

Revelation's HOPE

Lesson 11: The Dragon and the Woman

Revelation 12

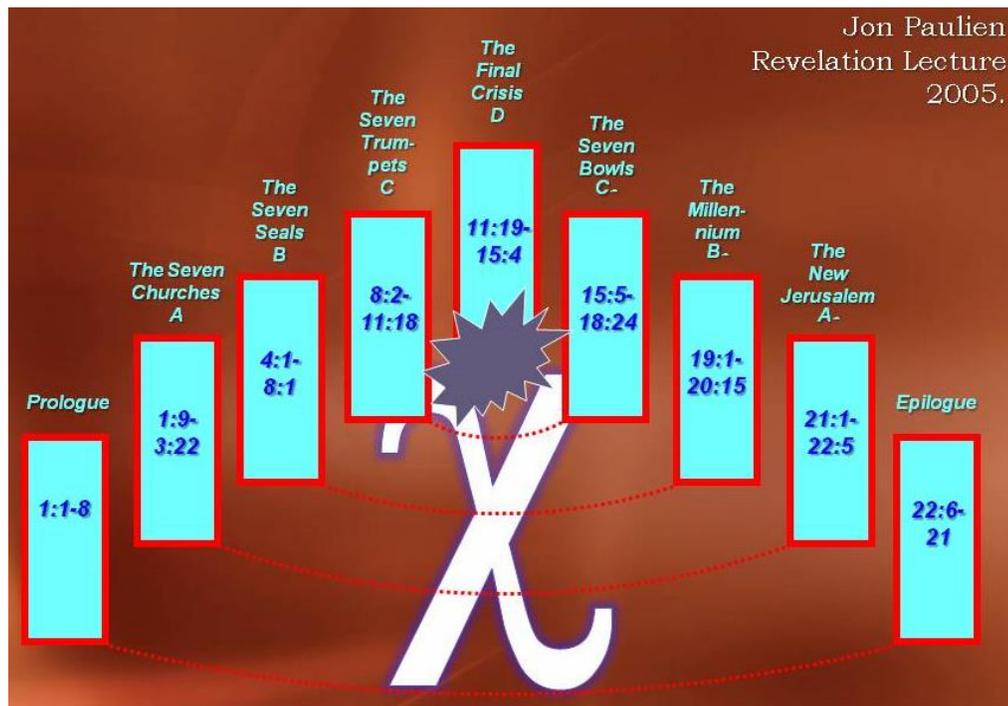
“And a great sign was seen in heaven: a woman arrayed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars; ² and she was with child; and she crieth out, travailing in birth, and in pain to be delivered. ³ And there was seen another sign in heaven: and behold, a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his heads seven diadems. ⁴ And his tail draweth the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth. . .

I. What do these symbols mean?

A. Principles

- Important principle: let Scripture interpret itself.
- Look in chapter
- Book
- Other writings by John
- The rest of Scripture

B. Important to understand this section = key to understanding Revelation & the Bible. Chiasitic structure points to the importance of what we are about to study:



C. EX: What are the stars and candlesticks? Angels / Messengers. 7 Churches.

II. Woman

A. Characteristics

- Arrayed with sun, moon under her feet
- Crown of 12 Stars
- Pregnant: going to have “offspring”
- Seen as an enemy by the Dragon
- God’s people from the beginning of time to the end with the focus being on the “Church” at the end as we progress.

B. Scriptural Support

- Woman linked to “moon”

“My dove, my undefiled, is *but one*; *She is the only one of her mother*; *She is the choice one of her that bare her*. *The daughters saw her, and called her blessed*; *Yea, the queens and the concubines, and they praised her*. Who is she that looketh forth as the morning, Fair as the moon, Clear as the sun, Terrible as an army with banners? (**Song of Solomon 6:9**).

- Jesus told Peter of twelve thrones and was speaking to Church leaders→ “Then answered Peter and said unto him, Lo, we have left all, and followed thee; what then shall we have? And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that ye who have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel (**Matthew 19:27**).

- Paul calls the Church (followers from every background) Christ’s Bride

“For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, being himself the saviour of the body. But as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives also be to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself up for it; that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word, that he might present the church to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. . .” (**Eph. 5:23-27**)

