

11.15.20

## Revelation

### Chapter 12 - Revealing Why God is so Passionate

#### The Family Threatened by Extinction (vs. 13-17)

**Revelation 12:13-17:** And when the dragon saw that he was thrown down to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male child. But the two wings of the great eagle were given to the woman, so that she could fly into the wilderness to her place, where she was nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent. And the serpent poured water like a river out of his mouth after the woman, so that he might cause her to be swept away with the flood. But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and drank up the river which the dragon poured out of his mouth. So the dragon was enraged with the woman, and went off to make war with the rest of her children, who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus.

The end of Revelation 11 begins to describe the nations and their hatred for God's people. The way that it reads, if you would look at it with me in verse 18 of Chapter 11, “And the nations were enraged...” When you see the nations being enraged over the declaration, the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ, what are you thinking? What do you see? Well, God sees red. And He not only sees that, but He sees a picture that perhaps we don't see. Therefore, it's the reason for Revelation 12. What you might see is a nation of people coming against God's people, but God sees somebody that He loves being threatened. And so, the description of Chapter 12 is what God is seeing.

It's one of the reasons why you come to, at the end of Chapter 11, in verse 19, the temple of God is moved. And lightning begins to shoot out from the holy place, and thunder begins to move the foundations of the heavens. Why? Because God is enraged. Somebody's trying to hurt somebody He loves. So, that you and I might see the almost disconnected thing that is taking place in the

world. God says, “No, this is personal with Me. These are people that I love.” And so, it's that picture that is really being conveyed in Chapter 12, and God is revealing why He is so passionate.

If you look at the outline as you go through the different verses of Chapter 12, once again, we won't go into a lot of depth in the chapter, but what you're going to see is that God is a loving husband that cares for somebody that He loves. And He wants you to see that same kind of passion. It goes on to reveal that He is a loving father to be. You know, it's a different emotion. You have a relationship with a woman and there's a passion there. And then you have the possibility of a child coming into your life. And that anticipation creates another emotion, the anticipation.

If you look within the passage, it says,

(Revelation 12:2) “And she was with child...”

It starts off and you see this wonderful woman, now she's with child. So, the passage is revealing to us the love of a husband, the longing of a father to be, and then it goes into the realm of the stirring up of a savior, of a protector.

She now begins to feel threatened. And God says, "How do you think I'm feeling?" All the way through Scripture, whether it's in the Old Testament or the New, God is revealing to us how He is feeling. And so, He even has the prophets of old go through very difficult things, whether it's sleeping on one side or whether it's the fact, with Ezekiel, "Your wife's going to die," or whether it's with Hosea, "Your wife's going to prostitute herself." I mean, in every case, God is calling upon the people to feel what He feels. We think of God oftentimes as detached and uncaring, but nothing could be further from the truth from a God who declares Himself love. So that Ephesians will say, "Do not grieve the Holy Spirit." I always thought, what a strange, bizarre thought that I could actually grieve God; that He would be that vested in me that He would even care how I affect Him. And yet, Scripture reveals to us that He's a loving and caring Heavenly Father and that He sorrows for us. There is no greater picture. This is a book of Revelation, so it's revealing to us this intense relationship that God has with us. And you see this mother desperately running for her life and this serpent craving vengeance upon her. And ultimately, as

we come to the text that we're going to be looking at today, the threatening of the family has now come upon the offspring of this woman. And how do you think God feels? Well, the passage is going to be revealing to us that you have this zeal of a protective husband, father, head of household, that is working on the behalf of His people. And it's kind of an interesting picture that you see in the Old Testament of Abraham; he hears that Lot has been taken off in war, and he just rallies his men. It doesn't matter how many, I mean, he's going against multiple nations, and he's got 300 men. It doesn't matter. He goes after him. And within this particular passage, you're going to see the stirring of the heart of God.

