

The expulsion of the Devil

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[0 : 00] Now let us take up Revelation chapter 12 from verse 7. Revelation chapter 12 at verse 7.

And there was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon. And the dragon fought and his angels and prevailed not.

Neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent called the devil, and Satan which deceives the whole world.

He was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation and strength and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ.

For the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony.

[1 : 14] And they loved not their lives unto death. Therefore rejoice ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea, for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.

We're not to think of the book of Revelation as a progressive series of events leading up to the end of world history.

It's a book that does show us world history in a series of visions. And these series of visions are complete in themselves.

For example, we looked at the seven seals of the scroll that was opened, showing to us the history of God's providence from the time of Christ onwards to the second coming.

And it's the same with the sounding of the seven trumpets. It's God showing to us the history of his judgments upon the world from the time of Christ onwards to the second coming.

[2 : 41] We will see the same with regard to the emptying of the seven bowls upon the earth. And interspersed there are these little scenes that are given to us to show us some of these points in history being explained.

It's as if you see our Lord had said to John, come up here. You are perplexed and you are baffled and you are bewildered by what you are seeing taking place in this world that you are living in. You cannot understand the power of evil that seems to be taking hold upon men and nations. Well, John, I want you to see it from our point of view.

I want you to see how evil is developing but how it is defeated. And so, sometimes the same thing is shown over and over again in order to emphasize a different point.

It is as if you take a series of pictures from different angles and you are looking at the same object but you are seeing it from a different point of view.

[3 : 57] Now, we were looking at verses 1-6 last Sabbath evening. There were these three figures introduced onto the stage of heaven. The radiant woman.

This great wonder woman clothed with the sun, the moon under her feet and upon her head. A crown of twelve stars. This is a picture, isn't it, of the church, as we said last Sabbath evening.

There is the church, a radiant being crowned with the glory of heaven. The moon, which is an earthly luminary under her feet.

She is victorious over the earth and she is on this crown of twelve stars. The twelve tribes of Israel, the twelve apostles.

she has been crowned with the teaching and the authority of the patriarchs of all, the Old Testament church.

[5 : 09] Crowned with the dignity and the authority of the New Testament church, the teaching of the twelve apostles of our Lord. And then there is a child that she is going to bring forth.

And Christ Jesus in his human nature came from Israel, which was the Old Testament branch of the church. And this other figure appears to this great red dragon.

This dragon of fearful proportions. red, as we have said already, because it's the color of fire and the color of blood.

This destructive creature. And he is there to devour this child, this child that the woman brings forth. But he's not able to do that.

And with his mighty tail he sweeps a third of the stars out of heaven to the earth. It's a picture, isn't it, of the fall of the devil and his angels from heaven.

[6 : 24] The child was caught up to heaven. That is, figurative of the ascension. And Christ Jesus was caught up to the right hand of his father.

And there he is now, our Lord Jesus Christ, beyond all temptations. And although he was tempted of the devil while he was in this world, he is beyond the devil's temptations.

He is beyond all suffering that could be inflicted on him and that was inflicted on him while he was here on earth. And he is beyond death.

Do you remember his prayer? Glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.

That was his prayer to his father. And after having accomplished the work that his father entrusted to him, his father said, Yes, my son. The glory that was yours is given back to you.

[7 : 35] You have triumphed magnificently. Triumphed gloriously. And now there is this place at my right hand. And I will make your enemy your foodstool.

And so as we come now to verse 7 it's a picture showing to us the expulsion of the devil from his place of authority.

Verses 7 to 9 There was war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon and the dragon fought and his angels and prevailed not.

Neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out. That old serpent you will notice it's very interesting to see the words that are used here.

Great dragon old serpent the devil Satan which deceives the whole world he was cast out into the earth and his angels were cast out with him.

