

10.25.20

Revelation

Chapter 12 - Revealing Why God is so Passionate The Mother Desperately Running for Her Life (vs. 5-6)

Revelation 12:5-6: And she gave birth to a son, a male child, who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne. 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.

Well, I have much to say about this passage. It's hard to know where to begin. This is a big picture. This chapter is a panoramic timeline of sorts. If you don't step back, if you don't see the all-encompassing sentiment of it, then you miss the text. Because what God is doing in the middle of this turmoil of Revelation is taking a timeout. And He's saying, "Obviously, you guys need to know what

this is all about.” I mean, it's like a kid walking up to his dad, and his dad is beating something on the ground, the kid is going, “What's going on?” And the dad looks at his son and he goes, “Son, you need to understand, there is something here that almost killed your mother. I'm not just mad. I'm protecting.” So, God causes us to step back and see the big picture. And He literally, in Chapter 12 of Revelation, takes us all the way back to the very beginning.

When he talks about the clothing, if you look at the very beginning,

(Revelation 12:1) “A great sign appeared in heaven...”

And when he talks about the fact that “a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars,” I mean, I don't know if you're getting it or not, but what He's saying is, “I created everything for her.” Now, what God is conveying is that it was always His intent to have a relationship with us. What He does is He creates this thing called marriage, and in Ephesians 5, He says, “I'm telling you, I had the church in mind when I did this, so that you would be able to

understand and comprehend what my relationship would be with you." So that all along it's been about a relationship. Unfortunately, the world gets into their technical perceptions and they begin to dissect things. And they not only dissect them to their hurt in the sense that they get out their little microscopes and they look at a passage and they think, "I figured out what this word means." But they literally dissect it to the point of not being recognizable anymore. Because after a while you get into a particular passage, and if you don't understand what God is saying through the Spirit of God, you're going to miss it. You're just going to miss it. So many people study eschatology, last things, and they're just so far off I'm going, "I don't even know where you're coming from." I mean, you ultimately have to ask yourself, why was it written? Because if you walk away, going, "Well, that's interesting. But I have no idea what He was saying." Then what benefit is that? I mean, all Scripture is written for correction, for reproof, for training in righteousness. If you don't understand what He's training you in, then you miss the point. And if the Spirit of God isn't leading you into this understanding, as 1 Corinthians 2 so aptly puts it,

that you and I couldn't figure this out by ourselves. The Spirit of God bears witness to these things. Eye has not seen, ear has not heard; it could not enter into the heart of man. Empirical reasoning is bogus because there's absolutely no way that we could understand what God is thinking unless His Spirit reveals it to us. And that's the fundamental point of 1 Corinthians 2.

So, as we come to this passage, I think it's important to come to it realizing that God is revealing His heart to us, that the last days is not about the judgment of God, it's about God's passion for us and His passion for His people. Now, the description that's given at the beginning of Chapter 12 of this woman is really personifying God's people, Israel, at the very beginning. I kind of hate using these words, but this woman in a way will morph into something far greater. But at the very initial point, the woman symbolizes the anticipation of God's people for the Messiah to come. So, at the very early stage of Eve's sinning, God gave her a promise. And He said, "The day's coming that from you will come a seed that will crush the head of the serpent." So, from that day forward, God's

people were looking forward and even thinking, even Eve thought, "Maybe Cain," she names him the "gotten one," "Cain is the gotten one. He's the messiah. He's the one who's going to rescue me." So, every woman from that, and that's why it would seem to be such a curse if a Jewish woman would not have a child. Who will have the Messiah? So, it has a sense of expectation.

And of course, as you look at verse 1, the 12 stars over the head, of course, Daniel 12 says to the nation of Israel, "You'll be like the stars in the heavens in the night." So, God has ordained His people to be lights in darkness and that they would shine forth. But it's only through a birth of the Messiah that will come the salvation of this woman. And so, the anticipation is seen in this picture of a woman that longs for a child. That's the picture. And that's why the picture is in the text. From day one, the woman longs for a child. And what child is she longing for? Well, as Scripture goes on, it's the Messiah. She's longing for the Messiah. The day is going to come.

Of course, as you come to Isaiah 26, we talked about, she couldn't produce the child, i.e. the children of Israel,

God's people, could not produce a Messiah. I mean, it would seem like perhaps David came close, but I don't know. If you read a little bit closer, you realize, okay, he's not the guy, but the longing is there. Moses, of course, calling the people out of Egypt, but you could see that the law couldn't bring them into the Promised Land. So, God says, "No, Moses can't fulfill that." And you realize by the name of Joshua that someone that is savior, that Jehovah's going to have to save Jehoshua, Joshua, has to bring him into the Promised Land, but who is that going to be? And you realize that Joshua couldn't sustain the people in righteousness. As soon as he dies, then everybody does basically as they please, and you have the Book of Judges, and every man does what's right in his own eyes.

