

Defeating the Enemy

Revelation 12:1-12

9/30/07

Intro

As we study through the book of Revelation, we have been given a look into heaven. John described the throne of God and the One sitting on it having a scroll upon which was written the edicts and declarations of the events of the last days.

John also saw Jesus who was worthy to open the scroll and to break the seven seals with which it was sealed; each seal revealing awesome events of the Tribulation seven year period that is coming in the near future.

The seventh seal was broken and it revealed seven angels with seven trumpets, each revealing cataclysmic events that will destroy and devastate the earth as the wrath of God is poured out.

But John was also shown that in the last days, Satan will also have a terrible role in world events. He is shown in chapter 12 as the serpent of old, the devil, Satan. He is mighty in power, that much is certain, and he desires to destroy, knowing that he only has a short time.

But we must also understand that we are called to be overcomers; we do not have to be defeated and in fact we are given everything we need for spiritual victory.

Here we will gain insight into who our enemy is and how we can be victorious in our spiritual life before God.

I. There was War in Heaven

- We read in these verses that two signs appeared in heaven. The first sign was Israel who we see in verse 5, is the one who gives birth to Christ Jesus.
- The second sign was a great red dragon who we know to be Satan. It is very important to see that

these two signs appear here because they both are crucial in understanding last days events.

A. Satan has been thrown down

- The history as well as the future of Satan is in view here. We know that Satan was originally known as Lucifer, the greatest and most powerful angel.
- His was the sin of wanting to be like God.

Isaiah 14:12-14, How you have fallen from heaven, O star of the morning, son of the dawn! You have been cut down to the earth, you who have weakened the nations! But you said in your heart, “I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God, and I will sit on the mount of assembly in the recesses of the north. I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.”

- There is another scripture in Ezekiel where Lucifer is seen as the power behind the king of Tyre. It's very important to note him being the power behind wicked world leadership.

Ezekiel 28:12-15 the power behind King of Tyre

- After Lucifer sinned he created a rebellion in heaven and a third of the angels joined with him in an angelic war and they were thrown to the earth where they deceive the nations.

Illus – The Mormons falsely teach that Lucifer was brother to Jesus, both being sons of God born through one of God's many wives in heaven. Both presented a plan;

Lucifer's plan was that no one would have free will. God rejected his plan so he rebelled and a third of the angels rebelled with him.

B. He has seven heads and ten horns

- In verse 3, Satan is seen having seven heads and ten horns. This is very significant for several reasons.
 - These represent that he is the power behind world leaders and nations.
 - The antichrist is also seen in **Revelation 13:1-2** described the same way.
 - In **Revelation 17:9-14** we see that the seven heads seven mountains which are seven kings. Five have fallen (Assyria, Babylon, Mede, Persia, and Greece) one is (Rome), and one is to come (Antichrist).
 - The ten horns represent the revived Roman Empire which was ten kingdoms. The European Union of 27 nations today takes up much of the ancient Roman Empire, but there are other clues to follow.
 - The antichrist will arise from a ten nation alliance, will destroy three and then rise to lead them all.

Daniel 7:19-27 The ten kingdoms under Satan's influence

Note – Rome is a city of seven hills, but interestingly so is Moscow. There are other cities as well that are on seven hills such as Jerusalem, Seattle, and Lynchburg, Virginia. Only Rome actually fills the other descriptions, however.

C. He longs to destroy Israel

- The first sign John saw was Israel from whom Christ will come. He will rule all nations. (Vs 5)
- Through Satan's influence, Israel has been the target of terrible persecution and many have desired to completely destroy Israel.
- At times it seemed their existence was holding by only a thread, but God has always made a way where there seems to be no way.

Illus – I recently read the book 1776 by David McCullough where he describes our nation holding by a thread as it fought against the British. But that was nothing in comparison to what Israel has endured to become a nation that endures.

- Why does Satan desire to destroy Israel? From her comes the one who will rule the nations.

Isaiah 9:6-7, For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; and the government will rest on His shoulders; and His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace. There will be no end to the increase of His government or of peace, on the throne of David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and righteousness from then on and

forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will accomplish this.

II. Be Aware of the Enemy's Schemes

- We are given insight in several places of scripture regarding the fact that Satan desires to steal, kill and destroy.
- It's critical that we understand our adversary and the schemes he would use to destroy.

A. He deceives the nations

- The deception could be placed into two main categories, one being religious and the other not.
- The deception in religion is seen in what we could call "the lie." This is as old as Satan Himself, 'We can be gods,' or we are gods now.

Illus – Many caught the wave of change in the 60's when the Beetles starting bringing Hinduism into modern culture. The Hindu belief is that we are gods but are unaware. Some even worship themselves.

- Many false religions are based on the 'lie' that we can be gods. Hinduism and Mormonism being the most common.
- The other deception is the opposite, 'you don't need God.' You need to be the center of your own life; your pleasure and fun is more important than anything else.

I John 5:10-12, the one who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed in the

testimony that God has given concerning His Son. And the testimony is this; that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have the life.

B. He is the accuser of the brethren

- In verse 10 John wrote, "The accuser of our brethren has been thrown down."
- What's interesting to note here is that he doesn't even have to make things up. He doesn't need to lie about us; all he needs to do is to point out the truth to accuse us.
- Many people have been defeated by being constantly reminded of their failings.
- The problem is that our failures are only part of the story; we must have an answer in our hearts when we are accused.
- The answer is that my standing before God is not based on my actions, but on what Christ has done for me on the cross.
- My sin is now paid for by the blood of Christ, therefore who can condemn me?

Romans 8:33-35, Who will bring a charge against God's elect? God is the one who justifies; who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress,

or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

III. These are the Keys to Victory

- John wrote that the saints overcame the serpent of old and then gives three ways that was done.

A. By the blood of the Lamb

- This is the answer to all of Satan's accusations. No need to argue whether we did bad or not, because we did.
- Knowing the truth is what sets us free and is what gives us the victory.

John 8:31-32, So Jesus was saying to those Jews who had believed Him, "If you continue in My word, then you are truly disciples of Mine; and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free."

Ephesians 6:11-14, Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand firm therefore, *having girded your loins with truth.*

B. By the word of testimony

- What is your testimony? One of the most powerful things we can say is to tell people what God has done for us.
- When that is then seen in our lives is very powerful.

Illus – I read recently of a young man who was being trained as a Hindu leader, but who then came to Christ. It was watching the difference Christ made that was convincing. Ten out of thirteen in his home became Christians.

I John 5:11, And the testimony is this, that God has given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son.

C. By dying to self

- John wrote that they did not love their life even to death, in other words, they had died to themselves.
- That was what made them alive to God.
- Jesus said that we should take up our cross and follow Him. He also said that it is in dying that we live.

Galatians 2:20, I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.