

“The Conflict of the Ages”

(Rev. 11:15 – 12:17)

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Sept. 23, 2007 a.m.

I. Introduction

A. The book....“The Conflict of the Ages”

1. By Arno Gabelein
2. Describes the greatest of all conflicts
 - a. Began before the creation of mankind
 - b. Has been fought
 1. In Heaven
 2. On Earth
 - c. Has involved incredible spirit beings
 1. Unseen angels screaming across the heavens
3. Began when the most powerful of all created beings rebelled against his creator
 - a. Will end with that frightening angel’s utter defeat
4. It rages on today
 - a. It is the driving force behind the conflict in the Middle East
 - b. Raging in the churches in Hudsonville
 1. An unseen conflict
 - c. ...and you are a part of “The conflict of the ages”
 1. Whether you want to be or not
5. Described for us in Revelation 11 & 12

B. About to see the last of the seven trumpets

1. All of the main characters are brought center stage
2. Christ about to reclaim His creation
3. But not without a furious battle
 - a. The battlefield is in Heaven itself!
 - b. The combatants include the holy and the evil angels
 - c. It results in the worst 3 ½ years in human history

II. Review

A. A “scroll” was opened in chapter 5

1. It details the events of the seven years of Tribulation
 - a. May soon begin
 - b. Signs all around us
2. Seven Seals
 - a. The 1st six are completed
3. Seven parts to #7
 - a. The Seven Trumpets of Judgment
 - b. The 1st six are completed
4. Now the 7th...and final...trumpet sounds (Rev. 11:15-19)

III. Text

A. The Seventh Trumpet sounds (11:15-19)

1. Remember...trumpets announce events.....v.15
 - a. The residents of heaven will know what it means
 - b. They respond to the trumpet call

- c. Sounds like the “Hallelujah Chorus”

“(15)The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ,...and he will reign for ever and ever.”

- 2. The 24 elders know the 7th trumpet means it’s time!....v.16-18

(16) And the 24 elders, who were seated on their thrones before God, fell on their faces and worshiped God, (17) saying: “We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, the One who is and who was, because you have taken your great power and have begun to reign. (18) The nations were angry; and your wrath has come. The time has come for judging the dead, and for rewarding your servants the prophets and your saints and those who reverence your name, both small and great—and for destroying those who destroy the earth,”

- 3. John spots the Ark of the Covenant.....v.19

“Then God’s temple in heaven was opened, and within his temple was seen the ark of his covenant. And there came flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, an earthquake and a great hailstorm.”....v.19

- a. John sees God’s HEAVENLY Temple

- 1. It opens

- b. Peers into the Holy of Holies

- c. Sees the Ark of the Covenant

- 1. God’s covenants
- 2. Promise of restoration
- 3. Israel’s redemption

- 4. Punctuated by God’s power.....v.19

- a. “flashes of lightning”
- b. “rumblings”
- c. “peals of thunder”
- d. “an earthquake”
- e. “and a great hailstorm”

5. Impending judgment against the enemies of Israel
6. The final battles is about to begin
 - a. It will begin in Heaven
7. The seven main characters are be introduced in chapters 12-13

B. The Seven Characters

1. The Woman (v. 1 & 2)

- a. The woman is described.....v.1

1. “A great and wondrous sign appeared in Heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and a crown of 12 stars on her head.”

- b. All kinds of wild ideas

1. J. Vernon McGee

“A female preacher in California, who became famous or infamous – however you care to express it—toyed with the idea that she might be the woman”

2. Christian Science Religion

- a. Founded by Mary Glover Baker Patterson Eddy
- b. Claimed that she was the Woman
- c. She added that the ‘man child’ that she brought forth is Christian Science
- d. And that the dragon is ‘mortal mind’, attempting to destroy her new religion.”

