

THE REVELATION

LESSON 20: THE WOMAN AND THE DRAGON (12)

Intro:

What if there really was something like Ghidorah?

Greek mythology has a horrible serpent, Python, which tries to kill Apollo, son of Zeus. Apollo later kills Python.

BIG IDEA: God _____ His people despite the wrath of the most _____ enemy.

The Sign in Heaven

¹ And a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. ² She was pregnant and was crying out in birth pains and the agony of giving birth. ³ And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads seven diadems. ⁴ His tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven and cast them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she bore her child he might devour it. ⁵ She gave birth to a male child, one who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron, but her child was caught up to God and to his throne, ⁶ and the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, in which she is to be nourished for 1,260 days.

- What John sees in heaven is a _____, it is symbolic of something.
- The woman is decked out in _____ bodies. She is _____.
(see Genesis 37:9-10)
- But she is about to give _____.
- Another _____, or symbol appears, the great red _____ ready to _____ the child.
- The dragon has horns representing _____ and crowns representing the power of the _____.
- The child's identity is clear. He is the fulfillment of _____ . He is the Messiah- _____.
- The child _____ to heaven to sit at the _____ hand of God the Father.
- The woman is the _____, the true _____, from which Messiah has come.

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- She wears a _____ because the _____ reigns with Christ.
- She has to flee into the _____ where, like Elijah, God nourishes her for 3 ½ years.

Historicist	Preterist	Futurist	Idealist
<p>Some see this a “retrogressive”, a departure from the time line. This is a second set of visions. The first dealt with the outward realities of the church. This series with the internal realities of the church. The woman is the true church, the child represents the children of the church. The dragon represents Imperial Rome which seeks to prevent the children of the church from realizing their destiny. It is often identified as referring to the reign of Maximim (313) while 2/3 of the church received protection under Constantine. The enthronement is the enthronement of Constantine over the whole empire in 324.</p>	<p>There are 2 main preterist interpretations. First, the full preterists believe that the rest of the book still refers to the destruction of Jerusalem. The first series of vision reveals the power of the Lamb in judgment on Jerusalem. This new series of visions shows the church in conflict with the powers and principalities. Partial preterists see this as the churches conflict with Rome. This chapter is the transition from Israel to Rome (under the power of Satan) as the main persecutor of the church. Both camps see the Woman as OT, faithful, Israel, the Child as Christ and the Dragon as a combination of the 4 beasts in Daniel. The flight of the woman represents the flight of the faithful from Jerusalem prior to its destruction. The dragon then continues its war against the church. The 3 ½ years</p>	<p>This section chronologically precedes the consummation. Roman Catholic interpreters view the woman as Mary in her “post-assumption” role as Queen of Heaven. Some cults, founded by women, identify her with their leader. Most see the Woman as Israel and the Child as Jesus. The heavenly bodies reflect Joseph’s dream (Gen. 37). Non-dispensationalist see her as the “messianic community”, the faithful remnant in Israel. The dragon, though seen as Satan, is associated with the revived Roman Empire at the end of time. The anti-christ persecutes Jews during the Great Tribulation. Hal Lindsey sees the great eagle as representing a massive airlift on their behalf to find safety in the U.S.. The 3 ½ years refers to the last half of the Tribulation. So the</p>	<p>This is the beginning of a new act (actually 11:9 is probably the beginning). This is about the birth of Christ and His ascension & enthronement. The 7 heads represent a universal authority, and the horns point to military strength. The 3 ½ years represent the church age in which God continues to provide for and sustain His people.</p>

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	is the time frame for the Jewish War and Nero's persecution of the church.	vision jumps from 30 AD to some time still in the future. The church dispensation is totally excluded. Ladd has a more idealist approach.	
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Historicists- _____ Time Lines

4-11 _____ Realities

12-19 _____ Realities

Preterists- _____ Time Lines

4-11 _____ as the source of persecution

12-19 _____ as the source of persecution

Talk it Out: What are the strengths or weaknesses of the various views? Which help us make more sense of the passage?

“Herod’s action was the first in a series of satanically engineered attempts to prevent the accomplishment of God’s salvation.” **Vern Poythress**⁶⁵

“The crown on the demon’s heads in 9:7 imply that the devil works his will through earthly kings by means of demonic forces.” **Greg Beale**⁶⁶

The War in Heaven

⁷ Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon. And the dragon and his angels fought back, ⁸ but he was defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. ⁹ And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. ¹⁰ And 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 brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God. ¹¹ And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death. ¹² Therefore, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them! But woe to you, O earth and sea, for the devil has come down to you in great wrath, because he knows that his time is short!”

- John describes a war in heaven between angels _____ and _____.
- The _____ seems to be with God and the faithful angels.
- Michael, leading the faithful angels, triumphs over the dragon.

⁶⁵ Poythress, pp. 136.

⁶⁶ Beale, pp. 634.

