

Tusculum Hills Baptist Church
Paul Gunn, Pastor

Sermon title: God's Redeeming Work From the Beginning of Time, Revelation 12:4b

Date preached: November 27, 2016

For public use: See non-copyright comments at the end of the message

INTRODUCTION: We are going to read Revelation Chapter 12, but while you're turning there, I'm going to ask you a question. Did you know Satan wants to destroy everything? Satan wants to destroy this earth. He wants to destroy you. He wants to do everything within his power to keep you from following Jesus Christ. But, Satan has failed time and time again.

SCRIPTURE: Revelation 12:4b ... *The dragon stood in front of the woman who was about to give birth, so that it might devour her child the moment he was born.*

I have one point to today's message:

SATAN FAILED IN HIS PLANS TO DESTROY JESUS CHRIST.

It may seem strange to begin a Christmas message with a scripture from Revelation, but this little tidbit, this succinct sentence, tells us what our enemy, Satan, the devourer, has been up to from the beginning. We celebrate the birth of Jesus at this time of year with a sterile depictions—pristine, ceramic or carved wooden manger scenes. In the manger scene, we have smiling faces, perhaps topped by halos, atop a coffee table or a mantel. It's a scene depicted all over the world, and people know what it stands for. We have Mary, who folds her hands serenely over her chest and smiles benevolently at a plastic Jesus in a plastic manger. And, Joseph hovers nearby, with kneeling shepherds and wise men in the background. But, I doubt many of us have ever thought about or certainly have not studied how Satan fought against the coming of the Messiah throughout scripture. His primary objective from the very beginning was to destroy the seed.

I read about a country in Central or South America. To start off the Christmas season, they believe it's best to get rid of Satan. So, every year, they create this paper mache-type statue of Satan and take it to the city square, and they soak it in

gasoline. And, everybody comes out into the city street to light it on fire. I have a friend who went to this country, and he just couldn't believe what he saw. But, the people in this country consider this activity the kickoff of the Christmas season.

APPLICATION: You know—it's true—we have to rid ourselves of Satanic influence. Why don't we all do our best to avoid Satan and turn our focus to Christ?

Since he's already been crucified and resurrected, now we can focus on the second coming of Christ.

SCRIPTURE: Genesis 3:15 ¹⁵*And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*

EXPLANATION: From the very beginning, there was enmity between the seed of woman and the seed of the enemy. War was declared on Satan. The seed of the woman is the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. And, this seed will be victorious over the seed of the serpent.

BIBLICAL ILLUSTRATIONS: Satan's only chance of victory lay in destroying this "seed of the woman" from being born or to destroy it when it did come. Throughout time, Satan tried to stop the seed—Jesus—from being born.

- His first attempt came when Eve had her first two sons, Cain and Abel. Satan thought the offspring would come from Abel because his sacrifice was accepted. So, he directed Cain to kill Abel. But, this made Cain unacceptable to be the deliverer. However, then Seth came along. Seth means, "appointed one."
- Satan corrupts the whole human race in Chapter 6 of Genesis, through the Nephilim intermarrying with the daughters of man (a whole other story!) except for one man and his family, Noah. All had to be destroyed, except for this one "blameless" family. "Blameless" did not mean they were perfect, but it meant their line had not been corrupted and they were seeking God's will in their lives.

- Next comes Abraham, whose lineage was to bring forth the Messiah. We know the story there. They were old and thought they could not have children. And, Sarah said to take Hagar the servant and have a child with her. So, Abraham had a child with Hagar, and the child was named Ishmael. Then Satan again tries to thwart the plans through Ishmael. But, God miraculously intervenes, and Sarah conceived and bore Isaac.

SCRIPTURE: Galatians 3:16 ¹⁶*The promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. Scripture does not say "and to seeds," meaning many people, but "and to your seed," meaning one person, who is Christ.*

- The barrenness of Rebecca in Genesis Chapter 25—

SCRIPTURE: Genesis 25:21 ²¹*Isaac prayed to the LORD on behalf of his wife, because she was childless. The LORD answered his prayer, and his wife Rebekah became pregnant.*

- Satan tries to destroy the nation of Israel in Egypt. But, as Pharaoh orders all the male babies to be killed, God sends a deliverer named Moses to lead the people out of Egypt.
- At one point in Israel's history, Satan was successful in killing "all the seed royal of the house of Judah." But, one boy was hidden in the temple for six years during this awful threat. His name was Joash. And, II Chronicles 22:10-12 tells us Joash was spared. He was the only person on the earth through whom the Messiah could come.
- Satan uses a man named Haman to make a decree to kill all Jews young and old, including women and children, in one day, during the time of Esther. God raised up the woman, Esther, and Mordecai to spare the nation.
- I'm sure Satan was aware of Gabriel's pronouncement to Mary that she would be the one to bring the Messiah into the world. Perhaps he inspired Caesar Augustus to send out the decree to the entire world for everyone to go to city of their birth to be taxed. As a result, Mary had to make a difficult and

dangerous journey through mountainous country to reach Bethlehem—when she was almost ready to deliver. This must have been a terrible journey.

