

THRU THE BIBLE EXPOSITION

Revelation: God's Revelation To His Servants Today On Events About To Occur

Part IV: "The Things Which Shall Be Hereafter": Events After The Rapture Of The Church

C. The Great Tribulation Period, Revelation 6:1-19:21

5. A Second View Of The Great Tribulation Guiding Us To Avoid Group Idolatry, Revelation 11:1-19:21

b. God's MOTIVATION And GUIDANCE On Dependently Following Scripture To Avoid Group Idolatry (Revelation 11:14-12:12)

Introduction: (To show the need . . .)

After our worship service last Sunday, one man told me he is seeing a lot of opposition to Christianity. Indeed, Paul taught us in 2 Timothy 3:12 KJV that "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution."

However, Brannon Howse (Religious Trojan Horse, 2012, p. 4) reported that in his Worldview Weekend meetings he warns that "our greatest opposition" in the future as Bible-believing Christians "will . . . come . . . from those who have the title 'reverend' or 'pastor,'" and that in fulfillment of a number of prophetic Scriptures!

We thus need **motivation** and **guidance** on *heeding* God *amid* the pressures to **conform** to **apostasy!**

Need: *So we ask, "With today's pressure to compromise with group idolatry versus following Scripture, WHY be MOTIVATED to FOLLOW Scripture's God DEPENDENTLY, and HOW can we ACHIEVE this?"*

- I. We learned in Revelation 11:1-13 that under anti-Semitic pressure caused in part by the non-literal interpretation of Scripture, Israel will act independently of Scripture's God to compromise her temple site in the Great Tribulation, giving ecumenical Gentiles the inner court right outside the Holy Place.
- II. However, this compromise, a CAPITAL OFFENSE in God's eyes (Num. 1:51; 2:2; 3:5-10), will lead to His third "woe" judgment, the seventh and final trumpet of God's trumpet judgments, Revelation 11:14.
- III. That final "woe," capping two former trumpet "woe" judgments of man's being tormented by demons (Rev. 8:13-9:21), will involve an ENRAGED SATAN afflicting mankind with great trouble, Rev. 12:12b.
- IV. Rev. 11:15-12:6 thus is an interlude to **MOTIVATE US TODAY to AVOID COMPROMISE with ERROR:**
 - A. God reminds us in Rev. 11:15-19 that in the *end*, we will give an **account** to **Him** as **Sovereign Lord** for how we lived as believers, motivating us **uncompromisingly** to heed His Word today for His future reward:
 1. The sounding of the seventh trumpet signals the final segment of God's Great Tribulation judgments when He takes control of the world's kingdoms for Christ's eternal reign, Revelation 11:15.
 2. Thus, the 24 elders, picturing the raptured Church in heaven, will fall on their faces to worship God and thank Him for exercising His great power to reign, for countering the errant wrath of the nations against believers by His own wrath and for judging all men and rewarding the upright, Revelation 11:16-18.
 3. Heaven's temple will then be opened to express signals of God's judgment on the group apostasy of lost men with their Jerusalem temple that is compromised in independence from Scripture's God, Rev. 11:19!
 - B. God also reveals that **all** such errant activity **performed independently of His Biblical directives is fueled by Satan**, so we **must dependently follow God's Word to avoid spiritual defeat in OUR era**, Revelation 12:1-6:
 1. Before God gives His last "woe" of Satanic affliction for group idolatry to men on earth (Rev. 12:12b), He explains why He is giving that "woe," and starts to describe a long, great historical conflict. In it, Israel is seen as a woman (Rev. 12:1, 5), with the sun, moon and 12 stars akin to Joseph's Gen. 37:9-11 dream. However, the sun **here clothes** Israel and the moon is at her **feet** to show her **permanence** as a **nation** due to the Abrahamic Covenant (Gen. 12:1-3) and God's Jer. 31:35-36 lasting ordinances of sun, moon and stars, Rev. 12:1. [This is why God turns the sun and moon in the 6th seal judgment to sackcloth and blood respectively versus eradicating them, Rev. 6:12: they cannot be eradicated until He fulfills His Abrahamic Covenant, so the sackcloth and blood signal Israel's respective woe and suffering in the Great Tribulation.]
 2. Israel's history is thus like a woman in labor (Rev. 12:2) who bears Christ to rule the world with a rod of iron (Rev. 12:5a; Ps. 2:9), and the **cause** of all her suffering is **sin and Satanic opposition**, Rev. 12:3-6:
 - a. The Rev. 12:3 great red dragon with 7 heads, 10 horns and 7 crowns is identified in Rev. 12:9 as Satan. His red color typifies his great sins (Isaiah 1:18), and his 7 heads, 10 horns and 7 crowns typify the antichrist's revived Roman Empire that Satan empowers in the Great Tribulation, Rev. 13:1; 17:9-12.
 - b. In Rev. 12:4a, Satan draws 1/3 of the "stars of heaven" with his tail and casts them to the earth, recalling Dan. 8:10 where Antiochus Epiphanes (171-165 B. C.) was predicted horribly to persecute the Jews; Ryrie St. Bible, KJV, 1978, ftns. to Dan. 8:9, 10-11 & 14. Thus, in the Great Tribulation, Satan through the

antichrist's rule will destroy 1/3 of the people of Israel (cf. Zech. 13:8-9), for as the Rev. 9:18-19 demon armies will kill 1/3 of men in the 6th trumpet in part with their serpent-like tails, Satan in the 7th trumpet judgment (Rev. 11:14-15) will destroy 1/3 of Israel *alone* with his power as typified in his tail (Rev. 12:4) in God's judgment for Israel's capital offense of compromising the temple in the Great Tribulation!

