

The Apocalypse

“War in Heaven”

Revelation 12 – May 8, 2016

Our Sermon Series

THE APOCALYPSE		
<i>A 14-Week Sermon Series on The Book of Revelation</i>		
Date	Message Title	Bible Text
Mar 26-27	The Revelation of Jesus Christ	Revelation 1-3
April 3	The Throne in Heaven	Revelation 4-5
April 10	The 7 Seals in Heaven	Revelation 6
April 17	The People in Heaven	Revelation 7
April 24	The 7 Trumpets in Heaven	Revelation 8-9
May 1	The Two Witnesses from Heaven	Revelation 10-11
May 8	War in Heaven	Revelation 12
May 15	The Anti-Christ and the False Prophet	Revelation 13-14
May 22	The 7 Bowls in Heaven	Revelation 15-16
May 29	The Fall of Babylon	Revelation 17-18
June 5	The Second Coming of Jesus Christ	Revelation 19
June 12	The Millennium	Revelation 20
June 19	Heaven – Part 1	Revelation 21
June 26	Heaven – Part 2	Revelation 22

Video: “I Thought I Knew” [2:45] found at sermonspice.com

Quick Review

- Believers are taken up to heaven (4:1) before the Great Tribulation begins. This is known as the Rapture (1 Thess 4:13-18).
- Chuck Swindoll: “The tribulation is a period of seven literal years upon the earth following the rapture of the Church and ending with the second advent of Christ. The events of this era are contained in Revelation 6-19. It will be a time of unprecedented evil, anguish, affliction, and trouble upon the earth due to the unrestrained activity of Satan.”
- One possible outline of Revelation 6-19:
 - **First 3.5 years of tribulation** (Rev. 6-9)
 - **Mid-point of tribulation** (Rev. 10-14)
 - **Last 3.5 years of tribulation** (Rev. 15-19)
 - **Second Coming of Christ** (Rev. 19:11-16)
 - **Armageddon** (Rev. 19:17-21)
- The interpretive approach that I am taking during these sermons is called a pre-tribulation, pre-millennial view of Revelation. There are other ways to interpret this book.

God is the Greatest Playwright Ever

- God is the greatest Engineer, Philosopher, Poet, Artist, Mathematician, Romantic, and Playwright ever!
- Revelation 12 is a melodramatic tragedy before the (true) fairy tale, triumphant ending.
- The best artistic playwrights tell the story in such a way that it is rich in symbolism and intrigue leaving the audience to ponder over and over again on the _____ of meaning and significance.
- Examples: Phantom of the Opera, Alice in Wonderland, Lord of the Rings, Les Miserables, Romeo and Juliet, Hamlet, etc.
- Don't let the abstract and highly symbolic nature of Revelation 12 frustrate you. Enjoy it like you would a great Broadway play or musical. God didn't put charts in the Book of Revelation on purpose!

The 3 Major Characters of Revelation 12

Person	Identity	Scriptures
Dragon	Satan	Rev. 12:9 clearly identifies dragon as Satan.
Woman	Israel	Israel “births” Messiah (Rom 1:3; 9:4-5). Israel pictured as sun, moon stars (Genesis 37:9-10).
Child	Messiah	Compare Rev. 12:5 with Rev. 19:15. Clearly Jesus.

The 3 Act Play of Revelation 12

Scene	Activity	Time Period
Act 1	Wonders in heaven (12:1-6)	6000 years (cosmic history)
Act 2	War in heaven (12:7-12)	Mid-point of tribulation
Act 3	Wrath on earth (12:13-16)	Last 3 ½ years of tribulation

Act 1: Two Wonders in Heaven (Revelation 12:1-6)

- Two wonders (signs):
 - (1) A woman giving birth (vv.1-2,5-6)
 - (2) A great red dragon seeking to destroy the woman and her child (vv.3-6)
- This is the great _____ of history. God purposed to create a universe to display His glory. He created angelic beings first, and one of the highest ranking of those angels (Lucifer) rebelled against God and took 1/3 of all the angels with him in his rebellion. God's highest creation was

humans (made in His image). When humans sinned, God instituted a plan to redeem and save them. His plan involved relating directly to one chosen group of people first (the Jewish people Israel). Through the Israelites God would bring a Messiah who would atone for the sins of the world and then gather believers from all nations to Himself to enjoy Him forever. Satan hates God and His plan and wants to thwart God's plan by destroying the Jewish people and their Messiah.