ILLUSTRATION: I remember when my youngest brother was born. We had a Mozda GLC—a great little car. It had a manual choke, so before you crank the car, you had to pull out the choke. If you didn't pull out the choke, you were sure in for a ride. Late in the night, my mom went into labor, and it was time to go to the hospital. We all got in. My dad was so nervous about getting to the hospital, he forgot to take the choke out.

I think about Mary—9 months pregnant—riding a donkey. Not only did she have a long and hard journey through mountainous country—but she faced the danger of robbers along the way, too.

- Another one of the most horrific attempts of Satan was the edict of Herod to kill all of the babies two-years-old and younger in Bethlehem and the surrounding areas.

And so, here we have the rather innocuous manger scene. It's peaceful. And, it's the culmination of the victory of Jehovah God through the ages over the schemes of the enemy. I think most people, even most Christians, have no idea what the theme of the Bible is—the redemption of man. They have no idea how the scriptures tie together from Genesis to Revelation with this theme of Redemption. Here's a list of God's redeeming work in all books of the Bible:

Genesis – Creator & promised Redeemer

Exodus – the Passover Lamb

Leviticus – High Priest

Numbers – water in the desert

Deuteronomy – He becomes the curse for us.

Joshua – Commander of the army of the Lord

Judges – delivers us from injustice

Ruth – our Kinsman-Redeemer

1 Samuel – All in one—He is the Prophet/Priest/King.
2 Samuel – King of grace & love
1 Kings – a Ruler greater than Solomon
2 Kings – the powerful prophet
1 Chronicles – Son of David, who is coming to rule
2 Chronicles – the King who reigns eternally
Ezra – Priest proclaiming freedom
Nehemiah – the One who restores what is broken down
Esther – Protector of his people
Job – Mediator between God and man
Psalms – our song in the morning and in the night
Proverbs – our wisdom
Ecclesiastes – our meaning for life
Song of Solomon – Author of faithful love
Isaiah – Suffering Servant
Jeremiah – the weeping Messiah
Lamentations – He assumes God’s wrath for us
Ezekiel – Son of Man
Daniel – the stranger in the fire with us
Hosea – faithful husband even when we run away
Joel – He is sending His Spirit to His people
Amos – delivers justice to the oppressed
Obadiah – Judge of those who do evil
Jonah – the greatest missionary
Micah – He casts our sin into the sea of forgetfulness
Nahum – proclaims future world peace we cannot even imagine

Habakkuk – crushes injustice
Zephaniah – the Warrior who saves
Haggai – restores our worship
Zechariah – prophesies a Messiah pierced for us
Malachi – sun of righteousness who brings healing
Matthew – the Messiah who is King
Mark – the Messiah who is a Servant
Luke – the Messiah who is a Deliverer
John – the Messiah who is a God in the flesh
Acts – the Spirit who dwells in His people
Romans – the righteousness of God
1 Corinthians – the power and love of God
2 Corinthians – He is the down payment of what's to come.
Galatians – He is our very life.
Ephesians – the unity of our Church
Philippians – the joy of our life
Colossians – holds the supreme position in all things
1 Thessalonians – our comfort in the last days
2 Thessalonians – our returning King
1 Timothy – Savior of the worst sinners
2 Timothy – leader of the leaders
Titus – foundation of truth
Philemon – our Mediator
Hebrews – our High Priest
James – He matures our faith.
1 Peter – our hope in times of suffering

2 Peter – the One who guards us from false teaching

1 John – source of all fellowship

2 John – God in the flesh

3 John – source of all truth

Jude – protects us from stumbling

Revelation – King of Kings and Lord of Lords,

– The Alpha and the Omega,

– The Beginning and the End, and

– He is coming again and the One who makes all things new.

CONCLUSION: No wonder the angels sang *Glory to God in the highest* when Jesus was born—

I want you to realize the lengths at which God went in order to redeem mankind to himself. The enemy wants to defeat you today just like he wanted to defeat the coming of Christ. Yet, at the same time, God wants to redeem all situations. God in his goodness is coming to redeem this earth someday. Through Jesus, God gives us a glimmer of that hope today. We see God's redeeming work on earth today. You can be a part of his redeeming work by first trusting Jesus as Lord and Savior.

To preachers, teachers, students, and anyone else reading or using this message: I have posted this for all to use as you see fit. There is no need to cite me as the source. You are free to delete sections, add your own, or do whatever you want. There is no copyright. My request is that you do not copyright or sell my work. I am sharing my preaching notes in good faith with you because I know the challenges of putting together a lesson, especially when your week gets consumed with other things. Use it and enjoy!

I use the NIV translation of scripture because of its conversational nature. Feel free to go to Bible Gateway and copy and paste whichever translation you want to use. This transcript has been edited to an outline format that improves readability and therefore may not exactly follow the video edition.

Find me at www.thbc.com Click on sermons or YouTube channel: Pastor Paul Gunn
Thanks to Judy Andrews and Nancy Claire Smith for her editing assistance.

Sincerely, Paul Gunn
Tusculum Hills Baptist Church
Nashville, Tennessee
USA