

Earth's Last War 1 of 12

Two Leaders—Lamb / Dragon

#0286

Study Given by W. D. Frazee—March 1960

This morning in this upper room, we begin the series of short studies on the book of Revelation.

As the late secretary of state, John Foster Dulles, lay in his bed in Walter Reed army hospital, suffering from the illness which took his life, he was cheered again and again by a special song, sung through a recording made for him by the choir of the Union Theological Seminary. This was his favorite hymn. Listen:

Through the night of doubt and sorrow,
Onward goes the pilgrim band;
Singing songs of expectation,
Marching to the Promised Land.
Clear before us through the darkness,
Gleams and burns the guiding light;
Brother clasps the hand of brother,
Stepping fearless through the night.

I thank God for the light on the road ahead, dear friends. Without that light, everything in the future is dark and uncertain. But with this light, we know what's ahead, and know how to get ready for it. Let us look where the light shines, what do you say? And let us step where the light shines. Let us walk in the light and keep up with the opening providence of God.

God thinks it's so important that you and I understand what's ahead, that He had His special angel, the angel Gabriel, come to dear John there on the Isle of Patmos, that John might write down what the angel brought from Heaven, and that we might know what's ahead.

Let us read Revelation 1, beginning with the first verse:

"The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John: Who bare record of the Word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw. Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand"
Revelation 1:1–3.

Do you notice that this Revelation comes directly from the Godhead? From the Father and the Son comes the light to the church. You notice it is brought by the angel, His angel, Christ's special angel. And you notice that John has borne record of it. That is, he wrote it down. But it is for us.

The first verse says the purpose is to show to God's servants the things which must shortly come to pass. And so there's a special blessing upon the reading and studying of this book, according to the third verse. And there is.

In the book *Great Controversy*, we have a wonderful comment on this book, the reading of it, to which I call your attention to:

“*Blessed* is he that *readeth*, and they that *hear* the words of this prophecy, and *keep* those things which are written therein’ Revelation 1:1–3” *Great Controversy*, page 341.

Yes, as the result of reading and studying this book, we shall find some things to do, some commands to keep, some warnings to heed. Blessed are they that hear and read and do what is found in this wonderful book.

In the book *Testimonies to Ministers*, I read:

“The Lord will bless all who will seek humbly and meekly to understand that which is revealed in the Revelation. This book contains so much that is large with immortality and full of glory that all who read and search it earnestly receive the blessing to those “that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein”” *Testimonies to Ministers*, page 114.

If you were the Devil, what would you do about it? Well, I'll tell you what he has done, friends. The very book that is designed to focus in a special way upon the problems of this last generation, that book, he has made the object of his attack. He has persuaded millions of people that this is a sealed book, not to be understood, not to be especially studied. It shows what a wily foe we have.

But foreseeing that effort of Satan; God plainly put on the last page of the Bible this statement from the angel:

“And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand”
Revelation 22:10.

Isn't it amazing that the Devil would have the audacity to state that this book is sealed when it is the very book that God said not to seal?

Thus we see, friends, that if we are going to get the blessing, we shall have to disregard all the ideas of Satan that he puts before the people through human

voices, human books. We need to fill our minds with the wonderful truths God has given us in this last book of the scriptures. Thus we shall receive a wonderful blessing as we contemplate the scenes ahead.

There are many, many things in the book of Revelation, and we shall not have time in this short series to go over them all, not even to mention them all. We shall not have time to look at all the chapters. What shall we do, then? We're going to study the great theme of the book of Revelation. And what is that great theme? It is the controversy between Christ and Satan, especially as it focuses on the last great conflict down here at the end of time. That's the great theme of the book of Revelation.

And in this book, we have delineated, under various symbols, the opposing armies in that great war. To become familiar with those symbols, and through the symbols to understand better the movements of Satan and his hosts, and God and His army, oh, that this may be our experience, dear friends. And as we do it, we shall, of course, be looking earnestly, I trust, for light on our own experience, light on the experience that we must have to stand with God through the times ahead.

In this book *Great Controversy*, page 341, you notice at the bottom of the page, after speaking of this blessing in studying the book of Revelation, it says that this instruction is concerning events to take place at the close of this world's history:

"To John were opened scenes of deep and thrilling interest in the experience of the church. He saw the position, dangers, conflicts, and final deliverance of the people of God. He records the closing messages which are to ripen the harvest of the earth, either as sheaves for the heavenly garner or as fagots for the fires of destruction. Subjects of vast importance were revealed to him, especially for the last church"
Great Controversy, pages 341 342.

Oh, do you get that? Who are these revelations especially for? The last church. Oh, that we may share in the glories of those revelations.

"Subjects of vast importance were revealed to him, especially for the last church, that those who should turn from error to truth might be instructed concerning the perils and conflicts before them" *Ibid.*, page 342.