Why is God revealing this to us? Because when in Revelation, and we're coming up to the seven bowls of wrath of God start being poured out, we understand why He's upset. The bizarre thing, of course, is that man wants to see God as the vengeful One when it really is man that is attacking God, because he is attacking His people, the very ones that He loves. We think of Armageddon as something that is stirred up and here God is releasing His

evil upon us. No, God is revealing your evil, man's evil, and He's going to defeat it so that you don't have to live with that anymore. So, it's a wonderful thing, and we're going to see this within this particular passage.

If you look with me in particular in Chapter 12 and verse 13, it starts off in that, and it's almost as if at the very beginning of Chapter 12 of the first five or six verses, He goes into kind of a heading, which is not an unusual thing in Scripture. Many of the chapters in prophecy are written like a newspaper. But people don't get newspapers anymore, do they? But if you've ever read certain things that come in the newspaper, an article will go something like this: There will be a heading of an accident and 500 people were dead. So, it'll kind of give a heading. And then the paragraph goes in, and it starts giving more detail. So, it says, "People were driving on their way to..." And it begins to describe it. Now, if you were to think in terms of chronological order, you would say, "Wait a minute, we're backing up." But we're not backing up. We just gave you the heading and then we're going into the

detail. So, the same thing is true if you look with me in Chapter 12.

It reads in verse 5,

(Revelation 12:5) “And she gave birth to a son, a male child, who is to rule all the nations...”

(Revelation 12:6) “Then the woman fled into the wilderness where she had a place prepared by God, so that there she would be nourished for one thousand two hundred and sixty days.”

Or the time, times and a half, or 3 1/2 years. So, the passage is giving a heading.

Now, if you look with me in verses 13 through 17, it's the details of this that is being conveyed within the passage. And so, what we're seeing is, of course, the family that is threatened by extinction. The desire of the dragon is to persecute... No, not simply to persecute, but to destroy the offspring.

And so, the passage reads this way in verse 13,

(Revelation 12:13) “And when the dragon saw that he was thrown down to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male child.”

(Revelation 12:14) But the two wings of the great eagle were given to the woman, so that she could fly into the wilderness to her place...”

Back up into verse 6 of Chapter 12,

(Revelation 12:6) “... a place prepared by God, so that there she would be nourished...”

So, God has already prepared this place for her.

(Revelation 12:14) “... so that she could fly into the wilderness to her place, where she was nourished for a time and times and half a time...”

In other words, what we're seeing is the latter part of the great tribulation, the last 3 1/2 years; 7 years tribulation; the last 3 1/2 years, time, times, and a half time. So, “time” would be one, “times” would be 2, and “a half times,” which is 3 1/2 years. The same language that's used in Daniel 7:25 and Daniel 12:7. So, it's not an unfamiliar understanding, which ultimately was giving

prophecy of this. And in case you are confused, verse 6 tells us, okay, 1,260 days. So, just in case you are confused, it gives the qualification within the passage. And then it will also say 3 1/2 years in other passages. So, the point is that He's drawing a connection by the way that He's saying what He's saying to the Old Testament prophecy, so that you're not coming to Revelation going, "Oh, wow, this is stuff that God hadn't planned on." No, this is stuff that had been proclaimed all through the times. This is God's designed work within the text.

Now, if you look specifically with me, what's interesting is how this woman is being saved. And the passage reads in verse 14 that it's like an eagle comes and saves her. Now, the picture of an eagle, of course, is when the eagle comes and takes you up, guess what? You're out of reach. An eagle pulls you up; they're not going to get you. Because where he flies is way beyond where everybody else. We have a couple of eagles in our neighborhood, and I watch them go up. And they just go up and up. Before long, they're almost literally out of sight. And I'm going, "Nobody's going up there." The passage is

revealing the fact that God has taken them to a place where nobody can touch them. They cannot be reached.

Now, what's also interesting is that there are a direct correlation and connection to the Old Testament. And that's the point that I want you to look at with me in just a moment. If you look with me in Exodus 19. There are just a couple of places I'll make reference to this so that you get the connection with me.

