

Bible Study # 24

3/22/22

Revelation 11 (Cont)

From Father Sebastian's Parish Presentation

Revelation 11 (Cont)

- **Revelation 11:6-7** *“They have power to shut the sky, that no rain may fall...and conquer them and kill them”*
 - By the fourth century, we begin to see commentaries attempting to explain these two witnesses
 - Some speculate that these are images of Elijah (stopped the rain) and Moses (turned the water of Egypt into blood) as they appeared at the **transfiguration** with Jesus
 - Some see them as Jesus representing Elijah and the apostle representing Moses
 - These two witnesses were prophesying about the coming destruction of Jerusalem (70 AD)

Revelation 11 (Cont)

- In the end, what we see here in Revelation is a reference to something that will happen in 70 AD in preparation in which God sent some sort of prophetic witnesses to prepare His people for the coming chastisement

Revelation 11 (Cont)

- **Revelation 11:8** *“and their dead bodies will lie in the street of the great city which is allegorically called Sodom and Egypt where the Lord was crucified”*
 - This may mean that the two witnesses will be killed
 - Obviously, the city is Jerusalem as it was the place where Jesus was crucified

Revelation 11 (Cont)

- **Revelation 11:19-12:1** *“Then God’s temple in heaven was opened,... And a great portent appeared in heaven, a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars”*
 - We just blew passed the chapter division!
 - Father reminded us that chapter (added by a 12th century bishop) and verse (added during the Protestant Reformation) divisions were not in the original texts
 - This is an example of a poor division
 - In Revelation 11, John is telling us one thing and then in **Revelation 12**, he will give us another thing in the same way

Revelation 11 (Cont)

- Father reminded us that the Ark of the Covenant was supposed to be in the Holy of Holies as it contained the throne upon which God sat
- The ark was made of *acacia* wood (very hard wood found in the desert, near Mount Sinai, good for building)
- It was covered with gold on the inside and outside with a golden cover upon which two carved golden cherubim were placed
- Inside, it held the two stone tablets, containing the 10 Commandments (**Exodus 25**)
- Here, we see the connection between the *acacia* wood as something of the earth and the gold which was obviously something of beauty

Revelation 12

From Father Sebastian's Parish Presentation

Revelation 12

- In **Revelation 12**, we have a woman clothed with the sun as a parallel to the gold
- This was because she was going to become the Ark of the Covenant
- In the Old Testament, God's word was placed on stone tablets which became the first material realization of God's Word (making the word physical)
- Here, the Word of God takes on human flesh and resides in the new ark

Revelation 12 (Cont)

- This fulfills **Jeremiah 31:31*** and **Ezekiel 36:24***
- Just as we had the word on stone tablets, we now have it in the flesh of mankind in Jesus Christ
- So, the Ark of the Covenant that is going to house the Word of God, is going to carry it (or bear it) in the womb of a woman clothed with the sun (not in a gold covered box of *acacia* wood)
- The sun is the symbol of purity and beauty
- So, John gives us a New Testament image with an Old Testament background by which we can understand it
- He is showing us that Mary is the new Ark of the Covenant

Revelation 12 (Cont)

- Luke makes a similar point about Mary as the Ark of the Covenant in **Luke 1:26-38***
- She goes to the hill country of Judea and stays with Elizabeth for three months (which fulfills **2nd Samuel 6:11*** where we see the ark in its similar travels of Mary)
- Both John and Luke make it clear that Jesus is the Word made Flesh
- Also, that the word of God resided in the Ark of the Covenant and therefore, inside of Mary is the living Word of God

Revelation 12 (Cont)

- John's gospel clearly tells us that Mary is the mother of Jesus
- Then, he says in **Revelation 12** that she was crowned with 12 stars
- This should remind us of the story of Joseph's dream in **Genesis 37:9-11***
- Further, we can ascertain that Mary was Queen of Heaven
 - At this point the temple was in heaven and she has a crown of 12 stars which was the symbol of the 12 tribes of Israel

Revelation 12 (Cont)

- Thus, this second image is of the identity of the child who is to come
- Mary was housing the word of God in the flesh
- Jesus is understood in the New Testament as the Word of God
- But, he is also understood as the fulfillment of the long awaited Christ (*Mashiach* - Hebrew for Messiah, the anointed one); the human king of Israel
- Father reminded us of the story of Israel asking God for a human king (resulting in Saul, David, and Solomon)

Revelation 12 (Cont)

- In **2nd Samuel 7:8-14***, God promised that David's dynasty would last forever
- So, at this point, Israel was waiting for the return of the human king and for the divine king
- A heavenly and an earthly king
- Jesus was both (as seen in **Matthew** and **Luke's** infancy narratives)
- Father said that the connection of this to the 12 stars is the of the queen mother (*gebirah*) in the Old Testament

Revelation 12 (Cont)

- A queen mother (*gebirah*) was called “the mighty woman” as seen in **Proverbs 31** where she gives advice to her son the king
- A crown of 12 stars (means that Jesus in her womb was not only the Word of God, but also the long awaited messiah)
- The following text will further clarify this