

War in Heaven!

Revelation 12:7-12

East Berlin Community Church

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May 1, 2022

Introduction

- The joy and frustrations of putting together a jigsaw puzzle.
- God's Plan for the Ages is like a giant jigsaw puzzle with many, many pieces
- The crucial pieces of this giant puzzle
 - God's 490-year plan to prepare the Jewish people to receive their Messiah and His kingdom
 - The events during the intermission, between the 69th and 70th week of Daniel's prophecy
 - Destruction of the temple and Jerusalem trodden under foot by the Gentiles
 - Regathering of Israel to the land, as "dry bones"
 - The institution and building of the church, the body and bride of Christ.
 - The rapture of the church—the next prophetic event to occur
 - God's plan for the Gentile nations: Babylon, Media-Persia, Greece, and Rome. The rise of the West
 - After the rapture of the church, the West will be weakened. Russian and her Islamic allies will move against Israel and are defeated. (Ezekiel 38-39). Their defeat allows the Jews to rebuild the temple on the Temple Mount.
 - During the chaotic period after the rapture, the West will reorganize into 10 nation confederation or 10 economic zones overseen by 10 leaders. Out of this new configuration, the Antichrist will rise to power. He will become the leader of the West (revived Roman empire). His rise to power will be aided by the Ecumenical church.
 - In heaven, before the end of intermission, God the Father will hand the seven-sealed scroll to Jesus Christ, the title deed to the earth and the plan on how to reclaim what is His.
 - As Jesus Christ opens the first four seals, the four horsemen of the Apocalypse emerge.
 - The first is the Antichrist, who will make a peace treaty with Israel, offering them protection from their enemies. This marks the end of intermission and the beginning of the 70th week, or the last seven year of the 490 year plan, a period known as the "tribulation." The last 3 ½ years segment is known as the "Great Tribulation"
 - The second is war and death, followed by "famine" and "disease", resulting in ¼ of the world's population dying during the first half of the tribulation.
 - During the first half of the tribulation, God seals His witnesses. First, the two witnesses, perhaps Elijah and Moses, who will minister for 3 ½ years and are killed prior to the end of the tribulation. Through their witnesses, 144,000 Jewish men accept Jesus as their Messiah, will be sealed and sent out to preach the gospel throughout the world. Through their ministry countless numbers of people will accept Christ but will pay for it with their lives.
 - During the first half of the tribulation, as the Antichrist will be solidifying his power, he along with the Ecumenical church will be persecuting and killing genuine followers of Christ. So that when Jesus Christ opens the fifth sealed judgment, the martyrs will cry out to God for Him to avenge their deaths. This happens near the midpoint of the tribulation period.
 - **A preview of what is to come:** Antichrist breaks covenant with Israel and persecutes the Jews. Jesus unleashes the rest of sealed judgments including the trumpet and bowl judgments. The nations of the world will gather to do battle at Armageddon. Jesus will return. The Antichrist and false prophet will be judged, and Satan will be bound in the bottomless pit. The judgment of the nations. The establishment of the Millennial kingdom here on earth. The Great White Throne judgment. Satan cast into hell. Destruction of the present heaven and earth, and creation of the new. The eternal state and heaven itself.

The War in Heaven

A. The COMBATANTS

- Revelation 12:7-8-- *“And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer.”*
1. **The “Dragon” or “Satan” or the “Devil” and his demonic forces**
 - a. Satan today is NOT in hell. Never has been there.
 - b. But Satan today divides his time between Heaven and earth.
 - 1) On earth, he is like a *“roaring lion seeking whom he may devour”* —1 Peter 5:8
 - 2) In heaven, he is the *“accuser of the brethren”*
 - Revelation 12:10-- *“the accuser of the brethren, who accuses them before God day and night.”*
 - a) Every time we sin, we give Satan an opportunity to accuse us before the Father.
 - b) But our defense attorney, Jesus Christ, intercedes for us.
 - 1 John 2:1b-2-- *“And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.”*
 - c) The inseparable link between a believer and Christ
 - John 10:28-29-- *“And I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish, neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father who has given them to Me is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father’s hand.”*
 - c. Satan has always been at war since his prideful proclamation
 - Isaiah 14:12-14-- *“I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation on the farthest sides of the north; I will send above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.”*
 - Ezekiel 28:14-17(paraphrase)-- *“anointed cherub who covers... who was on the mountain of God, who walked back and forth in the midst of the fiery stones... who was perfect in his ways from the day that he was created —until iniquity was found in him”*
 - d. Satan’s domain is primarily the earth and the air surrounding it.
 - 2 Corinthians 4:4-- *“god of this world”*
 - Ephesians 2:2 -- *“prince of the power of the air”*
 - Ephesians 6:12 -- *“spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.”*
 2. **Michael the Archangel and the good angels**
 - a. Michael and Satan disputed over the body of Moses.
 - Jude 9 -- *“Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, ‘The Lord rebuke you.’*
 - b. Michael comes to the aide of another angel dispatched to answer Daniel’s prayer.
 - Daniel 10:12-13 -- *“Then he said to me, ‘Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words. But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone with the kings of Persia.”*

