



Sooke Baptist Church
Sunday, May 9, 2021
9am, Face Book and YouTube

And There Was War in Heaven, Part Two
Revelation 12

Coffee/Question:
**How do you react when you
are running out of time?**

When you run out of time.... do you panic, or do you stay calm?
Do you become angry, or do you become super-focused?
Do you collapse in a puddle of anxiety, fear or despair, or do you buckle down...
and do what you can do in the time you have?

Our passage for today is a continuation from last week regarding the war in heaven that spread to the earth.

Our passage communicates news... time is short.... that creates great hope for those who follow Jesus.

Our passage also gives us understanding that this news... which is our hope, greatly provokes the dragon ... because he knows the child from heaven has defeated and that his time on the earth is short.



Let's work our way through the passage.

v.7 - Then war broke out in heaven.

As we saw last week, this war began in the past... with the corruption of one of God's guardian cherubs...

Isaiah 14:12-14

How you have fallen from heaven, morning star, son of the dawn! You have been cast down to the earth...¹³ You said in your heart...

"I will ascend to the heavens; I will raise my throne above the stars of God; I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly, on the utmost heights of the sacred mountain. ¹⁴ I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High."

This corruption of one angel spread... (we're not told how)... but other angels (we're not told how many)... were likewise corrupted and rebelled against God.

It's clear from our Scripture passage that in this war there were two sides. Look again at v.7b...

- On the one side was Michael and his angels.

Who is Michael?

He is not the guy who rowed the boat ashore!

gotquestions.org says this about him...

Michael is spoken of in the book of Daniel as **a great prince**, in the book of Jude as **an archangel**, and in the book of Revelation as **the one who leads the armies of heaven in the fight against the dragon.**

gotquestions.org

In Revelation 12, the reader is reminded that angels...are warriors.



See also 2 Kings 19.

On the night that Jesus was born, an angel announced good news to a group of shepherds who were in the fields of Bethlehem watching their sheep.

The angel said – **Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.** And then suddenly... the Scripture says, “... **a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel**” praising God. (Luke 2:13).

Do you know what the heavenly host is?

A host is an army!

Isn't that incredible...a great company of heaven's army appeared to a group of shepherds... the night Jesus was born.

The one angel would have been sufficient.

But the fact that a great company of the heavenly host also appeared makes sense now having read the first part of Revelation 12.

They were there not only to announce good news and to praise God; but also to protect the Christ-child.

There is something else we must realize about this word “host.”
In the OT one of the names by which God identifies himself is...



... which mean the Lord of heaven’s armies.

- On the other side of this conflict were the dragon and his angels.

In the vision shown to John, verse 3 states that the dragon was a sign.
But then the identity of the great dragon is clearly stated in v.9.

**The great dragon is
the ancient serpent
called the devil,
or Satan.**

This is who fought with Michael and his angels.

The word “devil” means slanderer.

Who does the serpent slander?

The ancient serpent endeavors at every opportunity possible to misrepresent God, attributing to him words he did not speak or to blame him for actions that he did not do; to diminish the glory and the worthiness of God or to plant doubt regarding the goodness of God.

The word “Satan” means adversary.

Who is the serpent’s adversary?

His adversary is the triune God.

The word “**ancient**” tells the reader that the guardian cherub’s corruption and the subsequent war that took place in heaven happened, as I’ve already said.... long ago... either before or shortly after the creation of Adam and Eve.

Regarding this event the Bible provides minimal detail because in the wisdom of God we don’t need to know any more than what we’ve been told.

We know that these two opposing angel armies fought.

But we’re not told specifics regarding... “the how” or... “with what” they fought or... for “how long” they fought.

We are, though, told the outcome of that war – in v.8-9.

- The dragon and his angels were not strong enough.
- They lost their place in heaven.
- They were hurled down to the earth.

It is important to God that his people know ...the victory of Michael and his angels was decisive.

They did not fight the serpent to a draw.

They did not narrowly win.

Theirs was a defining and complete victory.

It is also important to God that his people realize that though the war in heaven is over, this ancient war spread to and continues on the earth.

How do we know that?

Look again at v.9b.

The dragon’s original intent was to lead all of heaven astray.

When he couldn't... and he lost the war in heaven, and was driven out... his ambition focused on the world of humanity.

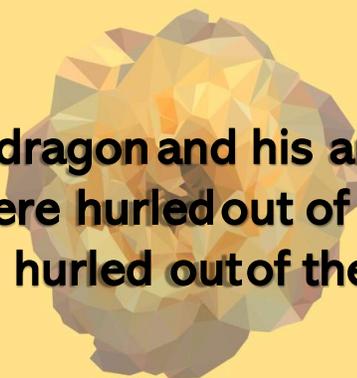


Here on the earth, it could be said... the dragon has been successful... for he leads the whole world astray.

But it is also important to God that his people know that the outcome of this war upon the earth... is not in question... it has been won.

That is the emphasis of Revelation 12:1=5.

Ultimately...



**The dragon and his angels
who were hurled out of heaven
will be hurled out of the earth.**

O the wisdom and grace and mercy and justice of God.