But Exodus 19:3, it says within this passage,

“Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him from the mountain, saying, “Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob and tell the sons of Israel:

(Exodus 19:4) ‘You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings, and brought you to Myself.’”

So, in this particular passage, He's establishing, “I rescued you and I took you to a place where they couldn't touch you; they couldn't reach you.” And the way that He describes it is, “eagle's wings.”

He goes on to say in verse 5,

(Exodus 19:5) “Now then, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, then you shall be My own possession among all the peoples, for all the earth is Mine.”

Then if you turn to Deuteronomy 32:9, it reads this way,

“For the LORD’S portion is His people;  
Jacob is the allotment of His inheritance.

(Deuteronomy 32:10) He found him in a desert land,  
And in the howling waste of a wilderness;  
He encircled him...”

That sounds like an eagle, doesn't it?

“... He encircled him, He cared for him,  
He guarded him as the pupil of His eye.

(Deuteronomy 32:11) Like an eagle that stirs up its nest,  
That hovers over its young,  
He spread His wings and caught them,  
He carried them on His pinions.

(Deuteronomy 32:12) The LORD alone guided him,  
And there was no foreign god with him.

(Deuteronomy 32:13) He made him ride on the high places of the earth,

And he ate the produce of the field;

And He made him suck honey from the rock,

And oil from the flinty rock,

(Deuteronomy 32:14) Curds of cows, and milk of the flock, With fat of lambs..."

In other words, He took care of him. Where? In the wilderness, where nobody could touch him. That's a pretty wild picture, isn't it?

So, it shouldn't surprise us that He'll use this same picture in Isaiah 40. Right. You're familiar with it. Isaiah 40. He tells His people, "Haven't you heard? I'm the Everlasting God who doesn't grow weary or tired, and I take care of you."

Then He says this in Isaiah 40:29,

"He (that is God) gives strength to the weary,

And to him who lacks might He increases power.

(Isaiah 40:30) Though youths grow weary and tired,

And vigorous young men stumble badly,

(Isaiah 40:31) Yet those who wait for the LORD

Will gain new strength;

They will mount up with wings like eagles,

They will run and not get tired,

They will walk and not become weary.”

What is the picture that we're seeing in Revelation 12:14?

Well, the picture is this: that God is specifically tying this to the way that He deals with His people. Why? Because the woman is His people. Her offspring will be those that come by virtue of the fact of her faith which she has had in God. The people of Israel worship the one true God, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. How do we know what God is the true God? The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. So, she is the one that had the relationship, and she is the one that carried the Messiah. It was through Mary, who was part of the lineage, that brought forth the Messiah of God. So, that's where our hope is.

Now, if you look in the passage, it's this woman that's being protected. So, what is God conveying? Well, God is demonstrating, “I'm going to save you the same way that I've always saved you.” If in fact you have established a

particular pattern with somebody in your life and they recognize that pattern, they're more apt to adhere to whatever command you give them because they recognize, "Well, that's just like them to do that." How has God always rescued His people? Listen, He always took them back to the wilderness. And every single time they would stray, He'd say, "Okay, back to the wilderness." And it was always in the wilderness that they had to see and trust in God alone, because in the world, they began to perceive that they have a trust in something else. God says, "Okay, let's go back into the wilderness." And so, you know, whether it's Deuteronomy in which He says in Chapter 8 to His people, "I took you into the wilderness and I let you be hungry so that you might see that man doesn't trust in bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God." When He establishes that, then what's the first thing that you see when Jesus comes on the scene in Matthew 4? The Spirit of God takes Him into the wilderness, the very first thing that He does. And it's God declaring, and even Jesus with His disciples, He says, "I'm going to the mountains to pray, because it's just Me and God." And

God does this with His people. This is the way He works. And when you're in the wilderness and manna from heaven comes down, you're not saying, "I wonder where that came from." And you're not taking credit for it. So, there's actually only one conclusion you can come up with, "God's taking care of me." And God is bringing His people back to faith. That's exactly what He's doing to this woman. And so, the end has to be the same as the beginning. How did He rescue His people? He brought them into the desert. And He rescued them in the desert. How was He going to rescue them in the end? He brings her into the desert. And she goes, "How am I going to survive?" He goes, "I have a place prepared."