So, as we go through Scripture, we see these facsimiles of hope, and this little bit of light flickering, but never enough. But of course, John 1 starts off and it says, "Light has come into the world." Men love darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil, but the light is shining. And the Light has come into the world, and if you'll

receive Him, you'll become children of Light. So, what a wonderful picture as the day star, as Peter will say, dawns in the hearts of man and Christ has come into the world. The Light of the world is Jesus. We oftentimes sing, "the Messiah is born."

So, as we go through, it's almost as if He's given us a synopsis of all time. And He's capsulizing, and it's God's way of saying, "In case you're confused about what it's all been about, here it is. I love you, and I want you to be with Me. The only way that's going to happen is through the child. The child will bring forth a kingdom that will bring peace on earth." And of course, you hear that echoed, especially in passages like Isaiah 9, "A Son is born, a child is given to us, and the government will rest upon His shoulder. We shall call His name Wonderful Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace, and He'll actually rule with a rod of iron." Well, that's going to be a phrase that's going to be used within the passage. But this is the Messiah that we've been looking for. So, if you dissect this too much, if you don't start stepping back and just, "Okay, what's it all

about?" You're going to miss it. But He literally is revealing to us what it's all about. And what we're seeing and feeling is the heart of God saying, "Don't complicate this, don't make this religion. Make this about us."

So, by the time we come down to these last verses of this particular paragraph, verse 5 and 6, she finally gives birth to a son. Now, you read before and there's the difficulty, and of course, like I said, Isaiah 26 says, Israel could only give birth to the wind. They couldn't fulfill the promise. But the wonderful picture, of course, of the Holy Spirit bringing forth the Messiah is revealing God had to bring forth the Messiah. It couldn't be something that man could accomplish.

So, verse 5 reads,

(Revelation 12:5) "And she gave birth to a son, a male child..."

Or more specifically, a man child, which the text has its emphasis of the word that is used; it's used because it gives a picture of somebody stronger, as opposed to a female, to carry or to lift something. So, of course, man child being one to carry or bear our burdens.

“And she gave birth to a son, a male child, who is to rule all the nations...”

That's where we get our word “shepherd,” shepherd the nations; the shepherd that is going to come. And obviously, it has the connotation of rule and to govern, but the emphasis is how He's going to rule and that is going to be as a shepherd. Now, it goes on to say He's going to do this to all the nations, which means that something's got to happen that's never happened before. And that is that all the nations will subject themselves to this Messiah. That's the day we're looking forward to. Talk about peace on earth. That's when peace on earth is going to come; not necessarily when your guy is elected.

“... who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron...”

That means unyielding. But it also means something else. In fact, there's mention of this, if you look with me in Revelation 2, so make note of this. Sometimes I think this concept is misunderstood. But as Christ is dealing with the different churches, in particular Thyatira in this particular section of Revelation 2:18-29, He gives a promise to those who overcome.

And if you look with me in verse 26,

(Revelation 2:26) “He who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, TO HIM I WILL GIVE AUTHORITY OVER THE NATIONS;

(Revelation 2:27) AND HE SHALL RULE THEM WITH A ROD OF IRON, AS THE VESSELS OF THE POTTER ARE BROKEN TO PIECES, as I also have received authority from My Father.”

Now, what's interesting about this is that this picture is given not only in Jeremiah 19, but it's also given in Isaiah 30 as well, and other passages; Isaiah 9, where it talks about a rule with a rod of iron. But more specifically, when it ties together the pottery, this is what's interesting. Because the question I think oftentimes people have is, “Well, what does it mean a rod of iron? Is He going to hit me with it?” And the picture is almost always tied to pottery.

We'll look at one of the passages. Isaiah 30, if you look there with me, kind of gives us an example of this. The way that this chapter starts off in Isaiah 30 is there's an indictment against the children of Israel who have gone to

another source for their protection, for their security, for taking care of them. So, Isaiah 30 starts off, and He goes, "Woe to you. You've gone down to Egypt." In other words, "You perceive another source as that which takes care of you."

I'm not going to have you turn to all the passages, but we recently came out of Jeremiah, and so, hey, you remember it. But one of the statements that's made in Jeremiah is he begins to talk about the fact that they're going down to the Nile, they go to Euphrates, and he says, "Why are you trusting in cisterns that can't hold water?" Now, this is the fundamental point of the breaking of jars. In other words, why would you shatter jars? Because they're not useful. They're deceitful. So, what it's talking about is when Christ comes, He's going to shatter all those things that are false hopes, things that we would put our trust in that are really bogus, that are empty. You know, they say, and they promise you water; you take a drink and it's dry. It's sort of like Jude says about false prophets. They are clouds without water; false promises

given to me. And Christ says, “When I reign, no more lies. Only truth will reign.”

