

Dr. David L. Mathewson, Revelation, Session 17, Revelation 11-12: Seventh Trumpet, Woman/dragon/son 6-Min. Video Overview

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Today, we are diving headfirst into one of the most vivid, dramatic, and, let's be honest, one of the most confusing visions in the entire Bible. It's from the book of Revelation, of course, and it's this huge cosmic drama that basically pulls back the curtain on the spiritual war happening behind all of human history. So let's get right into it.

Just imagine this. You're reading a book. You get to the grand finale.

The ultimate victory is declared. And then you look down and realize you're only on page 150 of a 300-page book. You'd be thinking, wait, what? Well, that's the exact puzzle that readers face at the end of Revelation chapter 11, and it sets the stage for the incredible vision we're about to unpack.

So let's set the scene. We're at the very end of Revelation 11. The seventh and final trumpet has just been blown by an angel.

And this is it. This is the moment everything has been building towards. It really, really feels like the end of the story.

I mean, listen to that. Voices in heaven make this incredible declaration. The rule of the world has officially been transferred.

God's kingdom is here on earth as it is in heaven. It sounds absolutely final. The long-awaited victory has finally arrived.

You know, all the major plot points seem to be wrapped up. God is reigning. Judgment is happening.

The good guys are being rewarded. The author even stops using the phrase the one who is to come, because, well, he's come. You could literally end the book right here, and it would make perfect sense.

And yet it doesn't end. We're only about halfway through the book. Then, out of nowhere, in chapter 12, this completely new and kind of strange vision kicks off.

So what gives? If the war is won and the kingdom has come, what else is there to talk about? This is the big question that opens up the entire second half of Revelation. While the answer is that the book is about to show us the exact same story, but from a totally new perspective, chapter 12 is pure apocalyptic literature. It's going to pull back the veil on all the earthly events to show us the spiritual reality, the real source of the conflict God's people were facing.

And this new vision introduces us to three mysterious and incredibly powerful characters who just dominate the scene. We've got this glorious star-crowned woman, a terrifying multi-headed red dragon, and a male child who has a world-changing destiny. So the big question is, who are they? All right, this is where the fun begins.

It's time to do some decoding. Each of these figures is absolutely packed with symbolic meaning, and it's all drawn straight from the Old Testament. Understanding them is the key to unlocking this whole vision.

Okay, let's just break it down nice and simple. The woman, she represents the people of God. The dragon, he's identified as Satan, who works through oppressive human empires.

And the son, the one destined to rule with an iron scepter, that's the Messiah, Jesus Christ. Let's take a closer look at the woman, her crown of 12 stars. That's a direct callback to Joseph's dream back in Genesis, talking about the 12 sons of Israel.

So she represents the nation of Israel, who gave birth to the Messiah, but she's still around after the son's birth, which shows she also represents the New Testament people of God, the church. She's this continuous community of God's faithful people all throughout history. And then you have her adversary, the dragon.

The text flat-out tells us he's Satan, that ancient serpent from the Garden of Eden. But it's also deeper than that. In the Old Testament, dragon-like sea monsters were symbols for godless, oppressive empires that went after God's people.

Think Pharaoh's Egypt. So the dragon is both Satan himself and the evil human systems he inspires. And this paints such a brilliant picture of this central conflict.

I mean, think about it. This is the Christmas story, but told in apocalyptic code. You have Satan working through powers like King Herod, literally waiting to destroy the Messiah, the Son of God, at the very moment of his birth.

But here's the thing. The dragon fails, and his failure to destroy the sun and earth kicks off an even bigger conflict, a war in heaven, that reveals what's truly at stake. The vision kind of fast-forwards through the entire life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus, all in one moment.

The sun is snatched up to God, the dragon is totally thwarted, and this defeat on earth is immediately followed by a decisive battle in heaven. The archangel Michael leads the charge, and Satan is utterly defeated and kicked out for good. Okay, so this is the crucial question, right? When is this battle actually happening? Is this some ancient fight at the dawn of time? Or is it something that's still to come in the future? Well, the text actually gives us a very specific anchor point.

This verse right here, this is the key. A voice from heaven spells out exactly how the victory was won. It wasn't just with angelic swords.

The number one decisive weapon was the blood of the Lamb, and that points directly and unmistakably to one single event. So what does this mean? It means the war in heaven is an

apocalyptic, symbolic way of describing what Jesus accomplished on the cross. Satan's ultimate defeat, his eviction from his role as the accuser in heaven, was secured by Christ's death and resurrection.

The victory isn't coming; it's already happened. But hold on, this raises a huge question, not just for the first-century church, but for us too. If Satan has already been defeated, if the decisive victory has already been won, then why do Christians still face persecution, suffering, and even death? The vision answers this head-on.

The dragon, furious that he couldn't destroy the sun and now defeated in heaven, turns his rage on the only target he has left, the woman and her offspring. In other words, the church and its members right here on earth. And this is where we see this fascinating paradox.

The woman, that is, the church as a whole, the institution, is divinely protected by God. She can't be ultimately destroyed. But her offspring, that's individual Christians, they're still vulnerable.

Satan can still persecute them and even kill them. But why is he so furious? Why this intense persecution? The vision gives us the reason. It's because the devil knows his time is short.

His defeat is sealed, his final end is absolutely certain, and this knowledge just fills him with this desperate last-ditch fury. And this creates such a powerful image. The suffering that the church endures isn't a sign of Satan's strength.

It's the exact opposite. It's the violent, destructive death throes of an enemy who has already received a mortal wound. He's just flailing around, causing as much chaos as he possibly can before the end.

And this right here is the core message of encouragement for the people reading this for the first time. This vision completely reframes their experience. Their suffering wasn't a sign that God had abandoned them, or that evil was winning.

No, it was definitive proof that the decisive battle was over, the victory was secure, and their enemy was in his final, desperate moments. So the takeaway here is this profound shift in perspective. The vision tells believers then and now that while your struggles are incredibly real, they are just the final skirmishes in a war that has already been won.

And that leaves us with a question. How does knowing the ultimate outcome change how you view the battles you're facing today?