Isn't that what it says in verse 6?

(Revelation 12:6) "Then the woman fled into the wilderness where she had a place prepared by God..."

And He's going to nourish her, according to verse 14, where He nourished her for 3 1/2 years. He's going to take care of her for 3 1/2 years. And she'll be preserved, unreachable, by the serpent, by the evil one during this time. It's an interesting picture. But the point of the

picture is that God is telling His people, "I'm working the same way. And I've always loved you, and I'll take care of you. And let's just get back to you putting your trust in Me."

The Chapter 14 is, to me, a miraculous and wonderful chapter, in which in Chapter 14, verse 1,

(Revelation 14:1) "Then I looked, and behold, the Lamb was standing on Mount Zion, and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand, having His name and the name of His Father written on their foreheads.

(Revelation 14:2) And I heard a voice..."

And they began to cry out and sing to God. Can you imagine? What a wonderful picture. What do you think they're singing? Well, we know that they're singing this new song, which the phrase connotes that it's fresh and it's new and they're alive and it's like for the first time they're declaring their allegiance to God from the mountain. Oh, they might have sung the song 1,001 times, but today it's new because He's taking care of us. And so, Chapter 14 is kind of that follow-up of how can these 144,000 be so confident in the midst of a

tumultuous world? Because He's been taking care of them. And God had always ordained His people to do that. "In the midst of the trials, in the midst of the tribulation, you can sing because I've got your back. I'm going to take care of you." And so, it's such a great picture.

"... from the presence of the serpent.

(Revelation 12:15) And the serpent poured water like a river out of his mouth after the woman, so that he might cause her to be swept away with the flood."

Obviously, he's not just trying to torment her; he's trying to get rid of her.

(Revelation 12:16) "But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and drank up the river which the dragon poured out of his mouth."

That's an interesting picture.

Now, there are places in the Old Testament that expound upon this. Why is Revelation giving this kind of picture? Once again, the emphasis of this chapter is to help you feel emotionally about what's happening. So that what is

actually happening are nations gathering together to destroy the children of Israel. I mean, have you ever seen masses of people pouring through valleys and coming through? It just looks like water is coming through. And when they get finished conquering, it's just like water that just levels everything.

The picture is given to us in Ezekiel. If you look with me in Ezekiel 37, and we won't go too much into this because I don't want you to miss the feeling of the text. In Chapter 37, it's the beginning of the stirring up of Israel as a nation. Great chapter, if you've ever read it. These bones are in the desert, and they're all apart. And you go, "Can these bones ever live?" And so, Ezekiel gets to watch these bones come together, and flesh come on them and then breath of life come on them, and it stands up. And God says, "That's Israel. It's going to look like it's dead." But I mean, we've actually lived long enough to watch this people that were no longer a nation come together in the 40s, become a nation. We've lived to see this. And now, people are coming in by droves. In fact, probably some of us actually remember when they were putting Ethiopian

Jews on 747s to bring them back home to Israel. And what a wonderful picture that was. But the nation is alive, and it is a nation now. It's breathing. It's starting to breathe. So, God is bringing the people together. Here again, I don't want to go into a lot of detail, because we're going to have to go to Daniel, and I don't have a lot of time.

But in Daniel 9 in verse 27, it tells us that there's going to be an evil one that comes up. Thessalonians will call him the lawless one. And he'll come up and he'll make a pact with Israel. And there will be a peace treaty for seven years. A seven-year peace treaty. So, that's recorded in Daniel, and it hasn't happened yet. How do we know? Because Israel doesn't feel secure. What's going to happen is Israel is going to feel so secure that they're going to tear down their boundaries or their fortresses, more specifically. They're going to ease up on their jets, all their powerful forces, and they're going to back down, and they're going to act like they don't have anything to worry about.

