

SERMON: ARMED FOR VICTORY!

A variety of passages in Scripture have a number of applications, especially the PROPHETIC passages. Some of those are literal; some are allegorical. Some only apply to the past; they're historical in nature. At the same time, some are currently applicable, and some pertain only to the future. For example, Daniel's 7-year time-table also applies to events that remain to be fulfilled in the future and gives us details of the seven years-long tribulation.

Chapter 12 in the Book of Revelation is one of those allegorical passages that applies historically, currently and in the future. There, we find a strange picture of spiritual warfare: a dragon chasing a woman and trying to devour her children. While the picture is a strange one, prophetic passages often are. Remember the story of Gideon sneaking into the army camp? He heard a Midianite soldier talking about his dream of a large bread rolling into their camp. His fellow-soldier knew the application: It was Gideon's army coming to destroy them.

The story of spiritual warfare – the struggle between good and evil – is the epic theme that unites the whole scope of the Scriptures. It also had historical application, reaching back to creation and before the fall of man. It is a story of great suffering and much trouble. It is also the story of GREAT VICTORY! And the victory is OURS

This struggle began before the foundations of the Earth when Satan lead a civil war in the heavenly places. Isaiah 14:12 – 15 is part of a passage – a message of condemnation against the evil king of Israel's enemy, Babylon. It describes the fall of Satan from heaven.

We understand that Satan was one of the three arch-angels: Gabriel, Michael, and Lucifer (Satan). That makes him a part of creation. While he is powerful, his strength is nothing compared the that of the Creator. Apparently, he rose up in pride and wanted to take over and be worshipped. Rev. 12:4 tells us that he caused 1/3 of the 'stars' (angels) to fall with him. They were cast out of heaven and ended up here on Earth.

Genesis tells us that he continued to initiate rebellion, not in the angelic/demonic realm, but in the human race. With his deception, he lead Eve and then Adam away from their loyal obedience to God and caused them to rebel against God's leadership.

Although this battle rages all around us, we know the final outcome: WE WIN! Satan loses! Matthew 25:41 clearly tells us about the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. Satan also knows that it is a lost cause as far as he is concerned – but he keeps on fighting, fighting, fighting. So should we!

In the meantime, it is our responsibility to 'fight the good fight.' Thankfully, we have the training and equipment to ensure victory in our personal lives. Listen to what Revelation 12:11 says, ***"and they overcame him by the blood of the lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death."*** (KJV).