

Be Aware!

The Devil is at War with YOU!

Thursday, 8/25 at 7 + Sunday, 8/28 at 8:00 & 10:45

11th Sunday after Pentecost / 10th Sunday after Trinity – 2011

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ: Can you see the big picture? *Do you really know what life is all about?* It's easy to *major in the minors* – to get so busy with the meaningless things of life that we lose sight of what is most important!

So what is on YOUR list of important items: food, phone, TV, computer, sports, home, work, vacation, exercise? Such things can *consume* our time, efforts, and money, *but none of them are part of the big picture!* The devil, *who is a liar and a master of deception*, has already brought sin, corruption, and death into our world. *But he is not finished;* he also wants us to suffer with him forever and ever! Now, turning to Revelation chapter 12, *let us understand the big picture:*

1. **Jesus' Birth, Life, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension:**

- a. ¹ A great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars [the OT Church]; ² and she was with child [the Savior referenced in Gen. 3:15; Mt. 1:21; Gal. 4:4-5; etc.]; and she cried out, being in labor and in pain to give birth [Jesus' birth, Christmas].

- b. **3** Then another sign appeared in heaven: and behold, a great red dragon [the devil] having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads were seven diadems [see Becker, 182-183]. **4** And his tail [draws or drags] a third of the stars of heaven [possibly as he corrupted 1/3 of the holy angels] and threw them to the earth [demon-possessed people are controlled by good angels who have become evil angels]. And the dragon [the devil] stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she gave birth he might devour her child [remember, God said this to the devil about the coming Savior: *NAU Genesis 3:15* "...He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel." Therefore, beginning with His birth, the devil tried to destroy our Savior].
- c. **5** And she gave birth to a son, a male child [Jesus], who is [about] to rule all the nations with a rod of iron [and now is ruling, Rev. 1:5]; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne [even though the devil wanted to STOP Jesus from being our Savior, Jesus successfully lived, died, rose, and ascended – thus He FINISHED His work].
- d. **6** Then the woman [the NT Church] fled into the wilderness [a lowly place] where she had [lit., has] a place prepared by God [for His holy children; John 17:15], so that [they [the Trinity?]] might nourish her] for one thousand two hundred and sixty days [the NT era].

2. **Jesus Defeats the Devil and His Angels:** **7** And there was war in heaven, Michael [probably Jesus; He alone has the power to defeat the dragon] and his angels [the holy angels] [waged] war with the dragon. The dragon and his angels [the demons] waged war, **8** and they were not strong enough, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven. **9** And the great dragon was thrown down, the

serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him [In the book of Job we are told about a time when Satan had the freedom to be in heaven: ^{NAU} Job 1:6 "...the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them." That occurred about 2,000 years before Jesus was born; however, in connection with Jesus completing His saving work, the devil and his angels were defeated and thrown down (John 12:31)].

3. **Rejoicing and Warning:**

- a. **10** Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, he who accuses them before our God day and night." The devil used to be in God's presence reminding Him of our many sins [See Becker, 188]; however, now, Jesus has †finished His work, †taken away our sins, and †cleansed us with His blood (1 John 1:7).
- b. **11** And they [believers] overcame him [our accuser] because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death. Christians ♦trust in Jesus' shed blood, ♦confess what they believe, and ♦love their Savior *more than their own physical lives!*
- c. **12** For this reason, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them. Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he has *only* a short time." Residents of heaven – REJOICE, *in Christ we win!*
Residents of earth – WOE, *the devil is crazy-mad and super-determined to take you out!*

4. **As the Devil Seeks to Devour, God Protects:**

- a. ¹³ And when the dragon saw that he was thrown down to the earth, he [pursued] the woman [*the Church*] who gave birth to the male *child* [*pursued to catch and destroy*]. ¹⁴ But the two wings of the great eagle were given to the woman, so that she could fly into the wilderness to her place, where she [is] nourished for a time and times and half a time [$1+2+\frac{1}{2}=3\frac{1}{2}$, *the NT era*] from the presence of the serpent. Regarding His church, Jesus said: "...the gates of Hades will not overpower it." (Mt. 16:18 NAU).
- b. ¹⁵ And the serpent poured water like a river out of his mouth after the woman [*the Church*], so that he might cause her to be swept away with the flood. ¹⁶ But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and [swallowed] the river which the dragon poured out of his mouth. Satan's second attempt at destroying the whole church also failed!
- c. ¹⁷ So the dragon was enraged with the woman, and went off to make war with the rest of her children [*individual believers*], [the ones keeping] the commandments of God and [having] the testimony / witness / evidence of Jesus [*a definition of believers; see Becker, 193*]. The devil is like a super-powerful lion, using every deception in the book to destroy our souls; therefore, let us diligently follow James 4:7 which says: "Submit therefore to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you." (NAU)

Conclusion: And all God's people said: Amen!