So, the way it's described here, it says,

(Ezekiel 38:8) “After many days you will be summoned; in the latter years you will come into the land that is restored from the sword, whose inhabitants have been gathered from many nations...”

Which we've already started seeing.

“... to the mountains of Israel which had been a continual waste; but its people were brought out from the nations, and they are living securely, all of them.

(Ezekiel 38:9) You will go up, you will come like a storm; you will be like a cloud covering the land, you and all your troops, and many peoples with you.”

(Ezekiel 38:10) ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “It will come about on that day, that thoughts will come into your mind...”

He's talking about other nations. And more specifically, if you back up into Ezekiel 38:1, Gog and Magog from the north, the nations from the north.

But He says,

“... that thoughts will come into your mind and you will devise an evil plan,

(Ezekiel 38:11) and you will say, 'I will go up against the land of unwalled villages...'

Now, I want to stop here. Who is "the land of unwalled villages"? Well, it's not Israel right now, but it's going to be Israel. Now, you say, "How do you know it's going to be Israel?" Because if you look in verse 14, He's going to say it's Israel. So, I'm just letting you know. I read ahead.

But it says in verse 11,

"And you will say, 'I will go up against the land of unwalled villages. I will go against those who are at rest, that live securely, all of them living without walls and having no bars or gates.'

In other words, they're not going to have their protections of their guards up.

"To capture spoil and to seize plunder, to turn your hand against the waste places which are now inhabited, and against the people who are gathered from the nations, who have acquired cattle and goods, who live at the center of the world.'"

Who is that? There's only one that He refers to that lives in the center of the world. That's His people.

(Ezekiel 38:14) “Therefore prophesy, son of man, and say to Gog, ‘Thus says the Lord GOD, “On that day when My people Israel are living securely, will you not know it?

(Ezekiel 38:15) You will come from your place...”

In other words, it's kind of this confidence that the nations from the north will have that they go, “Okay, nobody's guarding Israel. Israel feels that everything's okay. Let's go get them.” So, they'll gather together. All the nations will gather together.

“You will come from your place out of the remote parts of the north you and many peoples with you, all of them riding on horses, a great assembly and a mighty army;

(Ezekiel 38:16) and you will come up against My people Israel like a cloud...”

It's an interesting picture, like a wave of water, so to speak.

“... It shall come about in the last days that I will bring you against My land, so that the nations may know Me when I am sanctified through you before their eyes, O Gog.”

Well, what's going to happen? Well, He actually tells us what's going to happen, that they're going to come up against Israel, and then God will mount up, if you look at the end of verse 18, in His fury, in His anger. That's a passion of God. Why? Because they're coming against His people. They're coming against family. They're coming against His wife.

So, it says in verse 19,

(Ezekiel 38:19) “In My zeal and in My blazing wrath I declare that on that day there will surely be a great earthquake...”

The earth is going to swallow up, what? The stream that's coming against it.

“... there will surely be a great earthquake in the land of Israel.

(Ezekiel 38:20) The fish of the sea, the birds of the heavens, the beasts of the field, all the creeping things

that creep on the earth, and all the men who are on the face of the earth will shake at My presence; the mountains also will be thrown down, the steep pathways will collapse and every wall will fall to the ground.”

In other words, “I'm going to rescue my people.” How? By an earthquake. Or as it's put in Revelation 12, the earth helped the woman. That's the way it's put in there. And the earth opened its mouth, drank up the river, or got rid of the warriors. We'll put it another way.

So, it says,

(Ezekiel 39:2) “And I will turn you around, drive you on, take you up from the remotest parts of the north and bring you against the mountains of Israel.

(Ezekiel 39: 3) And I will strike your bow from your left hand and dash down your arrows from your right hand.”

And He goes on and begins to describe.