B. The CONFLICT

1. **Who starts the battle?**
 - Revelation 12:7 -- *"Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought."*
2. **What caused the conflict? Rapture of the Church?**
 - 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17-- , *"For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus shall we always be with the Lord."*
3. **Who wins the battle?**
 - Revelation 12:8-9-- *"But they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him."*
 - a. Satan is permanently banished from heaven.
 - b. Positive identity of the loser
 - 1) The "serpent of old" —emphasizes his subtlety and treachery
 - 2) The "devil" —means "slanderer, false accuser"
 - 3) "Satan", which means "adversary"
 - 4) The "one who deceives the world"
 - John 8:44-- *"does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own resources, for he is a liar and the father of lies."*
4. **When is the battle won and Satan permanently banned from heaven?**
 - a. **Satan was cast out of heaven after Jesus' death and today is in the bottomless pit**
 - 1) View of replacement theology and those who hold a non-literal interpretation of Revelation
 - 2) Support for this view
 - a) The link between Revelation 12:9 and Luke 10:18
 - Luke 10:18-- *"Jesus said to them, 'I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven'"*
 - b) Scriptures that indicate that Satan was defeated at the cross.
 - John 12:31-- *"Now is the judgment of this world; now the ruler of this world will be cast out."*
 - John 16:8-11-- *"when He comes He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they do not believe in me; of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged."*
 - Hebrews 2:14-15-- *"likewise shared in the same, that through death He might destroy him who had the power of death, that is, the devil, and release those who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."*
 - Colossians 2:15-- *"having disarmed principalities and powers, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it."*
 - 1 John 4:4-- *"He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world."*
 - 3) Problems: Satan is very much alive and well on planet earth.
 - 1 Peter 5:8-- *"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour."*
 - Matthew 13:19 -- *"When anyone hears the word of the kingdom and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside."*

b. **Satan is permanently cast out of heaven in the middle of the tribulation**

- 1) Satan will persecute the “woman” for 3 ½ years.
 - Revelation 12:13-- *“Now when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male child.”*
 - Revelation 12:6-- *“Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days”*
- 2) Michael the archangel is “standing” at the beginning of the Great Tribulation.
 - Daniel 12:1 -- *“At that time Michael shall stand up, the great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people; And there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered, everyone who is found written in the book.”*

C. The CELEBRATION and CONSTERNATION

- Revelation 12:10-12-- *“Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, ‘Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death. Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time.’”*
- Matthew 24:21-22 -- *“For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect’s sake those days will be shortened.”*

APPLICATION FOR US TODAY?

1. **We today are involved in a spiritual conflict.**

- Ephesians 6:10-13-- *“Finally my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and have done all, to stand*
- a. Our conflict is not with other human beings, but with spiritual dark forces
 - b. We need to rely upon God’s strength to be victorious.
 - c. We need the full protection of armor to stand against the evil one.
 - Ephesians 6:14-18-- *“Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints.”*

2. **We can silence our accuser by following the example of the “overcomers”.**

- Revelation 12:10-11 -- *“Then I heard a loud voice in heaven saying, ‘Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down, And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.’”*
- a. *“The blood of Christ”*—by trusting in the death of our Savior
 - b. *“The word of our testimony”*—by sharing our faith with others
 - c. *“Did not love their lives to the death”*—by a life fully surrendered to Jesus Christ