

Study 6- Revelation 12

The Defeat of **the Accuser**

This study brings us to some of the most famous yet difficult aspects of the book of Revelation. We meet strange dragons and beasts, strange numbers like "666" and all sorts of other mysteries. Don't panic! Remember again that John is writing to Christians in the Roman empire, under attack for refusing to bow down to the emperor. In chapter 12, John is given a history lesson, and the outcome is a reminder of the way God has protected his people and won a great victory over Satan.

Read Revelation 12. Imagine the scene.

1. Who does the child represent? How do you know?

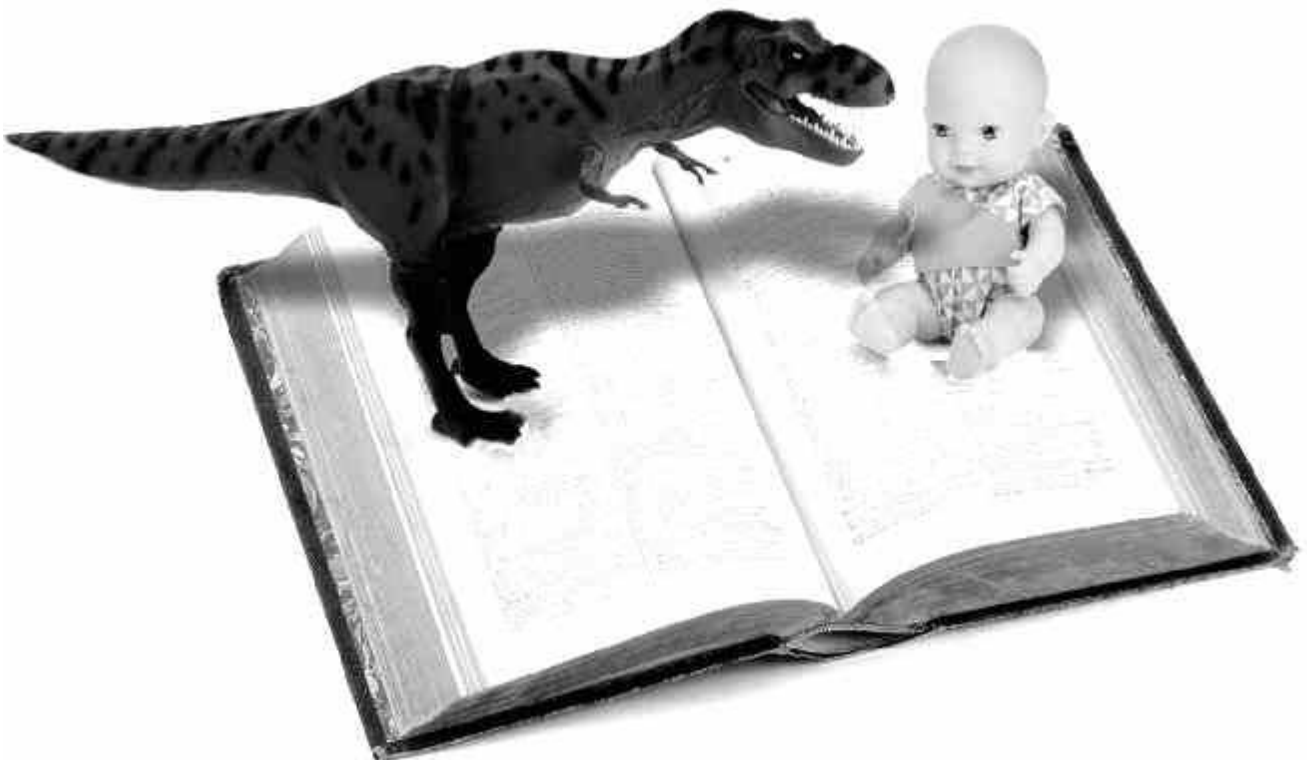
Where is the "child" in the end?

2. Who do you think the woman represents?

Did you say Mary? It's an obvious first reaction. But compare the symbols surrounding the woman with Joseph's dream in Genesis 37:9-11, where the sun, moon and stars represent the forefathers of Israel. Probably, the woman in John's vision is meant to represent Israel.

3. Who does the Dragon represent? (Look at verse 8)

4. The Dragon in the dream wants nothing more than to destroy Jesus, right from the start. How is this principle illustrated in the actual account of the birth of Jesus in Mat 2:1-18?



5. Look at the following three titles given to "the dragon" in verse 9.

* Ancient serpent (remind you of anything in Genesis?)

* Satan (which means "adversary" in a courtroom)

* Devil (Which means Slanderer, False Accuser)

What picture emerges of how the dragon does his work?

6. How, in plain language, is Satan defeated? **Find the verse that tells you, and write it out in full here:-**

7. How, exactly, is the "accuser" defeated and made powerless? Compare your answer with Romans 8:1.

8. What is his reaction?

The big picture...

The cosmic battle between the angels and the dragon is simply a vivid word picture. What is the reality? Simply that Satan is defeated by "the blood of the lamb" - the death of Christ on the cross - and the "word of our testimony." As we proclaim Christ's death for sin, and God's forgiveness, there is no longer anything the "Accuser" can accuse us of. There is simply no condemnation for those "in Christ Jesus," who has been taken up to the side of the Father to rule over all the nations. The last thing a Christian should do in the face of persecution, then, is to stop testifying about Jesus... no matter how much the Devil tries to make us stop! John pictures the force of the Roman empire poured out against Israel (the woman), and then against Christians. But this is the Satan who has already been thrown out of heaven on his ear, and has no power to accuse us any longer!

Apply it...

What opposition should Christians today expect from Satan? What is our defense? Think about and share examples from your own life.

How keen are you to testify about Jesus? What stops you doing it?



Time Capsule... What a Great Idea, St George!

George of Cappodocia, now commonly known as Saint George, was born to Christian parents. George was rapidly promoted in the army of the emperor Diocletian. Unable to participate in persecuting Christians, he resigned his command, went to the senate, and told them he was Christian; at the same time, he rebuked them for their paganism, and pointed out the foolishness of worshipping idols. George's words so greatly provoked the senate that they had him tortured, and by the emperor's orders was dragged through the streets, and beheaded the next day. The legend of the dragon, which is associated with George, is usually illustrated by representing St. George seated on a charging horse and skewering the monster with his spear. This fiery dragon symbolizes the devil, who was soundly beaten by St. George's steadfast faith in Christ, which remained unshaken in spite of torture and death.