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- The identity of the dragon is revealed- _____. He was thrown to the _____.
- A loud voice declares that the Messiah, the Son of Man, has taken up His throne.
- Though Satan _____ Christians, they prevail by the _____ of the Lamb.
- The heavens rejoice, but earth will experience the _____ of the _____ for a short time.
- The red may point to _____, the blood he spills to _____ the church. Jesus shed his own blood to _____ the church.
- If we love this life _____ than Christ (and eternal life), we will be _____ to endure persecution.
- The testimony of Jesus should move us out of an idolatrous view of this life and set our hope in the next.

Read Daniel 10. How is Michael described? Does this help us to understand Revelation 12? How?

“The devil no longer had any basis for his accusations against the saints, since the penalty that they deserved and that he pleaded for had at last been exacted in Christ’s death.” **Greg Beale**⁶⁷

Historicist	Preterist	Futurist	Idealist
<p>This is often taken out of heaven and placed on earth. Some say this is the church’s struggle with Julian the Apostate (361-3). When he died he said “O Galilean, thou hast conquered! The establishment of the kingdom refers to Rome under Christian rule though from time to time heretical persecutors arose. It culminates in the rise of the Papacy. So this is a bit of a rewind.</p>	<p>The war is not chronologically after the flight into the wilderness. Chilton & Russell see Michael as Jesus (not like JWs do). He is not an angel, but the one who leads the angels. The defeat of Satan at the cross ended his role as Accuser of the Brethren. But he seeks to stamp out the church which prevails through the work of Christ.</p>	<p>This is the fulfillment of Daniel 12, connected to the Great Tribulation. Opinions differ as to mid-Tribulation, the 5th trumpet, the time of the Rapture etc. The declaration of the kingdom is the announcement of salvation as another stage of the conquest has been completed. No longer in heaven, Satan continues to attack the Tribulation saints. He seems to prevail physically, but they prevail spiritually. His attacks</p>	<p>Michael and his angels prevailed as a result of Christ’s atonement. The announcement marks the beginning of the New Covenant age. He loses his place as Accuser because of the blood of Christ. He still accuses us, but not before God. We are defended by the blood of Christ. We go on the offense with the testimony of Christ.</p>

⁶⁷ Beale, pp. 659.

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		will end with the millennial kingdom.	
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Talk It Out: Weighing the strengths & weaknesses, which interpretations make the most sense of the passage?

“This twofold position, that Satan is hostile but under restraint, is what Revelation wants us to appreciate.” **Derek Thomas**⁶⁸

¹³ And when the dragon saw that he had been thrown down to the earth, he pursued the woman who had given birth to the male child. ¹⁴ But the woman was given the two wings of the great eagle so that she might fly from the serpent into the wilderness, to the place where she is to be nourished for a time, and times, and half a time. ¹⁵ The serpent poured water like a river out of his mouth after the woman, to sweep her away with a flood. ¹⁶ But the earth came to the help of the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed the river that the dragon had poured from his mouth. ¹⁷ Then the dragon became furious with the woman and went off to make war on the rest of her offspring, on those who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus. And he stood on the sand of the sea.

- Satan seeks to destroy the church. He uses his mouth- _____ !
- He makes war on those who keep the _____ of God and _____ to Jesus.
- Like the Giant Angel, he (Satan) stands by the sea shore.

“The very structure of God’s created world restricts and frustrates Satan’s plans.” Vern Poythress⁶⁹

Historicist	Preterist	Futurist	Idealist
The two wings are often viewed as the eastern and western divisions of the Roman Empire. The persecution is often seen as the rule of the Arian emperors. Others see the dragon as now representing the Papacy which informally ruled the Holy Roman Empire. They take the days to represent years in	This picks up where vs. 6 left off. This refers primarily to the escape of the Judean Church during the Jewish War in conjunction with Mt. 24:15-28. The wings of the eagle alludes to Exodus 19:4, a description of redemption from oppression. Having failed, Satan	This picks up where vs. 6 left off. Most do not take Lindsey’s perspective of the eagle but see this as an allusion to Ex. 19:4 and God’s care for Israel. Some interpret the flood literally, some see it as representing false teaching. Others, like Lindsey, see it as a large army. The focus seems to be	Satan seeks to destroy the witnessing church since he cannot directly attack Jesus. There is the allusion to Ex. 19. This refers to the time period from Christ’s enthronement to the final judgment. The flood is seen as a host of things sent to deceive and destroy the Church. While the Church is preserved,

⁶⁸ Thomas, pp. 102.

⁶⁹ Poythress, pp. 138.

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which the true faith was obscured by false teachers & teaching.	turns against the Gentile Christians.	on Israel and then Jewish Christians.	individual Christians may suffer death.
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Talking It Out: Which views make the most sense of the text?

Practical Application

- Satan seeks to destroy the Church thru _____ and _____.
- He does this because he cannot defeat _____.
- He no longer _____ us before God, but to _____ face.
- We triumph thru the work of Christ _____ to us and _____ to others.
- We have hope despite opposition because Christ has _____.