3. Furthermore, since Israel's final victory is due to God's Abrahamic Covenant that is fulfilled in Abraham's seed, Christ, (Gal. 3:16), Satan focused on trying to destroy Jesus right at His birth, Revelation 12:4b.
 4. After Israel produced Him, Christ was caught up to heaven to God's throne in His ascension, Rev. 12:5.
 5. Rev. 12:6 "fast-forwards" from Christ's Rev. 12:5 ascension *past* the **Church** to the *future last half* of the **Great Tribulation** when Israel flees from Satan (Rev. 12:13-16). Satan thus works *now* to oppose Biblical Christianity (Matt. 16:18b) as is repeatedly stated in the Revelation 2-3 messages to the Seven Churches! Indeed, 1 John 5:19 in the Church era reveals Satan currently controls the whole world system.
 6. Thus, ***all pressures to act independently of and hence contrary to Scripture in history, including Church History in Revelation 2-3, are fueled by Satan to counter God's fulfillment of His Abrahamic Covenant!***
- V. **Rev. 12:7-12a then reveals *HOW WE TODAY OVERCOME SATAN'S PRESSURES to COMPROMISE:***
- A. In the midst of the Great Tribulation, God's angels will remove Satan and his demons' access to heaven where Satan throughout history had sought to defeat believers by (1) deceiving the world to think believers are wrong for uncompromisingly heeding Scripture, and by (2) accusing them of sin so God must judge them. There will be a great war between the archangel Michael (Jude 9) and his angels versus Satan and his demons, and Satan and his demons will lose and be cast out, no longer having access to accuse believers, Rev. 12:7-10.
 - B. In *light* of Revelation 12:7-10, Revelation 12:11 then describes *how* we believers currently *overcome* Satan's works, ***leading US to function DEPENDENTLY on GOD'S BIBLICAL DIRECTIVES for VICTORY:***
 1. First, believers overcome Satan's accusations of sin by "the blood of the Lamb," by relying on the merits of Christ's death for forgiveness -- positionally by faith in the Gospel at salvation, Col. 1:14; experientially by confession of sin in daily life as believers, 1 John 1:9; Ibid., Ryrie, ftn to Rev. 12:11 with 12:10b.
 2. Second, believers overcome Satan by "the word of their testimony," by telling the pure truth regardless of pressures caused by Satan's deceiving the world to think believers are wrong for not compromising.
 3. Third, believers overcome Satan by "not loving their lives unto death," by not compromising at any cost.
- VI. **Having lost access to heaven to accuse believers and knowing this means he has a short time before God judges him, an *INFURIATED SATAN* will turn to afflict men on the earth, the third "woe," Rev. 12:12b.**

Lesson: (1) God *MOTIVATES* us to avoid group idolatry *TODAY* by (a) reminding us of our final accounting to Him and of the severity of His wrath against compromise that will elicit His letting an infuriated Satan terribly persecute men via the antichrist for such compromise and by (b) revealing that all lures to function independent of God's Word are fueled by Satan. (2) God guides us to avoid group idolatry by overcoming Satan who is behind it by calling us to (a) rely on the merits of Christ's death for forgiveness at salvation (Col. 1:14) and in our ensuing daily walk (1 John 1:9), by (b) telling His truth versus compromising it and by (c) upholding His truth at any price.

Application: (1) May we believe in Christ to be saved, John 3:16. (2) May we avoid the lure of group apostate idolatry, (a) being motivated out of our final solemn accounting to Almighty God to do so, (b) realizing Satan fuels all functions that are independent of God's Word, and (3) may we *ACHIEVE* victory over Satan by (a) relying on the merits of Christ's death for forgiveness, (b) by telling God's truth (c) and by upholding God's truth at any price.

Conclusion: (To illustrate the message . . .)

While attending Dallas Seminary and working as an Assistant Chaplain at the Baylor University Medical Center, a group of Mormon elders visited our office, and since I was the only Chaplain on duty, they started to try to witness their faith to me.

When I shared the Gospel in return, one elder replied, "Don't you find all that doctrine stale and unfulfilling?!" He had apparently heard how some evangelicals have an aversion for doctrinal precision, so he was trying to use it as a ploy to convert me to Mormonism. Realizing this, I replied, "Oh no, I *love* Bible doctrine," and proceeded to clarify how salvation truths and Bible doctrines impacted my walk with Christ!

This clearly caught them by surprise as I could see by their facial expressions, so they quickly left!

I learned from that event that *DEPENDENTLY FOLLOWING SCRIPTURE'S LEAD* is *ESSENTIAL* for *ME* to *OVERCOME SATAN'S DECEPTIVE LURE* unto *APOSTATE ERROR!*

May we trust in Christ to be saved. Then, may we function *DEPENDENTLY* on *SCRIPTURE'S LEAD!*