Interesting enough, in verse 11 of Chapter 39, He uses the term, “the valley of Hamon-gog” within the passage. The multitude of Gog is what He's talking about, thus Ham and Gog.

But the picture that's given in Revelation is fundamentally this picture, although the way that Revelation is portraying it is in the personal realm. What is God seeing? How is God seeing this transformed? And the dragon is trying to kill, and He's not going to let him do it. And he's going to move heaven and earth to save her. So, it's a great picture.

If you go back with me to Revelation 12, you know, you think about it, there's nothing like an aggressive threat, a malevolent force, or a nefarious evil to move the passion of somebody who cares. And this is really what's being displayed. The question in the text is, what is it that the evil one could do to bring extinction to God's people? That's the \$64,000 question. That's the big question that you have to ask yourself.

And if you look in verse 17, it says,

(Revelation 12:17) “So the dragon was enraged...”

Because it couldn't get the woman. Now, once again, the woman is a picture of who? Yeah, Israel, God's people. He was enraged because he couldn't get the woman.

“... and went off to make war with the rest of her children...”

Okay, there we go.

“... who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus.”

Now, this is a fundamental point that He's going to keep bringing up in Revelation, “hold to the testimony of Jesus.” It's a picture, really, when you think about it, it's almost always in a present participle active case, which means that you never let go. It's a continuous action. “I'm not going to let go of this testimony.” And it has the connotation of a possession. You hold it as a possession of high regard. The point is, and the one thing that makes us distinct is we hold to the testimony of what Jesus has done in our life at the highest regard. And that's what makes us unique. And as Scripture is going to reveal, that's the only thing that's going to save us.

If you look at the beginning of Revelation in Chapter 1, it's the fundamental premise that he gives us at the very beginning.

It starts off,

(Revelation 1:1) “The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants...”

Watch verse 2,

(Revelation 1:2) “who testified to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ...”

That's it. The testimony of Jesus Christ. It's what we hold to.

So, you even back up into Jude. I mean, Jude is just right there. What are you praying in verse 21 of Jude? To keep ourselves in the love of God, to wait anxiously for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life. And you go, “Okay, so again, how do I dodge the dragon?” He says, “You don't. I take care of him for you.” What causes the extinction of man is not the fact that God is not able to protect him, but that he's not holding to God.

And so, the passage reads at the end of Jude, verse 24,

(Jude 1:24) “Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy,

(Jude 1:25) to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory..."

That's what we hold to. You understand?

So, if you look in Revelation 6, and like I said, it's kind of peppered all the way through. But if you look in Revelation 6:9, as He breaks the fifth seal, it says,

(Revelation 6:9) "When the Lamb broke the fifth seal, I saw underneath the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God, and because of the testimony which they had maintained."

If you look in Chapter 14 of Revelation, it says,

(Revelation 14:12) "Here is the perseverance of the saints who keep the commandments of God and their faith in Jesus."

What makes them holy? That's the question you have to ask yourself. "Saints" is the word "holy". What makes them holy? Is it perfection? Well, hardly. What makes us holy, what makes us different, what makes us unique, is that we put all of our faith in Christ. That's why we're called "saints". I didn't know if you knew that. Maybe

some of you thought, “Yeah, I'm really a saint.” Just ask your spouse. It says this is their perseverance, that they hold to their faith in Christ.

It says, if you look in Chapter 19, at the appearing of Christ, if you look with me, the praises of the bride begin to declare, “Hallelujah!”

We actually have a song that we sing, the end of verse 6, “... “Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns.”

(Revelation 19:7) Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready.”

Now, here's the question. How does the bride make herself ready? Well, I think some people would say, “Well, you know, she dresses up, she puts on her makeup and everything.” But that's the wrong answer. She makes herself ready by being faithful, by her fidelity to her fiancé. She's not ready if she's unfaithful. So, it's the fact that she's not loved anybody else but the one she wants to marry. That's what makes her ready. What makes you

ready for the coming of God? Because you're perfect? Because you put on your makeup and you look good, and God goes, "Wow, that one looks good. I think I'll bring them home."? What God is saying is, "If you've been faithful to Me, you're ready." And it fundamentally is the point. I mean, Hebrews 10:22 says, "Let us draw near with a sincere heart to God."

