

“EARTH’S LONGEST WAR”

Rev. 12:13-17; 13:1

Pastor Keith E. Gephart

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INTRODUCTION

The Time of this event: beginning of the Great Tribulation—connection with verse 6.

The aftermath of the battle of vv. 7-12; Satan has come down with great wrath.

Should we be frightened? Should we feel intimidated?

Humans give far too much credit to Satan, and pay far too little attention to our powerful, omnipotent God.

I. THE DRAGON’S PERSISTENT PERSECUTION (13)

- Thrown down: why not give up?
- Rather, he pursues—i.e. persecutes the woman who gave birth to the male child—Messiah.
- This woman is the remnant—the visible people of God in the last days, especially Israel as repentant and seeking God.
- Cf. Mic. 5:3—the nation bears a child, and as he is born in their hearts she bears other spiritual children.
- Satan **evokes mixed admiration**: he does not give up; but such perseverance is due to the total perversity of his nature.

II. ISRAEL’S PROVIDENTIAL PROTECTION (14)

A. Wings as Eagle—God’s providential provision for safety.

- See Ex. 19:4; Dt. 32:11-12—He carried them on His wings.
- Is. 40:31—He gives them wings!
- Note two wings—one would not be effective.
- Note the “great” eagle showing its power and success.

B. Wilderness stronghold

- Cf. Sinai-Moses & Israel; Elijah; Maccabees
- “Her place”—God has a special place providentially appointed for her.
- Likely includes scattered locations—not merely Petra.

C. Half-week Sustenance

- “Time, times, and half a time”—cf. v. 6: 1260 days
- Cf. Elijah at Cherith and at the widow’s house (1 K. 17; 3 ½ years—James 5:17)
- 3 ½ years—see **Dan. 7:25; 12:1, 7**—note Michael, and the persecution and humbling of God’s people.
- Protected from the “face” (presence) of the serpent

III. THE SERPENT’S PROFUSE PROPAGANDA (15)

- The symbol of ‘water’ likely because he is a sea-dragon.
- River and flood often portrays **overwhelming trouble** (Is. 59:19; 43:2).
- This is a *total effort* to destroy God’s people [cf. ISIS in Iraq and Syria].
- Compare the Red Sea and Pharaoh’s army, and Jordan’s waters at Jericho.

A. An expeditionary force?

- See Egypt's force under Pharaoh Necho defeated at Carchemish (Jer. 46:7-8); note the rising and surging waters of the Nile.
- See Nebuchadnezzar's army's invasion of Philistia in Jer. 47:2-3 portrayed as overflowing waters of the Euphrates.

B. Rivers of Propaganda and Lies? (See **Rev. 13:14; Mt. 24:24**)

IV. THE BEAST'S POLITICAL PROBLEMS (16)

A. The Earth helped the woman by opening its mouth to drink up the river poured out of the dragon's mouth.

- Could this be a reference to some natural catastrophe (earth) affecting the beast's army or military efforts?
- Does it allude to the destruction of his army?
- Cf. Ex. 15:11-12—Earth swallowed the Egyptian armies in the Red Sea.
- Cf. Num. 16:32—Korah and his company swallowed by the Earth
- Could it refer to the difficulty in locating and destroying the refugees?
- Could political turmoil and problems be included?

B. Possibly the "Rest of the Seed" of the woman (v. 17) were involved in thwarting Satan's activity [via the activity of the Beast of ch. 13] against the woman.

- He was angry with the woman
- He went off to war with the rest of her seed

V. SATAN'S POLEMICAL PASSION (17)

A. Against the Ideal Nation—if he can't hurt the woman's Son, he can hurt the Son through His mother!

B. Against Individual Believers

The Son, then the seed—cf. Acts 9:4-5 (Saul persecuting Jesus through His people); Jn. 15:20-21

1. They keep God's commandments—thus they love Him and know Him.
2. They hold Jesus' testimony—both what He testified, and what they testify to Him.

CONCLUSION

There is a long history of the attempt of Satan to destroy the "seed" (cf. Gen. 3:15); the Bible notes many attempts involving Israel—God's covenant people.

Abel, Abraham's : birth of the son, sacrifice of son; wife of Abraham, wife of Isaac & Abimelech, birth of Jacob, famine and 12 sons, Israel in Egypt, Babylonian Captivity; Haman & Jews, Maccabees, Herod and the infants, attempts on Jesus' life; boat on the lake; Garden of Gethsemane, persecutions of the church, all the modern attempts to destroy Israel, etc.

Now the Dragon proceeds to the seashore—13:1; what is he attempting next?