3. Roman Catholic Church – the Virgin Mary

4. Others say it is the Church

- c. They are all wrong!!!
- d. The key is to learn who her son was.....v.2

“She was pregnant and cried out in pain as she was about to give birth.”.....v.2

d. The child is described in v.5-6

1. She would give birth to a male child

a. Her child would “rule all nations”.....v.5

b. With a rod of iron

c. Has been caught up to Heaven

d. To HIS throne

2. That’s Jesus – the Son of God

a. The Messiah

e. **Israel** is the woman

1. Israel produced the Messiah

a. (Rom. 9: 4-5) — ***“Who are Israelites, to whom pertain the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises; ⁵ of whom are the fathers and from whom according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, the eternally blessed God.”***

f. Israel brought forth the child with much agony and travail

1. We’ll see why

2. The Dragon (v. 3-4)

a. ***“Then another sign appeared in Heaven: an enormous red dragon with seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns on his heads.”....v.3***

1. This is an easy one also

2. Given a title in v. 9 – “called the devil, or **Satan**”

b. His description

1. 10 horns...7 heads...7 crowns

a. Same as in Dan. 7:23-27

- b. Will lead a 10 nation confederacy
- c. Details in a later sermon

c. The fall of the unholy angels

“His tail swept a third of the stars out of the sky and flung them to the earth”....v.4a

1. Stars = angels

- a. Lucifer – means “Day Star”
- b. Job described angels as stars when he said – “the morning stars sang together” (Job 38)

2. A third of the angels joined his rebellion against God

- a. Happened before the creation of mankind
- b. Cast out of Heaven

d. Stood ready to kill the child at birth

1. ***“The dragon stood in front of the woman who was about to give birth, so that he might devour her child the moment it was born.”....v.4b***

2. The slaughter of the innocents at the birth of Christ

3. Satan used Herod the Great

4. One of Satan’s evil henchmen

- a. A long line of “antichrists”
- b. Herod...Hitler...Ahmadinajad

e. Satan’s continual battle to stop the plan of redemption

f. Many attempts to destroy the Messianic line

1. When Cain slew Abel (Gen 4)

2. When the demons tried to pollute the human race before the Flood (Gen 6)

3. When Esau tried to slay his brother Jacob

4. When Pharaoh attempted to kill the male children in Egypt
5. When various attempts were made to wipe out the Messianic line of King David
6. When Esther was called on to preserve the line of Christ
 - a. Satan moved King Ahasuerus to exterminate all of the seed of God's people
 - b. But a king's sleepless night spared them in the Days of Esther
 - c. Esther.... "For such a time as this"

3. The Male Child (v. 5)

"She gave birth to a son, a male child, who will rule all the nations with an iron scepter.".....v.5

- a. Despite all of Satan's opposition the Christ child is born
- b. The male child is of course **Jesus**
- c. Truly—the woman brought forth the male child with much labor and pain
 1. Satan stood ready to devour the child at birth
 2. Satan moved Herod to slay all of the male children in and around Bethlehem at the time of the birth
- d. Satan tried to tempt Jesus to cast Himself down from the pinnacle of the Temple
- e. Satan moved the people of Nazareth to cast Jesus off the brow of the hill on which their city is perched
- f. Satan moved the Scribes and Pharisees to attempt to stone Jesus to death
 1. Yet he walked through them unharmed!
- g. Satan thought he had finally won the Conflict of the Ages as he watched the life ebb out of Jesus on that cruel cross
 1. Yet we read in Rev. 12:5 *"And her child was snatched up to God and to his throne." (v.5)*
 - a. He was caught up *ALIVE!*

- h. And the battle continued
 - 1. Satan used Rome to kill and disperse God's chosen people Israel
 - 2. Satan used the Crusaders to kill the Jews
 - 3. Satan used the Spanish Inquisition to kill Jews on the way to fight the Muslims
- i. Satan is trying to prevent the Return of Christ for His chosen people the Jews...by eliminating them
 - 1. Satan used Hitler to kill 6,000,000 more Jews
 - 2. Satan used the nations of the world to try to keep God's people out of their Promised Land
 - 3. Mahmoud Ahmadinajad of Iran
 - a. Wants to annihilate the Jews
 - b. A pawn in the evil hand of Satan
- j. But Satan can't stop God's clock
 - 1. It just keeps ticking forward