C. Woman = Followers of God / Bride.

III. The Dragon

A. Characteristics

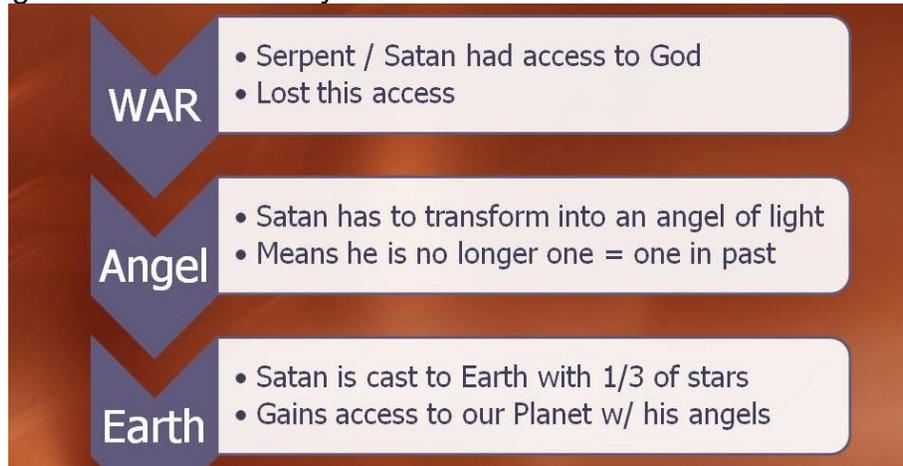
- 7 heads & 10 horns
- 7 Crowns
- Red
- Has a third of the “stars”
- We learned that stars are angels (Revelation 1)
- Further evidence later in book: ancient serpent is the “devil” (**Rev.12:9**) cast down from Heaven.
- How did he get access to God’s people on Earth?
- Where else do we find a woman, serpent and offspring?

B. Preliminary Clue in 2 Corinthians 11

“For such men are false apostles, deceitful workers, fashioning themselves into apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for even Satan fashioneth himself into an angel of light. It is no

great thing therefore if his ministers also fashion themselves as ministers of righteousness, whose end shall be according to their works” (2 Cor. 11:13-15).

C. Progression of the “enemy” / Satan



D. Old Testament “roots”

1. **Genesis 3:4-5:** Serpent, Woman and Offspring
2. **Matthew 13:27-28:** An enemy has invaded our world
3. **Ezekiel 28:** Fallen Cherub
4. **Isaiah 14:** Lucifer, “shining one” that rebels
5. **1 John 4: 7, 10:** God governs with love, Lucifer with the opposite – force.
6. Question to consider: Why not just eradicate Lucifer before he can spread his “government” to other places? When we consider the next Character in the Revelation, then we might begin to understand.

IV. The Man Child

“and the dragon standeth before the woman that is about to be delivered, that when she is delivered he may devour her child.⁵ And she was delivered of a son, a man child, who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and unto his throne.⁶ And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that there they may nourish her a thousand two hundred and threescore days” (Rev. 12:4b-6, ASV).

A. Man Child a Threat to Satan

- Satan wants to kill man child / woman
- Man child = Rules with rod of iron, caught up to God
- Is at God’s throne
- Is this Moses?
- We have learned that Jesus sits at the Father’s right hand.
- **Revelation 19 / Psalm 2** makes it clear WHO the man child is→

B. Man Child Other Places

“And out of his [Satan’s] mouth proceedeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of

the fierceness of the wrath of God, the Almighty. And he hath on his garment and on his thigh a name written, **KINGS OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS**” (**Rev. 19:15, 16**, emphasis mine).

- This makes it clear that the King of Kings, Jesus, is the one who rules with a rod of iron. **Psalm 2** also states the Messiah would rule with a rod of iron.
- After Jesus is resurrected, He begins to prepare to rule but now Satan turns his wrath on the people of God→

C. God’s people in Revelation 12

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V. Stages of Earth’s Conflict!

A. Now we have repetition and enlargement

⁷ And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels going forth to war with the dragon; and the dragon warred and his angels; ⁸ And they prevailed not, neither was their place found any more in heaven. ⁹ And the great dragon was cast down, the old serpent, he that is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world; he was cast down to the earth, and his angels were cast down with him. . .¹⁰ And I heard a great voice in heaven, saying, Now is come the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, who accuseth them before our God day and night. ¹¹ And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb, and because of the word of their testimony; and they loved not their life even unto death. ¹² Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and ye that dwell in them. . . (**Rev. 12:7-12**).

- Notice there are stages in the conflict described in Revelation 12-13:

	Rev 12	Rev 13	
Stage One	Dragon vs. Male Child (5)		
	----- Enthronement of Christ (7-12)		
Stage Two	1260 days (13-15)	42 months (1-7)	Past tenses in chapter 13
	Earth helps woman (16)	Beast from the earth (11)	
Stage Three	Dragon vs. Remnant (17)	Worldwide worship of the Beast (8-10, 12-18)	Present and future tenses in chapter 13

- Decisive moment = cross that purchased salvation!

B. 1,260 Days

“Woe for the earth and for the sea: because the devil is gone down unto you, having great wrath, knowing that he hath but a short time.¹³ And when the dragon saw that he was cast down to the earth, he persecuted the woman that brought forth the man child.¹⁴ And there were given to the woman the two wings of the great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness unto her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. . .