I mean, James 1:12 puts it this way,

"Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him."

2 Timothy 4:8, the crown of righteousness is given to all who have loved His appearing. What makes the bride ready? She can hardly wait for Him. She hasn't had eyes for anybody but Him. And so, if you love only God, you've had no other gods before you, then you've prepared yourself for the coming of Christ. And He's going to supply the crowns. He's going to supply the robe of white. He says, "You stayed faithful to Me, you get the robe of white." And what a great picture.

All the way through the Book of Hebrews, it makes reference to this holding fast to this truth.

And if you look within the passage, it says,

(Revelation 19:7) “... His bride has made herself ready.”

(Revelation 19:8) It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean...”

So, God supplies the stuff, and so, you don't even have to get dressed up.

And then if you drop on down to verse 10,

(Revelation 19:10) “Then I fell at his feet to worship him.

But he said to me, “Do not do that; I am a fellow servant

of yours and your brethren who hold the testimony of

Jesus; worship God. For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit

of prophecy.”””

In other words, it's all about your loyalty to Him, and you

testify to Him. And as Hebrews 10:23 says, “Let us hold

fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He

who promised is faithful.” I'm not going to let go of the

hope that's within me.

(Hebrews 3:14) “For we have become partakers of Christ, if we hold fast the beginning of our assurance firm until the end.”

The evidence that we are His is we remain true. But what's at stake in all of this? Well, what's at stake is that man would turn to something else during the time of trials and tribulation to hold him, to keep him, rather than to God. Going to let go of God and turn to something else? This will be sudden doom. Is God able to keep you? He's able to cause you to mount up with wings like eagles. So, what is happening to the offspring? Now, I want you to underline the word, if you go with me, Revelation 12:17.

(Revelation 12:17) “So the dragon was enraged with the woman, and went off to make war with the rest of her children (offspring) ...”

With kids, I don't know if you would necessarily want to explain this, but the Greek word is actually, “*sperma*”. What it's talking about is, of course, that which produced life, like unto the life that was produced in Mary, the *sperma* of God. The way that it's put, I think, in Luke 1:35

is, “The Holy Spirit will come upon you, Mary, and then you will conceive and bear.” And so, the point is that there is a seed that the evil one is coming after. And that seed, if you think about it, if you understand, is what we've received in our hearts.

The example that's given in Romans 9, if you look with me, and we won't read all the verses that corresponding to this, but in verse 8,

(Romans 9:8) “That is, it is not the children of the flesh who are children of God, but the children of the promise are regarded as descendants.”

“*Sperma*” is actually the word that's used. You have in your NAS, “descendants,” it's the same word that's being used there. “Offspring” is translated in Revelation, here descendants, but it's the same word.

And you're going to see the same word in Galatians 3. Except the way that it's used is more appropriate.

(Galatians 3:16) “Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his *seed*. He does not say, “And to

seeds,” as referring to many, but rather to one, “And to your seed,” that is, Christ.”

Then it says this in verse 19,

(Galatians 3:19) “Why the Law then? It was added because of transgressions, having been ordained through angels by the agency of a mediator, until the seed would come to whom the promise had been made.”

Now, drop on down to verse 28,

“There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

(Galatians 3:29) And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham’s descendants (sperma), heirs according to promise.”

Now, there's another place that you see it. It's in 1 John, actually a number of places. But if you look with me in 1 John 3, an interesting declaration is given in 1 John 3:9.

It says this,

(1 John 3:9) “No one who is born of God practices sin...”