- **Genesis 3:15** – *And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; He will crush your head, and you will strike His heel.*
- A partial history of the dragon seeking to destroy the woman and her Child:
 - Pharaoh enslaves and ultimately seeks to annihilate the Jews (Book of Exodus)
 - Athaliah seeks to wipe out the royal line of David (2 Kings 11)
 - Haman seeks to annihilate the Jews (Book of Esther)
 - Herod seeks to kill the Christ Child (Matthew 2)
 - Judas betrays Jesus leading to His crucifixion (Matthew 26-27)
 - Rome conquers Jerusalem and kills 1 million Jews (70 AD)
 - Spanish Inquisition burns Jews at the stake (1400s)
 - Ukraine massacres 100,000 Jews (1648)
 - Hitler kills 6 million Jews in Holocaust (1940s)
 - Future: Antichrist will seek to destroy the Jews (2nd half of tribulation)
- Application #1 – Don't be a part of the dragon's plan of destroying the Jewish people. Bless the Jewish people (Genesis 12:1-3). Pray for the peace of Jerusalem (Psalm 122:6-9).
- Application #2 – A mother is a key hero in God's cosmic story. Honor your Mom!

Video: "Mom!" [2:27] found at sermonspice.com

Act 2: War in Heaven (Revelation 12:7-12)

- Charles Ryrie: "This will likely occur at the _____ of the Tribulation."
- John MacArthur: "There has been war in heaven since the fall of Satan (Isaiah 14:12-14; Ezekiel 28:11-18). Satan and his evil angels have actively opposed both the holy angels and God's people since Satan's fall (Daniel 10:12-13; 1 Peter 5:8). The war raging between supernatural beings in the heavenly sphere will reach its peak during the tribulation. That future conflict will find Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. Verse 12 says that Satan and his forces have only 'a short time' after they

leave heaven, supporting the view that they will have only the last three and a half years of the tribulation to operate. During that last period, Satan's full power will be directed at anyone belonging to God, especially Israel."

- Michael appears to be the highest ranking angel – called an archangel (Jude 9). He seems to have assignment over Israel (Daniel 10:10-21; 12:1).
- Application #3 – Be aware of Satan's tactics (2 Corinth 2:11). From Revelation 12, we learn that two of his main tactics are deceiving (v.9) and accusing (v.10). Therefore, don't buy into his deceptions and reject his accusations.
- Application #4 – Verse 11 tells us how to have victory over Satan's deceptions and accusations:
 - (1) _____: Trust fully in the merits of Christ's shed blood on the cross for you;
 - (2) _____: Quote God's Word to yourself and others (Matthew 4:1-11);
 - (3) Die to self: Deny yourself, take up your cross daily, and follow Jesus... even if it means persecution or martyrdom.
- Video: "War Room Prayer Scene" [3:08] found at YouTube

Act 3: Satan's Wrath on Earth (Revelation 12:13-16)

- Warren Wiersbe: "Knowing that his time is short, and having no more access to heaven, the adversary must vent all of his anger earthward. He begins with Israel (the woman), and creates a wave of anti-Semitism. Satan has always hated the Jews because they are God's chosen people and the vehicle through which salvation came into the world. Satan would like to destroy the nation, particularly as the time draws near for the Messiah to return to earth to establish the promised kingdom. A Jewish remnant must be ready to receive Him and form the nucleus for the kingdom (Zech. 12:9-14:21; Rev. 1:7). God will prepare a special place where the Jewish remnant will be protected and cared for. The remnant will be sheltered for the last half of the tribulation."
- This sets us up for next Sunday (Revelation 13-14) as the antichrist becomes the chief instrument for Satan's wrath on earth.
- Application #5 – Spoiler alert: Satan and his antichrist lose. Our team wins! Live like you are on a winning team! Because you are!