[8 : 53] well then here was this war in heaven Michael and his angels now we must remember that this book of revelation is not to be taken literally it's a book of symbolism and it speaks to us here of the dragon the old serpent old you see serpent it wasn't the serpent in the garden of Eden that tempted Eve the old serpent old as to reminders of his maturity and there he is the devil the devil that is a word from the Greek meaning slanderer and Satan is the word from Hebrew meaning adversary you will never read the word devil in the old testament he is always called

Satan there but in the new testament he is called the devil and who is this person this superior intelligence well this was one of the angels let us remember that he wasn't created the devil he was among the angels of God these angels whom God had created and he was a superior angel just as there are archangels and an archangel means someone who is greater than an ordinary angel here then was this mighty being superior and what are we to learn from what the Bible has to say about him justice that he sought to exalt himself above God he wasn't satisfied with his position he wasn't satisfied with even the superior position that

God had given him in the administration of heaven but he exalted himself above God God if not to be equal with God even above God and so he along with those who apostatized and rebelled with him kept not as it tells us in the epistle of Jude kept not their first estate they didn't keep their first estate they left their own habitation and God flung them out of heaven and they are reserved in judgment under chains to the judgment of the great day and so you see this apostasy that took place in heaven this rebellion it couldn't be tolerated and as soon as it began it tells us that it was opposed and who opposed this rebellion it was

Michael and his angels there was war in heaven Michael and his angels fought against the dragon now you will notice that it wasn't the dragon who fought against Michael but as soon as this rebellion began as soon as this apostasy started Michael immediately attacks the dragon Michael and his angels they fought and the dragon and his angels they fought and prevailed not neither was their place found anymore in heaven and the great dragon was cast out that old serpent called the devil and Satan which deceives the whole world he was cast out into the earth and his angels were cast out with him my dear friends what a word we have here the word of God which explains to us everything doesn't it it makes it so clear and it's so fascinating too in its own way well then we ask

who is

Michael the name Michael means who is like God you know this angel is mentioned in the book of Daniel if you turn to Daniel chapter 10 and Daniel chapter 12 you will read there how he is called the prince of God's people the prince of the people of Israel and he was sent to Daniel to tell Daniel about the visions and to explain to him the visions that he was having while he was in captivity and again we find that Michael is mentioned in the epistle of Jude where it tells us in that epistle that he disputed with the devil away back in the days of Moses after Moses had died he disputed with the devil over the body of Moses that's in

[14 : 37] Jude verse 9 well then I ask the question who is Michael well I have to confess that I don't know John Calvin is of the opinion that Michael was none other than Christ it was a name given to Christ but then there are other commentators who disagree and say that Michael was one of the archangels just like Gabriel but it's immaterial whether he whether we accept Calvin's view or whether we accept the view of others it's immaterial because Christ Jesus isn't he the Lord of the angels and you can be sure of this that when that apostasy and that rebellion began in heaven it was Christ who summoned Michael if Michael was another being it was Christ who ordered him to attack ordered him into battle and in that battle that took place the devil was overcome and he was expelled from his position of authority and then of course when the devil saw that he was expelled from this place of authority this is when he tried to destroy the child of the woman because God had ordained that his son must go into the world to save his people and it's in the epistle to the Hebrews that we read this that our Lord

Jesus took flesh and blood that's what it tells us in the epistle to the Hebrews that our Lord Jesus took flesh and blood why this is what the writer to the Hebrews says is the reason why he took flesh and blood that by means of death and he could only die through flesh and blood that by means of death he might destroy him that hath the power of death that is the devil and deliver all those who by fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage now do you not see how the word of God is casting light on all this and showing to us that this is the reason for the venom of the devil when he tried to snatch and kill and destroy the child of the woman he knew you see that our Lord coming in flesh and blood was going to destroy him and it's interesting you know we read in Luke together this evening where Luke tells us that after the victorious mission of the 70 you see Jesus had sent out these 70 disciples he said look I give you authority I give you power over evil spirits and they came back and they rejoiced and they said Lord the very spirits are subject to us and Jesus said this to them yes he said I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven you know Satan's position is finished Satan's position is at an end Satan has been thrown out of heaven you know that figure of being driven from heaven a great dragon was cast out that old serpent the devil cast out into the earth that figure is expressive of a loss of power you see to fall from heaven is to be defeated and that's why

Jesus tells us in John's gospel now he says is the judgment of this world now shall the prince of this world be cast out you see the devil could not be allowed to dwell in heaven after he opposed God he had to be hurled out and he was allowed to be hurled out onto the earth and from that time you see he has tried to thwart God's purpose he can no longer have any effect in heaven but he can have any effect upon this world and here is man made in the image of God and the devil sees man made in the image of God and although he says to God I hate you but I can't touch you but this man this creature that you've made in your image