So, as you look in Isaiah 30, it says in verse 12,

(Isaiah 30:12) “Therefore thus says the Holy One of Israel,
“Since you have rejected this word

And have put your trust in oppression and guile, and have
relied on them,

(Isaiah 30:13) Therefore this iniquity will be to you

Like a breach about to fall,

A bulge in a high wall,

Whose collapse comes suddenly in an instant,

(Isaiah 30:14) Whose collapse is like the smashing of a
potter’s jar,

So ruthlessly shattered

That a sherd will not be found among its pieces

To take fire from a hearth

Or to scoop water from a cistern.”

In other words, “You will never again trust in a lie, not when I reign.”

Now, watch the passage,

(Isaiah 30:15) “For thus the Lord GOD, the Holy One of Israel, has said,

“In repentance and rest you will be saved,
In quietness and trust is your strength.” ...”

(Isaiah 30:18) “Therefore the LORD longs to be gracious to you...”

So, don't always picture the rod of iron as being something where Christ is just going around hitting people on the head with something heavier than a stick. But what He's doing is He's smashing all those things that man would have a tendency to put his trust in. And of course, that's given all the way throughout Scripture. Once again, the very fundamental promise of a child being born in Isaiah 9 is marking to that point where it ruled with a rod of iron.

If you look with me back in Revelation 12,

(Revelation 12:5) “And she gave birth to a son, a male child...”

Who was able to bear the sins of the world, who will shepherd all the nations and will smash all the things that are false hopes that man has put his trust in.

And then the end of verse 5, I mean, we just go through thousands of years of time instantly. But we go from a promise of a woman, and then she has a child, and then the child is just taken up. So, from verse 1 to verse 5, we're dealing with thousands of years. But we're seeing the big picture. And it's almost as if as soon as this child is born, the child's taken up. We know that's not true. We know the child is not only born, but then walks on the earth, and disciples are made, and then within 30 years, but within a span, it's almost instantaneous, because we're dealing with thousands of years. The child is born, the child is then taken up, so Christ dies, is taken up. Why doesn't He linger over the cross? And the reason is He wants you to see the picture of God's relationship and how He longs for that relationship.

If you read John 17, the emphasis is less on the cross than the prayer and more on, "I've got to go home with Dad. I've got to be home with Dad." And His statement is at the

end, “And I wish that you could love Him as much as I love Him because, wow, do We really love each other.” So, the picture that's given within the passages is that Dad wants His Son to be with Him. And He is so in love with His Son that He wants Him to reign in the heavens with Him. And so, that's the instant picture that we see. Now, the question that is posed and that is going to be seen really throughout Revelation is, why does He love His Son so much? And the Gospel of John probably clarifies this the best. He goes, “Jesus tells us.” Jesus says, “You want to know why the Father loves me? Because I lay down my life for the sheep. That's why He loves Me. Because I capsulize His heart. And that's why We're so drawn together.” I mean, you find what we call a soulmate, in which you think like that person, and you love the same things. You're naturally drawn together, and you never want to leave each other. You want to always be together with that person. So, that's the picture that's given within the passage.

Then, if you look,

(Revelation 12:5) “... and her child was caught up to God and to His throne.

(Revelation 12:6) Then the woman fled...”

That's a very interesting picture.

“Then the woman fled into the wilderness where she had a place prepared...”

A city, a village would be another word for the “place,” or a place marked off with limited room.

Once again, if you want to parallel this, I mean, there's another place you can go, but since we've already been there, Isaiah 26, just keep your finger there. It's almost using the same word here in Isaiah 26:20,

(Isaiah 26:20) “Come, my people, enter into your rooms
And close your doors behind you;
Hide for a little while
Until indignation runs its course.”

And that's always been that which defines the tribulation, the time of indignation; the time of the wrath of God that's being conveyed. “I have a room prepared for you. Go there. I'll let you know when to come out.” That's kind

of the picture. And if you look, it actually gives the amount of time, 1,260 days, 3 1/2 years. It's going to be mentioned throughout Revelation.

And you want to go to Matthew 24, we'll kind of get that picture within Matthew 24, which Jesus will actually subdivide the tribulation. Now, we know there's seven years of tribulation, but Jesus always divides it in half, 3 1/2 years.

So, you have the first part, and Jesus will say to His disciples in Matthew 24,

(Matthew 24:9) “Then they will deliver you to tribulation...”

And then He talks about if you'll endure to the end, He says in verse 14,

(Matthew 24:14) “This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come.”

Which seems to be that there's going to be a mass preaching before the coming. Now, here again, erroneously, many evangelists say that's us or that's the

church or whatever. But I mean, just read Revelation 14:6. It tells you who it is. It's an angel in mid-heaven that goes through the whole world and preaches the gospel. So, just to let you know. "Oh, Jesus can't come yet. We haven't preached the gospel." Okay, read Revelation 14:6. He can come anytime He wants to. Thank you very much.

