

Text: Rev. 12:7-17

Title: "The Dragon's Doom"

Time: 1/7/2018 & 1/14/2018 am

Place: NBBC

Intro: There is a lot of football going on right now. There comes a time in many football games at which point the team that is losing is behind in the score, out of timeouts, and playing defense against an opponent who has a first-down and merely needs to take a knee three times before the game is over. The contest is still going on, but the outcome is not in doubt and soon to be finalized.

In Revelation 12 we are reading about the day our enemy Satan faces that kind of situation in his rebellion against God. This passage tells us of the great red dragon's doom. Satan's opposition to God is futile in this passage, the outcome is not in doubt, but the contest is not yet over. There is still some time remaining on the clock of God's sovereign plan. We still have the last 3 and ½ years of the tribulation to go before the final whistle blows. But the outcome, which has never been in doubt, now becomes more and more obvious even to the dragon.

As we read about the dragon's doom in this passage, I want us to focus on why it is that his efforts finally end in futility, because these reasons for his ultimate demise are the same reasons we can have victory over this powerful enemy in our spiritual battles today.

I. The dragon is doomed because he fights against God's heaven (vv. 7-10a).

Ill: You may have heard in the recent news that our President has decided to move our embassy from Tel Aviv to

Israel's capital, Jerusalem. Just prior to Christmas, the UN General Assembly passed a resolution condemning our nation for that decision. 128 nations voted for the resolution, and only 9 voted against it. 35 nations abstained from the vote, and 21 nations did not participate.

Appl: The hostility the UN and Gentile nations in general have had historically against the nation of Israel reflects a hostility we see in what our passage tells us is a war in heaven.

On one side stands the archangel Michael with his angels, and on the other the great red dragon, the devil Satan.

That Michael is mentioned is another significant indicator that in this chapter about the woman and her child, we are reading about God's dealings with Israel. The Bible indicates that the angelic hosts have divided up the nations among themselves, with the exception of Israel, who is under the special protection of Michael. Daniel mentions Michael's role in the protection of this nation in the end of time, "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book" (12:1).

On the other side stands the great red dragon, who is the devil, the ancient serpent who tempted Eve in Genesis 3 and caused the rebellion of man against God, who is Satan, God's adversary, and who deceives the whole world.

It seems to me that as long as this war is between Michael and Satan, Israel has experienced suffering. But the clock is

running out on Satan in this passage. It turns out that his tireless efforts, which began thousands of years ago in the Garden of Eden, shall ultimately end in futility. God has had enough in this passage, and when that happens Satan is cast out of heaven, which offers him a place no more.

He is cast to earth for 3 ½ years more, but it turns out that this is not his place either. Jesus spoke of Satan's place in Matt. 25:41, "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

The dragon's place is the everlasting fire of hell. That is the doom of the dragon, and he is doomed because he wars against God's heaven. He has set himself against one who is greater than he is, and that greatness is described in verse 10. Our God is a God of salvation, and a God of power, and a God who reigns over a kingdom, and a God whose anointed King, Christ, has been given all authority in heaven and in earth. It seems to me also that He has been a very patient God. Satan has been in rebellion for some time.

So the dragon is doomed, but what does that mean for you and me? Well, we appear in this passage in that phrase, "the whole earth." You and I are a part of that place. We are told that the dragon is very unsuccessful when it comes to defeating heaven, but very successful when it comes to deceiving earth.

One of the great tragedies of the Lord's words in Matthew about the place prepared for the devil is that His command to depart into that place will be spoken to people, not to devils only. That is not our place. It was not prepared for us. But we can wind up there if we allow the devil to de-

ceive us. Do we believe that salvation, power, the kingdom, and the authority belong to the God of heaven and His Christ? If not, it is because the dragon has deceived us. He is doomed, and those deceived by him will be doomed with him.

II. The dragon is doomed because he accuses God's justified (vv. 10b-12).

III: We have some people in our church who are very hard workers. They work even harder when it snows. But even these hard workers get some rest at night.

Appl: Not so when it comes to the work of this doomed dragon. His work is to accuse the brothers of the Lord, and he does that work faithfully day and night, making his argument for their destruction before the throne of God. If insanity is doing the same thing over and over again while expecting a different result (and I do not think it always is, by the way), then this is the ultimate insanity.

Joseph Seis: "Note what a lesson of rebuke and duty addresses itself to Christians from the Devil's example. He never rests from his murderous endeavors. He stops for no losses, succumbs to no adversities, desists for no hindrances, turns back from no encounters, and surrenders not even to the Almighty's judgments, so long as he has liberty to act or time in which to operate."