When I first read that, I said, “Okay, I need to ask Jesus in my heart again.” The emphasis of “practices” is really the key word here. It's making reference to somebody carrying out with a desire to accomplish. Oftentimes, it's actually translated “celebrates”. Here's the point. Nobody who is born of God wants to sin. It's not that you're going to be perfect, but something has happened where you don't want to do it anymore. You're still going to do it, but you don't want to practice it.

So, it says,

“No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed (*sperma*) abides in him; and he cannot...”

He doesn't have the power, “*dynamai*”. In other words, there's something inside of him that says, “You don't even feel like doing that anymore, do you?” Whereas, before, you seemed to have great energy to sin, now you just go, “I don't even think I want to do it anymore.” Because the power that you have within you is a different power. You have the seed of Christ in you. Now, the evidence of the seed of Christ is fidelity and its endurance. But more

specifically, the seed of Christ, being the Holy Spirit of God, is defined very clearly in John.

And so, if you look with me in John 15, just to clarify this.

It says in verse 26,

(John 15:26) “When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth...”

Okay. So, what's the seed of Christ within us? Truth.

Here's the point. You will truly love; you will truly hope.

See, there's going to be sincerity of heart, sincerity of mind. This is why Paul writes to Timothy, “The goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart, a good conscience, and a sincere faith.” Sincere and truth are synonyms. It's the same word. To be sincere, to be genuine, to be real is truth. We have the Spirit of truth. So, we don't try to do right because we're afraid somebody might catch us doing wrong. We actually want to try to do right. That's the spirit of truth within us. And it's the spirit of, “I believe that that's the power of Christ.” You ask me, “Are you really convinced?” No, I really believe this. I'm convinced that Jesus is the source that has changed me. I hold to this testimony. He goes, “If you hold to the testimony, I'll take

care of you. To all those that hold to the testimony, I'll take care of you." And those who are offspring of God, who have that seed of truth within them, can't deny Him. There's just something in us that says, "It's Christ alone. He's the only One that can rescue me."

We have to end with 1 John 5. It says this in verse 3, if you look with me, 1 John 5, same author that wrote Revelation, so we're tying them in.

But it says this,

(1 John 5:3) "For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments..."

Now, do you keep His commandments because you have to? Not if you have the *sperma* in you; not if you have the Holy Spirit's seed in you. Like Father, like son, I do what I do because I want to do that. And I have the heart of God.

"... and His commandments are not burdensome."

Yeah, nobody's making me do this. I do it because I want to.

(1 John 5:4) "For whatever is born of God overcomes the world..."

Why do you overcome the world? Because you don't love the world.

So, that goes back to 1 John 2, right?

(1 John 2:15) “Do not love the world nor the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.”

(1 John 5:4) “For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith.

(1 John 5:5) Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

(1 John 5:6) This is the One who came by water...

Who cleansed us.

“... and blood...”

Who causes us to be willing to be sacrificed, and to sacrifice for this truth, just as He was.

“... Jesus Christ; not with the water only, but with the water and with the blood. It is the Spirit who testifies, because the Spirit is the truth.”

This is a key point; it is the Spirit who bears witness because the Spirit is real. You mean you would die for Christ? Yeah. Well, let's see. Because only the real will. See, 1 Corinthians 12 says, "No man can confess Jesus as Lord except by the Spirit." But you make that confession, you can't not do that because the Spirit of God is within you. And all glory, because I hold on to the righteousness of Christ. It's not the righteousness of Gary that preserves me. It's the righteousness of Christ. And it's by embracing and holding to the testimony of Christ that preserves the offspring from extinction. It's the only thing, and God is revealing this to us in Revelation. Wonderful pictures that God gives us.

### **Closing Prayer:**

Father, we give You thanks for giving us these truths in picture form, so that we can see just how passionate You

feel about rescuing us. But how clearly You can and will to those that will hold to the testimony.

Your heads bowed and your eyes closed. I don't know what you believe in. I don't know what you're holding on to. I don't know what your hope is. But if it's anything but Jesus, you'll never make it.