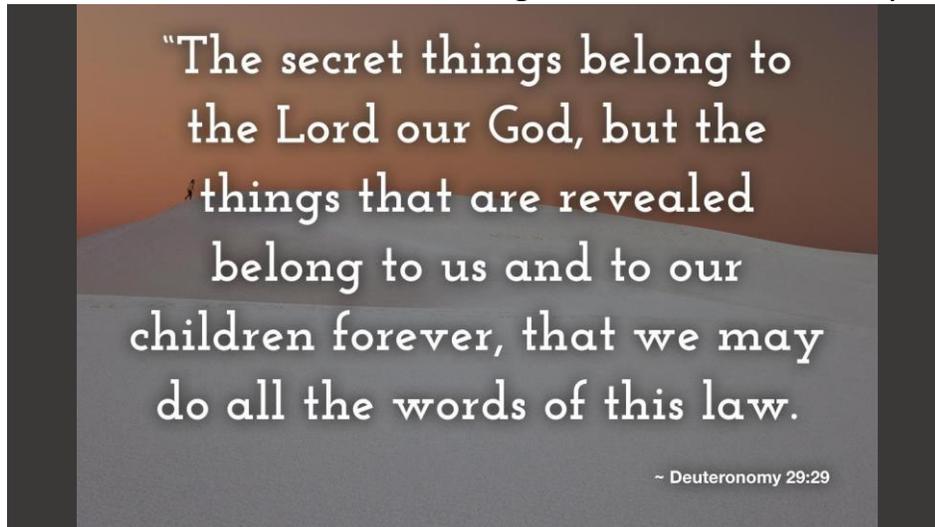
It is here we find ourselves surprised... in the best possible of ways.

When it comes to our understanding of this spiritual war...that it has been won and yet it continues... followers of Jesus... we must not go beyond what God has revealed to us in his Word... even though this means... we live with a certain measure of tension.

If the Bible is silent on certain details, we are not to turn to our imaginations to fill in the blanks.

This word...(hold up my Bible)... is sufficient, just as God and his grace is...

Listen to what our God said through Moses – Deuteronomy 29:29.



There are things which God purposefully... has not told us. We will have to wait until heaven or his return to ask about these matters. And it may very well be... at that time, as it was for Job, our burning questions will no longer matter because we've seen our Savior face to face.

But there are things he has revealed to us... in this book. And these things... we are meant not only to know as facts and certainties, but to do, that is, to obey.

These things are the constants of our lives. These things are the certainties... upon which we build our lives.

In verses 7-9, John saw a vision of war in heaven. There is so much more that could have been said about this war. But we've been told what we need to know.

The dragon...when driven out of heaven... brought... war to the earth. But the child of heaven...born to the woman came and he defeated the dragon. God wants his church to know that though the war on earth is not over...yet... in Jesus it has been already won.

God reveals this truth because he wants his church to live with confidence and certainty in our Savior, rather than in fear and despair.

This is why in the vision, the very next thing to happen was John hearing a loud voice speaking truth from heaven.

Look at what was said by the loud voice.

Revelation 12:10-11

Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say:

“Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Messiah. For the accuser of our brothers and sisters, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down. ¹¹ They triumphed over him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.”

To where has the salvation and the power of God come?

To the earth!

We are reminded that it has always been the purpose of God to save the fallen sons and daughters of Adam and Eve.

- God promised Eve after she sinned that a child of hers would crush the head of the serpent.
- God promised one of Eve’s descendants, Abraham, that through his offspring (singular) all nations on earth would be blessed.

Let’s ask this question even though we know the answer.

Did God formulate his plan to save humanity because of the war in heaven?

What I mean...was God caught off guard by the corruption of some of the angels?

Was his plan for the earth formulated in response to what had happened in heaven?

Look at what the Scripture says...

1 Peter 1:20

[Jesus Christ] was chosen before the creation of the world...

Chosen to do what?

1 Peter 1:20

[Jesus Christ] was chosen before the creation of the world...

1 Peter 1:18

... to redeem us from the empty way of life handed down from our forefathers....

Jesus Christ was chosen in eternity past... before war broke out in heaven... before the earth was created and everything in it...

Jesus was chosen to redeem humanity from an empty way of life.

What does that mean?

When the serpent deceived Eve he promised her life.

But he lied.

The serpent knew that if Eve did as he suggested she and her husband would die. Not immediately... but the fulness of life they enjoyed in relationship with God would leach out of them... leaving behind a great emptiness... that they would pass on their children and in turn their children to their children and so on.



“Empty way of life” is a haunting description of what life under the serpent is like.

