

## Overcoming Satan

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Edwin Crozier  
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### Introduction:

In **Genesis 3:14-15**, we are introduced to the curse of the serpent who tempted Eve with the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. This curse is not merely the future of men versus serpents. It is the future of the woman's seed, that is the Christ, crushing the serpent, that is Satan. Notice the three main characters in this curse: the woman, the seed and the serpent. At the other end of the Bible we are reintroduced to these same characters in **Revelation 12**. In **Revelation 12:1-2** we meet the woman pregnant with her seed. Then in **vs. 9**, we learn the dragon is actually the great serpent of old, Satan. Notice briefly what takes place in **Revelation 12**. In **vss. 1-6**, Satan fights against the woman and her son. Satan loses. In **vss. 7-9**, Satan fights against the forces of heaven. Satan loses. In **vss. 13-17**, Satan is fighting against the followers of the seed on earth. Our Bible is bookended with this story. In **Genesis** we see the curse that the seed of the woman will crush the serpent. In **Revelation** we see the explanation of that. While **Revelation** was originally written for the persecution the first century Christians faced, this same battle is taking place today. **Ephesians 6:12** explains that we are in a battle right now, even though we cannot see the battle physically. There is a great spiritual battle taking place even through our lives right now. According to **I Peter 5:8**, Satan is seeking whom he may devour. In **Genesis 3**, he devoured Eve and Adam. How do we keep him from devouring us? We want to be in this **Revelation 12** picture. We want to be part of the conquering horde in **Revelation 12:10-11**. But how? How do we overcome Satan? **Revelation 12:11** tells us how.

### Discussion:

- I. We conquer by the blood of the Lamb.
  - A. The heart of our problem is, by ourselves, we have already lost the battle. **Romans 3:23** explains that we have all sinned and fallen short of God's glory. Like Adam and Eve, Satan has already overcome us. What's even worse, the more we try to rely on ourselves to merely pull ourselves up by our bootstraps and be righteous all on our own the more we just keep sinning. At least, that is what happened to Paul according to **Romans 7:15-23**.
  - B. Gratefully, we don't have to fight this battle on our own. According to **Revelation 12:11**, we overcome Satan by the blood of the Lamb. This is the same Lamb who was worthy to open the seals of the scroll of God's plan in **Revelation 5:5-6**. This is the Lamb who was slain and by His blood "ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation." He has made us a kingdom of priests who will reign on the earth. By the death of Jesus we become conquering and victorious kings and priests.
  - C. No doubt the Jews who had been looking for the Messiah struggled with this. They were looking for physical victory and vindication over their Roman oppressors, but the Christians were learning that this is what God planned all along. Spiritual victory over Satan in Christ. In fact, this is the fulfillment of **Isaiah 53**. According to **Isaiah 53:6** each of us have fallen short and sinned. We have gone our own ways like wandering sheep. However, according to **Isaiah 53:5, 7, 10-12**, the Messiah, God's servant, would be sacrificed and slain that we might live.
  - D. If you want to overcome Satan, don't try to do it by yourself. You can only conquer through the blood of the Lamb that was slain to save you.
- II. We conquer by the word of our testimony.
  - A. Obviously, without the blood and strength that comes from Christ, we are nothing and can do nothing to overcome Satan. However, we must not take that to mean we can do nothing and still overcome. Jesus did not die so we could sit on our thumbs and just bask in the victory He offers. Rather, if we are going to overcome, it will also be by the word of our testimony.
  - B. **Romans 10:9-10** talks about the role of confession in being initially saved. We must testify our faith in Jesus as the Christ. We must confess that we believe Jesus is Christ and Lord in order to be saved. **Acts 8:37** provides a great example of this when Philip asked the eunuch if he believed and he said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."
  - C. **Matthew 10:32-33** explains we must acknowledge or confess God before men if we want Him to acknowledge and confess us before God. That is, Jesus' blood provides us the victory we

cannot hope to have by ourselves. However, we have to testify, acknowledge and confess Jesus before the world. We cannot hide our relationship with Him; we must display it.

- D. While this is mainly a verbal work. We can't help but notice **Matthew 5:16** which explains we need to be a shining light by our good works that point people to God and His glory. We must not only confess God by our words, but also by our actions. When we obey God, we confess to the world that we believe God. When we seek first His kingdom and righteousness we confess to the world that we believe He will provide for us. When we seek to close the door on the devil by not letting anger have a foothold in our lives, we confess to the world that we believe God's peaceful path is right. On and on this list could go.
- E. If you want to overcome Satan, then display the word and action of your testimony.

### III. We conquer by not loving our lives even to death.

- A. When John wrote **Revelation**, the disciples were enduring intense persecution. Many were dying for their faith. Jesus had told the Smyrnan Christians if they were faithful unto death, He would give them a crown of life (**Revelation 2:10**). When He addressed the brethren in Pergamum, He recalled the death of Antipas who was martyred for the word of his testimony (**Revelation 2:13**). The point here is these disciples overcame because they were willing to die rather than turn their back on the Lamb who had died rather than turn His back on them.
- B. Satan is taking a different approach in his attack against us today. We have a hard time grasping this "faithful unto death" concept because we do not face the kind of persecution that might lead to our deaths (not yet, anyway). How does this transfer to us?
- C. **Galatians 2:20** says as Christians, we are crucified with Christ and we live based on what He wants, not what we want. Our lives are surrendered to Him. **Matthew 16:24-25** says we must take up our cross and follow Jesus. We may not die physically, but we do crucify ourselves spiritually. We put ourselves on the cross and Jesus on the throne in our lives. We don't argue with Jesus about how much serving Him we really have to do to go to heaven; we just find what He says and do it because we know it is best for us.
- D. This will sometimes call for extreme measures in our lives understanding that half measures will avail us nothing in our fight against Satan. We may not be killed by our government or by false religion this week, but we may have to cut off our right hand or pluck out our right eye. As Jesus said in **Matthew 5:29-30**, if something causes us to stumble we need to sacrifice it, surrendering it to God. Let Him have it as we lay it on the altar before Him. Let me highlight something from this verse that we often overlook. In this passage, it says *if* your hand or eye causes you to stumble. In other words, Jesus is not establishing a law for everyone per se. Therefore, with some of the things you have to cut out of your life and surrender to God, you won't be able to find a verse that says, "Thou shalt not." But if you want life and want to overcome, you had better cut it off. If you can't go into a convenience store without picking up a beer, then you are going to have to quit going into convenience stores. If you can't watch a certain show without lusting for a certain actor or actress, then you are going to have to quit watching that show. If you can't control your time in front of the television and it is eating your life away, then you are just going to have to get rid of your tv. If video games cause you to waste all of your time and they get in the way of your devotion to God, then you are just going to have to get rid of video games. If you can't hang out with certain people without getting involved in gossip, then you are just going to have to quit hanging out with them. You won't be able to turn around and make a rule for everybody on these issues. However, if you want life, you will cut these things off even though it is like plucking out your right eye.
- E. If we want to overcome Satan, we must not love our lives even unto death.

### Conclusion:

Satan will lose that third battle as well. In fact, we know he already has. **Revelation 12:10-12** is not just about the defeat of Satan by the heavenly foes. It is the proclamation of his utter defeat period before God and His children. As **Revelation 12:12** says, we, who are the citizens of heaven (cf. **Philippians 3:20**) can rejoice because Satan is losing, will lose and, in fact, has already lost. We will overcome, if we are on the Lord's side.