

# REVELATION - THE FINAL VICTORY

## (Lesson 6)

### **Intro: What do you consider the two or three great enemies of the church?**

- certainly the devil and all his evil angels, but what about his evil agents that he uses - we were introduced to false teaching that exists within the church (locusts out of hell) but also the false philosophies of this world (army from Babylon)
- these are enemies that seek the church's complete and final destruction - Satan's earthly agents to bring souls into hell

### **- The Fourth Vision: The Seven Visions**

#### **1. The First Vision: The Great Red Dragon (12:1-17)**

##### **The Dragon and the Child (12:1-6)**

- Identify the woman, the red dragon and the male child. - not called seven visions but following vision begins with "I saw"; male child caught up to God is Christ; red dragon is Satan; woman - the Church (clothed with sun, moon under feet - rule of church; crown of 12 stars - 12 number of the church, gave birth to child - Jesus; Church as organism - mother of us all, heavenly Jerusalem Gal 4:26)
- How is the red dragon portrayed in the vision? - horns symbolize power, crowns an attempt to rule; seven heads - wisdom, stars swept out of sky - fall of evil angels led by devil
- What is the 1,260 days when the woman is in the desert? - church is in exile in the wilderness away from her real home, not ascended with the Lord yet, persecuted by the devil- 1260 days = N. T. era

##### **The War in the Sky (12:7-12)**

- What battle is being referred to? (note especially verses 10-12) - could be time when devil was throne out of heaven, but victory song is sung after, word heaven could be translated sky - spiritual realm of battle (Eph 6); devil lost ability to accuse believers; when seventy two came back to Jesus from missionary work, Jesus said he saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven - defeat of Satan when gospel proclaimed; battle referred to is Jesus defeat of Satan - his redemptive work to destroy the devil's work
- In what way is Satan the "accuser of our brothers"? - Satan like prosecuting attorney to bring charges against believers, God to punish them; Satan's fall- salvation, power, kingdom of Christ established
- How was Satan defeated? - Satan overcome by blood of Lamb and by the word of the gospel; Satan defeated by those who remain faithful to Christ - believe the gospel, devil now an enraged enemy, his time is short; Michael is archangel who fights for God, protector of God's people - ongoing battle in spiritual realm

##### **The Dragon Persecutes the Woman (12:13-17)**

- What is the significance of the two wings that the woman receives? - devil takes out anger on the woman, the church; wings are generally God's care and concern for his people (Ex 19:4; Ps 91:4); woman receives divine help to escape devil's wiles and anger
- What is the river that the devil uses to destroy God's church? - probably false teaching again, seeking to rob church of her spiritual blessings in Christ who won the victory for eternity
- In what sense does the world swallow up the devil's attacks? - perhaps a way of stating how false doctrines go out of style, lose their appeal, become discredited in the world or society
- Failing to destroy the woman, with whom does Satan make war? - Satan could not destroy church as an organism, it will continue to exist, so he directs his attack against individual believers - separate them from church, destroy their faith, one by one

## 2. The Second Vision: The Beast from the Sea (13:1-10)

*(Daniel's vision in chapter 7 of his book helps us identify John's vision here. Daniel saw four beasts come out of the sea - a lion, bear, a four headed leopard, and a terrifying beast with ten horns. These beasts are identified as four earthly kingdoms - Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome.)*

- What similar characteristics does this beast from the sea have? - *beast also comes out of the sea, has ten horns, resembled a leopard, feet like a bear, mouth like a lion; in Daniel four heads of leopard plus three equals 7 heads as here; represents secular government; beast is not creation of the devil but created by God, but devil uses this beast to serve his evil purposes, seven heads and ten horns like dragon*
- What "fatal wound" did the beast suffer only a few hundred years after John wrote this? - *crowns beast wears is attempt to dethrone God, claim authority for themselves; emperor Constantine was converted to Christianity - instead of persecutor, civil government became promoter of Christian religion, but wound was healed - state church system became one of the greatest enemies of the church*
- What fatal wounds does the beast still suffer? - *wounding of one of the heads indicates periods of time when open hostility of governments will be subdued for a time (fall of Communism in Russia)*
- What are the blasphemies that this beast speaks? - *the world admires the power and prestige of the beast; world worships dragon when it bestows idolatrous honor to earthly governments; blasphemes God's name - what is revealed in his Word, makes claims to usurp God's will (Roe vs. Wade, homosexuality etc.) and blasphemes his dwelling place, that is, his believers, against the church*
- Where does this beast derive its power? - *dragon gave beast his authority to persecute church 42 months*
- What additional power does this beast receive? - *not only to blaspheme but also to wage war against church (every tribe, people, language and nation) - wherever we go, until the end of time, beast will attack; victory not complete - apparent when Christians martyred and persecuted ( under their "power 'J*
- What comfort is given to those who have to withstand the dragon and the beast? - *the beast cannot harm those who names are written in the book of life, belong to the lamb who was slain; God is in control, calls for patient endurance and faithfulness on our part - comfort of eternal election, security in heaven*

## 3. The Third Vision: The Beast from the Earth (13:11-18)

- How is this beast from the earth described? - *coming out of the earth, two horns like the Lamb but spoke like the dragon -looked Lamb-like but was dragon-like; exercises authority of first beast - from Satan and makes people worship the beast from the sea - secular governments; this beast of the earth is the Antichrist and antichrists - especially Roman papacy teaches doctrine of the devils - saved by works not faith, blasphemes name of God in mass - denies sufficiency of Christ's sacrifice, substitutes its visible kingdom for God's kingdom, becomes like a earthly government - makes laws (Paul describes Antichrist- 2 Thess. 2)*
- What powers does this beast have? - *signs, lying wonders to deceive men; like Elijah calling down fire from heaven as a sign it is from God, so they mimic God's wonders to support false teaching*
- How does the beast from the earth serve the beast from the sea? - *Antichrist/antichristian forces gives breath to secular government to order death, execution of Christians and economic pressures*
- What does a mark or brand indicate? - *mark indicates ownership, indicate they belong to beast (communist youths must join communist organizations for entrance into higher education, to buy and sell)*
- To whom does the number 666 belong? - *mark impressed is the name of the beast or number of his name - beast of sea or context is beast of the earth (both? - work so closely together) not a number for Satan*
- Since the number 7 is used for God's covenant with his people, how does the number 666 help characterize this beast and his work? - *triple failure to destroy God's church, but keeps attacking*

**Conclusion:** *Why is it necessary for Christians of every era to identify the allies of Satan? – they vary from time to time, so watch and pray for God's help to identify them*