I hate him and I'll destroy him and that's why our Lord came to redeem to oppose the devil and his work and so the woman was there the church to bear the humanity of our Lord the woman identified with Israel and we have seen last as we said last Sabbath evening how the devil tried to destroy the seed of the woman right from the beginning you take for example and this is just in passing take for example a book like the book of Esther you read it through there's no mention of God in it and you say to yourself well what is the purpose of that book in the Bible well you can see the purpose of that book in the Bible now because Haman wanted to destroy Israel but he wasn't allowed to destroy Israel because God saw to it that there was this young woman

[21 : 22] Esther a Jewess with her uncle Mordecai and God saw to it that Mordecai gained a place of eminence in the eyes of King Ahasuerus and that Ahasuerus when he was seeking for a wife saw Esther and this woman was brought to the kingdom as it says for such a time as this to preserve these Jewish people in order that Christ might come as it had been ordained oh the devil no wonder he's called that old serpent he's rife mature in evil he knows every device he'll try

everything to support the purpose of God but you see he has been unseated he has been expelled from his position of authority but now we go on to this second point yes he has been expelled and we come to this second point the triumph of Christ on behalf of his elect people verse 10

I heard says John a loud voice saying in heaven now is come salvation and strength and the kingdom of our God and the power of his Christ for the accuser of our brethren is cast down which accused them before our God day and night and they overcame him by the blood of the lamb and by the word of their testimony and they love not their lives unto death therefore rejoice ye heavens and ye that dwell on the earth and so on you know in the position of authority what was the devil able to do what was he able to do the devil in the position of authority that he had and he's still able to do it because although he's down here and not up there he's still able to do it well he's able to accuse he is called here the accuser of the brethren and that is why we read in Job chapter 1 how Satan came into the presence of

God and he said here is this man Job that you're so pleased with this man Job you've set a hedge about him you've got him under your control he's within your love but says Satan to God put him into my hands I tell you he'll curse you to your face leave him to me I'll motivate him against you I'll show you what kind of a man Job is and so God said to Satan he's in your hand do what you wish but touch not his life and again we read something similar in the book of Zechariah where it tells us in that strange prophecy he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him here was

Joshua the high priest standing beside the angel of the Lord and here you see at his elbow Satan trying to resist Joshua putting everything in his way as a stumbling block to him and you know the devil still is the same that word means slanderer you know what a slanderer is one who goes around telling stories to belittle someone stories that aren't true when your character is slandered you know what it means and here is the devil who slanders the character of God's people but you see he cannot succeed there if you are a Christian what is the devil trying to do he's trying to slander you slander your character and mine ah what will he say to God this man this woman see them hypocrites they're not real

Christians they don't have a spark of grace in them if they had grace in them would you think they would do this or do that or think this or think that that's what the devil is doing he's the slanderer and he is slandering your character and mine before God but you see he can't succeed because as it tells us here salvation and strength and the kingdom of our God and the power of his Christ have come for the accuser of our brethren is cast down which accused them before God day and night and they overcame him by the blood of the lamb oh my dear Christian friend that is how you overcome the devil it's by the blood of the lamb through the blood of Christ the devil can no longer be your accuser you only have to say the blood of

[27 : 38] Jesus Christ God's son cleanseth me from all sin and so what can the devil accuse you of if you've been cleansed from all your sin he can't raise an accusation against you he can't say oh but you're a hypocrite you've done this or that or the other you can say the blood of Christ has cleansed me and that is why the apostle Paul puts it like this in his epistle to the Romans who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect who no human being can lay anything to the charge of God's elect no fallen angel can lay anything to the charge of God's elect and the devil the accuser of God's people he cannot lay anything to the charge of God's elect who can lay anything to the charge of

God's elect is the apostle Paul and he goes on to answer that question by saying it is God that justifies who is he that condemn it is Christ now listen to his words it is Christ that died oh the blood of Christ it cleanseth from sin it is Christ that died yea rather that is risen again who is even at the right hand of God who also maketh intercession for us and Christ's blood has cleansed us and Christ's intercession for us goes on in heaven and isn't it in the first epistle of John that we read this the blood of Jesus Christ he says God son cleanseth us from all sin so where are you now you devil you accuser of the brethren you slanderer you who take up these false accusations against the Lord's people where are you you cannot accuse because the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses from all sins and that is what our Lord wanted John to know I heard a loud voice saying in heaven now is come salvation and strength and the kingdom of our God and the power of his Christ for the accuser of our brethren is cast down he's put out of his position of authority which accused them before our God day and night and they overcame him by the blood of the lamb and then also it goes on to say and by the word of their testimony that's how you overcome this accuser by the word of