Are there conflicts ahead of us, friends? Are we to know them? Are we to be prepared for them? Yes:

"None need be in darkness in regard to what is coming upon the earth" *Ibid.*

Thank the Lord.

Through the night of doubt and sorrow,
Onward goes the pilgrim band,
Singing songs of expectation,
Marching to the Promised Land.
Clear before us through the darkness,
Gleams and burns the guiding light;
Brother clasps the hand of brother,
Stepping fearless through the night.

Ah, my friends, there's a courage and a confidence that comes when we see clearly the road ahead, that can never be ours if we stumble along in the darkness. And so with expectation, we turn to this book of Revelation to get the light on the coming conflict.

Now, there're several scriptures that speak directly and specifically of that coming conflict. For example: Revelation 12:17. You all know that text. Will you say it with me?

"And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ" Revelation 12:17.

Now, we often study this text to get the distinguishing marks of the true church, and that it brings them to view very clearly. But the subject of the text is this: the dragon doing what? Making war on whom? The woman and her seed, the remnant of her seed. That's the subject of it. The dragon goes to make war against the remnant people of God. This scripture is applied in the book *Great Controversy*, to the soon coming conflict. That's where this text applies:

"In the soon-coming conflict we shall see exemplified the prophet's words: 'The dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ'" *Great Controversy*, page 592.

Again, Revelation 17:14. Here's another view of this war ahead:

"These..."

Speaking of the kings of the earth with their power, their armies, and their resources.

"...shall make war with the lamb, and the lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful" Revelation 17:14.

You notice that the powers of earth are united against the Lamb. It's a war against God. You notice that Jesus has some with Him that are called and chosen and faithful. And who's going to win in this war? Oh, the Lamb will win, and those who are with Him—never any doubt about the issue of the conflict, never any question about who's going to be victorious. Jesus will win. And thank God, friends, if we stand with Him, we too, shall win. Aren't you glad? Yes.

Revelation 19:19, still another view of this soon coming conflict:

“And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army” Revelation 19:19.

Here's the beast. Who is that? Well, we shall see. But the beast and the kings of the earth, and his armies, are gathered together to make war against Him that sat on the horse and against His army. Who's the one who sits on the horse?

“And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True” Revelation 19:11.

Who is this? Jesus.

“...and in righteousness he doth judge and make war” Revelation 19:11.

So you see, friends, on one side, there is a demon war inspired from beneath in an attack on God and His people. And answering that from the heights of Heaven is a righteous war in which Jesus Himself leads, and all the armies of Heaven follow, for it says:

“And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean” Revelation 19:14.

There you have it, friends. The lines are drawn.

Again, let us go to Revelation 16:13–14:

“And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty” Revelation 16:13–14.

Ah, yes, here they come. Inspired by demons, they come. The millions of

this wicked world, they come. Oh, they come. What for? To fight against God.

You notice these three symbols here, these three great powers—the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet. This triumvirate of iniquity that formed this confederacy of evil against God and His people, what do those symbols represent? Who and what is the dragon, the beast, the false prophet? We need to clearly understand these things. Let me call your attention to a statement here in the book *Testimonies to Ministers*:

“By a variety of images the Lord Jesus represented to John the wicked character and seductive influence of those who have been distinguished for their persecution of God’s people” *Testimonies to Ministers*, page 118.

By a what? A variety of images.

“By a variety of images the Lord Jesus represented to John the wicked character and seductive influence of those who have been distinguished for their persecution of God’s people” *Ibid.*

Now, watch:

“All need wisdom carefully to search out the mystery of iniquity that figures so largely in the winding up of this earth’s history” *Ibid.*

What is it that is going to figure largely in the winding up of this earth’s history? The mystery of iniquity. And you and I, it says, need wisdom carefully to search out that mystery of iniquity. Is it brought to view in the 12th chapter of Revelation? Yes. Is it brought to view in the 13th chapter of Revelation? Yes. Is it brought to view in the 14th chapter? Yes, and the 15th and 16th chapters? Yes, and the 17th and the 18th and the 19th. Yes, my friends.

The very heart of the book of Revelation is a delineation through various symbols of this mystery of iniquity which figures so largely in the winding up of this earth’s history. You and I need wisdom to do what? Carefully to search out that mystery of iniquity. We need to know what is in those wonderful chapters in Revelation that put the searchlight of prophecy upon the Devil.

You know this morning, as I walked down here to this chapel in the darkness, I had my flashlight. And as I crossed the little stream, I heard something. I turned the flashlight on it, and what do you suppose it was? A skunk. That’s right. Was I glad I had a flashlight? Oh, yes. And I watched him as he ambled up the bank and on over the pasture and out into the woods.

I tell you friends, I thank God we’ve got a searchlight to put upon the dragon and the beast and the false prophet, aren’t you, friends? Yes. It means so much to

have a light that shows exactly where they came from and where they're going, and, shall I say, keep out of their way.

