON EARTH.

Revelation 12:17 (NASB)

¹⁷ So the dragon was enraged with the woman, and went off to make war with the rest of her children, who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus.

This verse shows **WHY SATAN FIGHTS** so hard against the Church. He was thrown down to earth and he turned his rage on us. He wages war against us because we have obeyed God's commands and we held to the testimony of Jesus.

(Pause)

Now why tell us this story?

Why tell us how Satan planned to destroy Jesus...and that he now has plans for us?

Well, a couple things come to mind.

- **We need to know that Satan IS REAL... and he is a dangerous enemy.**

The story here in Revelation 12 tells us about what motivates Satan - He's out to get you!!!

1 Peter 5:8 (NASB)

⁸ Be of sober *spirit*, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

He's looking to take you out - so be aware, be alert, and be self-controlled. Satan doesn't like you because he doesn't like Jesus. So don't be surprised when he comes knocking on your door.

BUT... there's something else God wants us to see here.

- **Satan is a dangerous enemy, but he's always operated under a disadvantage.**

Revelation 12:4 tells us "(Satan's) **tail swept away a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth.**" Most scholars believe that the stars refer to the fallen angels who followed Satan in rebellion.

You know what that means? It means that Satan's outnumbered --- 2 to 1. But even if he weren't outnumbered... he was never a match for God.

But now he's been thrown down from heaven and he's coming after us! And WE are no match for Satan.

- It doesn't matter how well you know the Bible, Satan knows it better.
- It doesn't matter how strong you are, Satan is stronger.
- It doesn't matter how clever you are... yeah, he's cleverer.

But there's one thing we have that he can't deal with. There's one set of weapons that will stop him in his tracks.

Revelation 12:11 (NASB)

¹¹ And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death.

Jesus reveals through John how we are able to overcome Satan, the Great Red Dragon.

We are able to overcome because of the Blood of Lamb, because of our testimony, and because Christ eliminated the need for fear of death. We know that even if we are killed for our faith, in the end WE WIN! These weapons will bring him down. They will OVERCOME him.

CONCLUSION:

What a lesson we draw from this passage of scripture! Because of Christ's death on the cross and His resurrection, Jesus has been give authority over all heaven and earth. He has established a new kingdom. When we accept Christ as our Lord and Savior, we become part of His eternal kingdom. Our testimony and faithfulness even unto death will allow us to overcome.

ILLUSTRATION:

A writer told a story about a zoo attendant and a wildcat in a zoo.

"As I stood there," he said, "an attendant entered the cage through a door on the opposite side. He had nothing in his hands but a broom. Carefully closing the door, he proceeded to sweep the floor of the cage."

The worker had no weapon to ward off an attack by the beast. In fact, when he got to the corner of the cage where the wildcat was lying, he poked the animal with the broom. The wildcat hissed at him and then lay down in another corner of the enclosure.

The writer remarked to the attendant, "You certainly are a brave man."

"No, I ain't brave," he replied as he continued to sweep.

"Well, then, that cat must be tame."

"No," came the reply, "he ain't tame."

"If you aren't brave and the wildcat isn't tame, then I can't understand why he doesn't attack you."

The man chuckled, "Mister, he's old -- and he ain't got no teeth."

May your New Year's resolution be to more effectively use Christ's weapons of war against Satan in order to overcome! Against these weapons "he ain't got no teeth"!

He is Lord!