their testimony it means doesn't it that the Christian character is formed by the word of God you see God by his Holy Spirit applies his word and we become submissive to the word of God and we learn to walk in God's ways and to do God's will oh before this we walked in the devil's ways and we pleased the devil well you know it says in the book of Deuteronomy that cursed is the being that takes a blind man and leads him along the wrong road to his destruction well the curse of God rests on the devil because we were blind and here he was leading us leading us along that wrong road and leading us to our doom to our destruction but now by the grace of God we've been turned out of that road and we are walking now along the road to heaven what a beautiful road it is and the shoes of heaven are on our feet and the word of

God is in our hearts and the will of God has been made known to us and you see I ask this question what can the devil do against that he cannot say to God this man is walking in the wrong way because this man is walking in the right way he cannot say to God this man's heart is full of mischief because this man's heart is full of God's word he cannot say this man is not doing according to your will because this man is doing according to the will of God because God has given to that man his word and he has applied it to his heart by his Holy Spirit and the devil cannot undo that nor can the devil overturn it it's impossible and so the Christian witnesses by his life he witnesses to the word of the truth of

[33 : 37] God and he witnesses to Christ and that is how we overcome the accuser of our brethren is cast down and they the Lord's people overcame him by the blood of the lamb and by the word of their testimony and then it says this that they love not their lives unto death that is to say a Christian man or a Christian woman carries his devotion to Christ he carries that devotion to the very end of his life to death itself oh we may have our personal pleasures yes we may have we may have our personal interests we may also have our personal enjoyments and our personal occupations but isn't this true

Christian friend your personal pleasures and interests and enjoyments and occupations are all subservient to the glory of God and to the service of the Savior in other words what I am trying to say is this Christ has won your heart hasn't he he has won your heart you've fallen in love with him and nothing else can come between you and Christ and because Christ has won your heart you've triumphed over the devil by the grace of God the devil has been defeated by Christ and he knows his time is short and because the devil cannot touch the throne of

God and because he cannot touch the people of God what does he do he exercises his vehemence against the earth and the people of the world and that is why John says woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea for the devil is come down unto you having great wrath because he knoweth that he hath but a short time and you can see the devil at work now in this world full of hate full of enmity to this world and hell bent on destroying it and destroying all whom he can get in it well I leave this section with you it's a wonderful picture isn't it in these verses the kingdom of God the authority of Christ they have been established by the work of our Lord Jesus our Lord Jesus work of redemption yes the victory has been won but let's remember we're still in the world and in the world we still have to pray lead us not into temptation deliver us from evil we still have to pray thy kingdom come but oh we are so thankful and I read this quotation to you I thought it was a rather beautiful quotation I read it from an Anglican a doctor Vaughan and he puts it like this all he says is ready the throne is erected multitudes of subjects flock around it and do homage homage of heart and life to him who sits thereon but not yet is every enemy made his footstool sin still struggles still in individual cases prevails still in many parts of the earth reigns paramount and death which follows after sin is not yet destroyed by the crowning miracle of the general resurrection but says

Vaughan the accuser of our brethren is already cast down he could not coexist in heaven with the mediator and the intercessor the entrance of the advocate is the expulsion of the slanderer the work of redemption accomplished is the silencing of the accuser above as well as the silencing of the accuser within if I've said anything this evening I hope it's this Christ has done a marvelous thing for you if you're a Christian he's blotted out your sins so the devil cannot accuse you and not only that but he will see that you are kept to the end until you are received by him into heaven it's great to be protected by

[39 : 44] Christ but then I ask are you not a Christian the devil is come down unto you having great wrath because he knows that his time is short I say flee from him flee from the devil whatever you do and flee into the arms of Christ and you're safe there let us pray our gracious God we thank thee

for the revelation that thou has given to us of all that has been accomplished all that has been done done we bless thee for this amazing victory by our

Lord Jesus Christ we thank thee for the wonderful benefits that he has procured for us through that work of redemption we thank thee that we are taken out of the thralldom of sin and darkness and brought into the marvelous light of God O Lord we pray that we may walk hand in hand with thee until we reach journey's end and be welcomed into the everlasting paradise of God at the end of our days in Jesus name we ask it Amen