Oh, that God may bless us with an understanding of the wonderful truths that He has given us.

Now, may I at this point, drop this word of caution? You know, when we study this book of Revelation, I suppose that in some minds an expectation is raised, "Now we're going to find out some of those questions that we have always wanted to know."

Well, if the questions we have always wanted to know are the things we need to know, we'll find them out, friends. But there are a great many things that I don't know about Revelation. There are many things in this book, friends, that are not as clear as you and I might wish they were.

But you know what I noticed, coming along the road this morning with the flashlight? I noticed that the clearest thing that stood out was the road ahead. Do you know why it was? Because that is where I focused the flashlight.

When our heavenly Father focuses the flashlight, the searchlight of prophecy for His church—watch this point—He focuses it on the road ahead, the place where we're to walk. And there are many things out in the darkness on either side, many things in the twilight zone, in between, that we might like to know and understand; that our curiosity naturally leads us to think about, many things there that are not so plain; perhaps not plain at all. But if we'll keep our eyes focused where the light is clearest, we shall see what God wants us to see. And especially, we shall find where our duties are. What do you say we do that, friends?

Let us study, then, most earnestly, the things which are clearest. And as we do that, we shall avoid idle speculations that the world is so full of today, and that creep into the church; human ideas and speculations regarding this and that.

Oh, I'm sure that in the study of this book we need to remember the rule that Peter lays down when he speaks of prophecy as a great light.

"Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation" 2 Peter 1:20.

So as we give heed to the light of prophecy, and focus our minds where the light is focused, we shall have clear vision concerning the things that we need to know.

We have spoken of the great powers of earth inspired by the Devil that are lining up even now, and will finally, in a great confederacy, oppose God and His people. But now, for a few moments, I would like to turn away from all that terrible picture of demon-inspired persecution, and I would like to have us think of the winning side, Heaven's side.

You remember in that first text we read on the battle in Revelation 12:17, the dragon was wroth with whom? The woman.

“And went to make war with the remnant of her seed which keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ” Revelation 12:17.

As far as this world is concerned, then, the army is composed of the woman and her seed. And I submit, friends that a woman and her children would not seem to be very much of an army to meet all the kings of this earth and their armies, especially when they are backed by the Devil and all his angels. But, ah, friends, things are not always as they appear. And that woman and her children are backed by all the power of the universe. The Lamb with all the armies of Heaven is behind that woman.

Who does that woman represent? The church, God’s church. And who are that seed? Her children.

If you and I have found the Lamb and stand with Him, then we are on the winning side. If you and I have found that woman, that true church, then we’re part of her children. Oh, then friends, we are on the winning side if we stay, if we remain. I pray God we shall; that we shall not be shaken out; that we shall not be sifted out; that when the army of God on earth and in Heaven join in that grand review before the throne, we shall be there with the Lamb on Mount Zion, having the harps of God. It will be a wonderful experience, won’t it?

You know, the One who heads this army, as we have seen, is repeatedly spoken of in the book of Revelation as the Lamb. Over a score of times that title is applied to Christ in this book of Revelation.

In our closing moments this morning with this first study, I would like to take you to Revelation 5. There I would like to have you get the first view of the Lamb in this great book of Revelation. *Volume 9*, says:

“The fifth chapter of Revelation needs to be closely studied. It is of great importance to those who shall act a part in the work of God for these last days”
Testimonies for the Church, Volume 9, page 267.

So in this fifth chapter of Revelation, what do we find? Ah, we find a view of the throne of God. We see the King of the universe seated there with a book in His hand. We hear a strong angel proclaiming:

“...Who is worthy to open the book and to loose the seals thereof?” Revelation 5:2.

But as the prophet looks, there is nobody in Heaven or earth that can open

that book. And he weeps because he longs to see what's within that sealed book. But, ah, one of the elders comes and touches him and says, "John, don't weep":

"...the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof" Revelation 5:5.

And John turns to see that Lion of Judah open that book, and what does he see?

"...I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four [living creatures] beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain"
Revelation 5:6.

This is the first view of the Lamb, the introduction of the Lamb in this book of Revelation. There He stands, my friends, in the presence of God. The great central object of view in all the universe, a Lamb as it had been slain.

Oh friends, there is much to study there. I bring it to your attention this morning, as the great central picture in the whole book of Revelation—Jesus the Lamb of God.

Thou dying Lamb, Thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransomed church of God
Are saved to sin no more.

There is where Heaven is thrilled with love and longing. Here is where the church of earth gathers its inspiration for its closing conflict, seeing the love and sacrifice of Jesus as He poured out His life on Calvary, and as He ministers that precious blood in the sanctuary above. Oh, it stirs every heart in the remnant people to do everything possible to satisfy the heart longings of the Son of God.

Shall we join in that, my friends? Shall we send Him the word this morning that we're heart to heart with Him in His longing for a clean universe? Shall we?

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