- 1,260 days is same as 42 months (**Revelation 11**)
- Same as times, time and half a time here (**Revelation 12:13-16**) or 3 ½ yrs.
- Times = **Daniel 4:23** (7 times = 7 years)
- Same as 42 months (**Revelation 13**)
- As Paulien notes→

Rev 11	Rev 12	Rev 13
10:8 - 11:1 Time of John	12:1-5, 7-12 Time of Jesus	---
11:1-13 <i>42 months</i> <i>1260 days</i>	12:6, 13-16 <i>1260 days</i> <i>Time, times and half a time</i>	13:1-7, 11 <i>42 months</i>
11:15-18 Final events: Wrath and judgment	12:17 Final events: Remnant	13:8-10, 12-18 Final events: Image and mark Present and future

C. Paulien’s Conclusion regarding thisⁱⁱ:

The 42-month period of Revelation 13:5, therefore, is not part of the final battle (Stage Three) of Christian history. The beast from the sea “was given authority” to rule for 42 months. The sea beast’s activity does not move into the present or future tenses until verse 8. As part of Stage Two, then, the 42 months of Revelation 13:5 belong to the middle period of church history, between the events of the first advent of Jesus and the events leading up to His second coming. Note the comparison of all three chapters in Revelation where 1260-day passages occur. They are firmly entrenched at the heart of the Christian era, not at its edges.

D. Two Witnesses and Flood against the woman (1,260 days) are referring to a specific time period leading up to the 2nd coming of Christ. They involve the Beast, and we will see a specific application when we consider the “Antichrist”.

E. Persecution in Revelation 12

“¹⁵ And the serpent cast out of his mouth after the woman water as a river, that he might cause her to be carried away by the stream. ¹⁶ And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth and swallowed up the river which the dragon cast out of his mouth. . .

- Flood of persecution resulted during one main period of Christian history.
- This would be after the time of Jesus and John.
- It would involve the beast of **Revelation 13**. We will learn more about this timeline later.

F. Where the 1,260 Days Fit in our Understanding so far



VI. The Conflict Continues

“¹⁷ And the dragon waxed wroth with the woman, and went away to make war with the rest of her seed, that keep the commandments of God, and hold the testimony of Jesus” (Rev. 12:15-17). “and he stood upon the sand of the sea” (Rev 13:1, ASV).

A. Key points

- The chapter break is not natural. The vision continues. And introduces the agents of persecution.
- Who are the targets of Satan’s attacks: Those who are trying to go right.
- Why do bad things happen to God’s people?

B. WHY doesn’t God do something?

- HE DID!
- The Cross shows that God is doing everything He can to save us, and that Satan is doing everything he can to destroy.

C. After we sinned and joined the rebellion, what were God's choices?

- Blot out law = no moral compass
- Do away with or excuse sinners: "God is not fair"
- Make us love Him = no choice or love.
- Find a way to forgive & save us!

D. A personal experience

One of the most difficult challenges had to face in my early Christian faith was during my junior year in college. The school work had begun to get intense. Two fellow students with their whole lives yet before them died tragically. Coupled with this was the death of a science professor and our senior pastor at the college church. It just did not seem real. The death that echoed loudest in my mind was that of the senior pastor. Here was a man who followed God, pointed others to Him and yet was now suffering in the clutches of a deadly cancer. The Church had followed the Bible promise in **James 5:14** and called the elders, anointed their beloved pastor with oil and prayed for healing - if it be God's will. The whole church had been praying for this godly man, but ultimately he died. In my heart I cried – "How can this be?" How could God allow this to happen to people that loved Him? Why do bad things happen to good people and many times the bad people get a free ride? No, none of these people were perfect, but at least they were trying. There are a lot of people out there who are not even trying. You do not have to be in this world long before you begin to ponder such penetrating questions.

My junior year in college was a very difficult year for me. But God finally did intervene. His words of hope came through the very person whose suffering I questioned the most: the senior pastor. You see the senior pastor of the college church preached one last time before he died. I was not able to be there for that sermon, but I got to watch it later. In the sermon you could see the beloved pastor standing supported by his two sons – one on each side. He talked of how the church had been praying for a miracle and that he was praying for one too: the miracle of changed hearts. He pointed out that through this situation God was trying to teach us that His strength was made perfect in weakness and that His grace was sufficient. He illustrated his thought by pointing out that prayer was not like a vending machine where you put the money in and select what you want. Instead it should be that we pray and allow God to work out the situation to His honor and glory. How could this pastor say what appeared to be utter nonsense? I believe it was because he was facing death with the belief that Jesus would come soon and take us to something infinitely better. As I processed that sermon, I realized what he said was true – for he was living proof of that fact. I came to the realization that we serve an Awesome God who cares infinitely about us and has a future in store for us!

ⁱ <http://biblicalresearch.gc.adventist.org/documents/1260%20Days%20in%20Revelation.pdf>

ⁱⁱ Ibid.