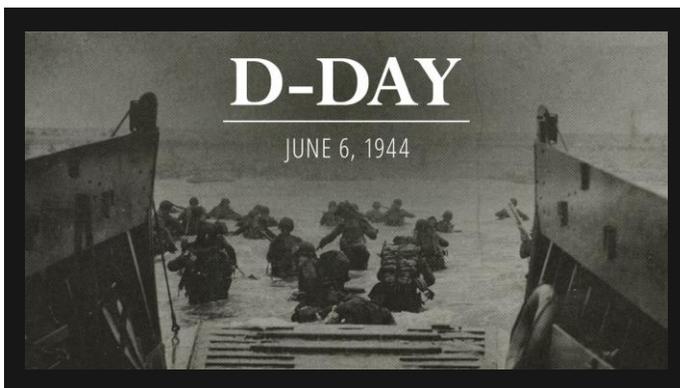
But God in his great mercy and love would not abandon humanity to this destiny. This is why he purposed to redeem us...before he even created us.

In Jesus the power of God to save sinners came into the world... and this great power gave the right to all who receive Jesus and believe in him to become a child of God, not of natural descent or human decision, but a child born of God.

Revelation 12:10-11

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The birth of Jesus 2000 years ago... was heaven's D-Day of the earth.
Do you remember what Jesus said when he began his public ministry?



Was there any better news to hear than this – “the time is fulfilled”?
In announcing this news Jesus also extended an open invitation to leave the dominion of darkness and enter God's kingdom.
How? Through repentance and belief in the gospel.

Just as the fulness of time had arrived when Jesus was born, so a second fulness of time will soon come, when.... as we saw and read several weeks ago...



What began with the coming of the child to the earth, will be brought to a glorious completion with the return of God's Messiah to the earth.
He will reunite heaven and earth ... and the war begun so long ago... will finally and forever be over.

The voice in heaven had more to say of how the serpent's work is destroyed in this present time and then with great finality at the end of this age.

Revelation 12:10-11

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"Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Messiah. **For the accuser of our brothers and sisters, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down.**¹¹ They triumphed over him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death."

It would seem there was a second hurling down of the serpent. The first happened at the end of the war in heaven. The second had to do with the coming of Christ into the world.

After his seventy-two disciples returned from their ministry trip, they excitedly told Jesus...

"Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name."

Luke 10:17

Jesus answered them and said...

"I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven."

Luke 10:18

Jesus explained what he meant.

He said to his disciples...

“I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you.”

Luke 10:19

Jesus, as the Messiah of God had authority from God to overcome and destroy the work of the devil.

Many years later, the apostle John spoke of this in his first epistle, 3:8,

1 John 3:8

The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil’s work.

That Jesus had come for this purpose was made evidently clear in his encounter with Satan in the desert.

Satan tried to tempt Jesus and failed.

This first round victory of Jesus over Satan... opened the door for Jesus’ years of public ministry.

It was from that desert victory that Jesus extended authority from God to his followers, to participate with him in trampling upon the serpent and overcoming him and his malicious purposes...

Can you imagine how grievous this was to the serpent?

But the true miracle... what was intended to fill the hearts of Jesus’ disciples with joy, was not the authority they had been given over the fallen angels.

Jesus said to them...

“However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.”

Luke 10:20

How does what Jesus said in Luke 10:18 – “I saw Satan fall like lightning,” connect to Revelation 12:10 – “the accuser... has been hurled down?”

The guardian cherub who became a serpent not only is a slanderer and an adversary but he is also an accuser.

In the OT time, he accused God about the humans God claimed as family.

Look at Job 1:9-11

Job 1:9-11

“Does Job fear God for nothing?” Satan replied. “Have you not put a hedge around him and his household and everything he has? You have blessed the work of his hands, so that his flocks and herds are spread throughout the land. But now stretch out your hand and strike everything he has, and he will surely curse you to your face.”

Look at Job 2:4-5

Job 2:4-5

“Skin for skin!” Satan replied. “A man will give all he has for his own life. But now stretch out your hand and strike his flesh and bones, and he will surely curse you to your face.”

Look at Zechariah 3:1

Zechariah 3:1

Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him.

The serpent pointed out to God the sins of his people and demanded that justice be applied to them immediately.

But God in mercy covered his OT people with grace...

...in anticipation of the sacrifice of his Messiah...

...who not only died for the sin of the world at that particular moment in time, but for the sin of those in the past who had looked ahead in faith to him, and the sin of the those in the future who would look back in faith to him.

Dear follower of Jesus, here the Scripture reminds us that the serpent is not the judge of all the earth.

Thank God that he isn't.

The serpent's word is not the final word.

In fact, his accusations hold no weight for those who are in Christ.

The cross has hurled them down, along with the one who speaks them.

This is heaven's response to the serpent's accusations.

"Therefore, there is now no condemnation
for those who are in Christ Jesus"
- Romans 8:1; NIV

There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus... because... the sacrifice of Christ has taken away our sin.

Hebrews 9:26-28

...[Christ] has appeared once for all at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself. Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people, and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.

What did Christ do with our sin?

He did away with it...that is, he absorbed in himself the penalty for that sin.

He who knew no sin was made sin for us so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

Look again at v.11.

The followers of Jesus overcome the serpent because of the blood of the Lamb.

The blood of Jesus is our testimony...our advocacy.

Our names our written in heaven.

We are now citizens of heaven, not minions of the serpent.

In Christ we are now God's beloved... we are no longer his enemies.

How can this be?

It is all of grace.

Worthy is our Lord Jesus Christ!