And yet, in spite of all this unquenchable zeal and untiring effort, every accusation made against God's justified is futile. Why? They overcome him by the blood of the Lamb. Jesus died a death of vicarious sacrifice that washes our record from sin and gives us a righteous standing before God's law. "There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. 8:1). "Who shall lay anything to

the charge of God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us? (8:33-34). Every accusation of the enemy that proves that we deserve God's judgment is futile because we overcome by the blood of the Lamb.

But there is more here – the word of their testimony and they did not love their lives even until death. That Christ died on the cross for our sins is a work wonderfully accomplished, but it is also a work that must be accepted and applied. Do you believe he died for you? Is that your word of testimony? Have you ever spoken such a word to anyone? Does your life demonstrate that you have turned from your sin to follow the Savior?

Jesus put it this way, “He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal” (John 12:25). Paul lived that kind of life – “But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify solemnly the gospel of the grace of God” (Acts 20:24).

If you are loving this world and all that you can do in your life more than following the Lord, you cannot be sure that you have overcome the doomed dragon by the blood of the Lamb. If that is you, you need to get real honest with yourself about what you really believe and deny about Christ.

III. The dragon is doomed because he attacks God's protected (vv. 13-17).

Appl: Here the focus of this prophetic vision given to the Apostle John once again becomes the nation of Israel. Cast to earth, the dragon's wrath intensifies against this woman

who gave birth to the child Messiah, Jesus Christ. Destroy her, and the dragon may save himself, for destroying her would be overthrowing one whom God had promised to protect.

The Old Testament is full of this promise of restoration, salvation, protection, and an eternal kingdom for Israel, but I will only read again what the promise to Daniel was, "and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book" (12:1).

This deliverance will happen. In the face of a flood from the dragon, perhaps a reference to some kind of military operation against Israel, Israel will be given wings to flee into the wilderness and the ground will swallow up her enemies. It will not be the first time God did that for Israel. At Sinai God said to Israel, "Ye have seen how I bore you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself" (Exod. 19:4). And speaking of God's protection of Israel from her Egyptian pursuers as she crossed the Red Sea, Moses recounts, "Who is like unto Thee, O Lord! Thou stretchedst forth thy right hand, the earth swallowed them" (Exod. 15: 11-12). God's protection is nothing new for Israel.

Frustrated, Satan will go after the woman's seed who keep God's commandments and the testimony of Jesus (v. 17). I think this indicates that the woman of chapter 12, Israel of the last 3.5 years of the tribulation, cannot be described on the whole yet at this point as those who keep God's commandments and the testimony of Jesus. But there is a remnant, who are yet in Zion rather than the wilderness, the 144,000 of chapter 14. These are the first-fruits of Israel's salvation. God protects them too, even though the earth

never opens for their protection and many undoubtedly ultimately suffer and are martyred. Satan can only touch the body. We fear not him. Even if he destroys our body, the dragon is doomed because he cannot touch the soul unless we let him.

We are God's protected ones too. Wings of protection are available to individual saints each and every day. Isa. 40:28-31, "Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding. He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall: But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."

Conclusion: Let's take one last look at verse 12 as we close this morning. Will you rejoice some day with those who dwell in God's heaven as God's justified and as God's protected? Or will you be one of the earth-dwellers upon whom the voice of heaven pronounces the Woe of this verse?

Everyone dwells, but some do so in heaven and others do so on earth. Everyone is accused, but some of the accused are justified and others are condemned. Everyone is attacked by the dragon, but some are protected and others are doomed with him because they have been deceived by him. The choice is ours. There is a true gospel for sinners deceived by the dragon. It calls us to repent of our sin and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and it promises that we shall be saved.

“A man came – I think it was actually in Philadelphia – on one occasion to the great George Whitefield and asked if he might print his sermons. Whitefield gave this reply; he said, ‘Well, I have no inherent objection, if you like, but you will never be able to put on the printed page the lightning and the thunder.’ That is the distinction – the sermon, and the ‘lightning and the thunder.’ To Whitefield this was of very great importance, and it should be of very great importance to all preachers, as I hope to show. You can put the sermon into print, but not the lightning and the thunder. That comes into the act of preaching and cannot be conveyed by cold print. Indeed it almost baffles the descriptive powers of the best reporters.”

– David Martin Lloyd-Jones,

*Preachers and Preaching*