4. The Remnant (v. 6 & 13-17)

- a. *"The woman fled into the desert to a place prepared for her by God, where she might be taken care of for 1,260 days."....v.6*
- b. We know that the "woman" is Israel (the Jews)
- c. These are the surviving Jews in the middle of the tribulation
- d. They will turn to Christ!!!
 - 1. **Saved Jews**
- e. Throughout the Bible God promised:
 - 1. That someday the Jews would return to the land
 - a. Happened in 1948

2. And that someday a remnant would accept Him as their Savior

f. One of the closing promises of the Old Testament

1. Zechariah 12:8-10 *(8) On that day the Lord will shield those who live in Jerusalem, so that the feeblest among them will be like David, and the house of David will be like God, like the Angel of the Lord going before them. (9) On that day I will set out to destroy all the nations that attack Jerusalem. (10) And I will pour out on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication. They will look on me, the one they have pierced, and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child, and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a first born son.*

g. Satan will attempt to annihilate them...yet, a remnant will hide

1. Maybe in PETRA

2. That great rocky fortress

3. My first visit there

4. Will be protected there for the final 3 ½ years

h. More details in v.13-17

1. Satan's sense of desperation....v.13

a. In the middle of the Tribulation

2. Goes after the saved Jews

i. The method of escape.....v.14

j. The place of escape.....v.14

k. The length of escape.....v.14

1. Times, times, and ½ a time (3 ½ years)

2. PETRA?

l. The Spewed Water.....v.15

1. Satanic flood

m. God's intervention.....v.16

- 1. But earth swallows it up
- n. The enraged dragon.....v.17
 - a. Time for final effort
 - b. Goes after the rest of the Christians
 - c. Will use a leader we call the Antichrist
- o. Satan pulls his “ACE”
 - a. The most brilliant of all
 - b. The Anti Christ
- p. In two weeks...the Antichrist, Satan’s Masterpiece of Evil

5. Michael

(v. 7-9)

- a. Michael is **The Archangel**
 - 1. The most powerful of the angels
- b. War breaks out in Heaven
 - 1. Michael and the good angels will prevail
- c. Satan will lose his last access to Heaven
 - 1. And he knows what’s coming
 - 2. He knows what Isaiah 14 says

(12) How you have fallen from heaven, O morning star, son of the dawn! You have been cast down to earth, you who once laid low the nations! (13) You said in your heart, “I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God; I will sit enthroned on the mount of assembly, on the utmost heights of the sacred mountain. (14) I will ascend above the tops of the clouds; I will make myself like the Most High.” (15) But you are brought down to Sheol (the grave), to the depths of the pit.”

IV. Summary

A. Two more characters to go

- 1. The Beast from the Sea

- a. The Antichrist
- 2. The Beast from the Earth
 - a. The False Prophet

B. Some final thoughts

1. The battle is led by an evil horde

a. Ephesians 6:12 ***(12) For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.***

2. Today we saw that the battle is global and timeless

- a. It has raged before the creation of mankind
- b. It has been fought throughout the universe
- c. It is frightening in its scope
- d. Involves nations and angelic beings
- e. It centers around the son of God

3. Next week we will see that the battle is personal and intimate

- a. That you are personally involved in the conflict
- b. That Satan has an evil plan for your life
- c. Ephesians 6:10-11 ***(10) Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. (11) Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.***

d. Next week....

- 1. Satan's most effective tactics to rob you of joy and effectiveness
- 2. How to recognize and thwart Satan in your life
- e. Even today Satan is throwing your personal sins in the face of God

1. Revelation 12:10 (10) *“Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say: ‘Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ. For the accuser of our brothers, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down.’”*

4. Our defense is in the blood of Jesus

a. Revelation 12:11 (11) *They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death.”*