But it goes on to say in Matthew 24:14,

"... and then the end will come."

So, He's marking it. Because this makes it an intense moment.

(Matthew 24:15) "Therefore when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand),

(Matthew 24:16) then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains."

"*Pheugō*" - "flee"

"*Pheugō*" is the Greek word. It's the same word that we're reading with the woman. The woman "*pheugō*," flees. She runs. It's always tied to her running from

something. More specifically, running from danger. It's always tied to that. So, it's not like she's out for a jog like most Americans. Well, maybe not most Americans. Not me. But what it's talking about is that she's afraid. There's something that's after her. And she's running for her life. And if you look in the passage, it says, "run to the mountains," or you could put it another way, "run in the wilderness." How long? Well, let's see, 3 1/2 years.

(Matthew 24:17) "Whoever is on the housetop must not go down to get the things out that are in his house.

(Matthew 24:18) Whoever is in the field must not turn back to get his cloak."

Run. If you're with child, run. Why?

Well, go back to Revelation 12. The woman ran, fled, "*pheugō*".

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

I'm not sure exactly where that is, and I don't think I have time to go into all the passages, but I do know that at the time that David was running from or leaving Jerusalem

from Absalom as he was taking over the kingdom, there's this place that he went to that actually was named by Jacob. And it was a time in which Jacob was actually getting ready to meet Esau, which his brother, the last thing he had said is, "I'm going to kill you." So, now he's getting ready to meet him. And angels came to Jacob and ministered to him and comforted him and took care of him. And he says, there's a Hebrew word for it, but "I'm going to call this the place of two camps, for the Lord has made me great and made me two camps." And so, it says the Lord strengthened him in that time. David will run from Absalom and will actually go to the same place. Nobody really fully knows exactly where it is, but it's probably a little bit northeast. It's over the Jordan. So, it's more east. It could be southeast, but anyway, it's up in the hills. It's up in the mountains in the wilderness. And what was interesting with David is that God sent him Ammonites, and these people came together. I mean, we have literally thousands of people that are following David and leaving Jerusalem. And they brought him supplies of bed, they brought him supplies of drink, of wine, of bread, of every conceivable thing that David

could have used, God was taking care of him when he was ostracized out of Jerusalem. So, you see a pattern.

And in many respects, just to kind of fill you in, all of the Old Testament are dry runs of the final. So, if you see something happening in the Old Testament, it's a picture of the final. I mean, for instance, we even know that Antiochus Epiphanes, who was Greek, went into the Holy of Holies, and it was called the abomination of desolation. So, we know what abomination of desolation looks like. It's a sacrifice to another God in the Holy of Holies. And it's declaring somebody else God rather than God. That's the worst abomination you could really pose. So, that's going to happen, and Jesus actually warns us of that in Matthew 24. Well, all these things are revealing the fact that there's a hostility against the woman, those that long for the Messiah.

And so, if you look with me back in Revelation 12, (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."

Now, what we understand is, in verse 4, there is an evil force, and obviously this is what she's running from.

(Revelation 12:4) "...the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she gave birth he might devour her child."

So, there is this hostile force called the dragon. Now, the picture that's being given to us is that God is in love and embraces this woman. There is a hindrance that is coming in, an evil, that wants to destroy everything about the relationship, but most of all wants to destroy the one who will come and not only give the woman hope but bring fulfillment to her life. So, how can he destroy that? How can he devour that? And from day one, the evil one's been trying to devour that dream. And that's what the Scripture's wanting to convey. You know, look, in the last days, you go outside with a flashlight, and you say, "I still don't see the dragon." Well, I don't know if there's going to be a real dragon that comes in the skies or not, but I don't think that's what you should be looking for. Because the fact of the matter is, the evil one's been fighting us all along. And the dragon, the evil one, is even attacking us

today. And if I can put it more in the conglomerate of “all those who have loved His appearing,” because we then become a part of that longing of that woman as we long for the appearing of the Messiah. So, there's kind of a morphing into even the church. To me, it's not one or the other. It begins with God's people as He initiates them, and says, “I have prepared you to long for this.” This is the whole reason why the 12 are made, so that you might long for this Messiah. But of course, as time goes by, we become a part of that. Paul will use the phrase in Romans, we've been grafted into this family. We've become a part of this family.

I don't think it can be any clearer than, I think it's in Matthew 12, if you look there with me.

(Matthew 12:46) “While He was still speaking to the crowds, behold, His mother and brothers were standing outside, seeking to speak to Him.”

(Matthew 12:47) “Someone said to Him, “Behold, Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside seeking to speak to You.”

(Matthew 12:48) But Jesus answered the one who was telling Him and said, “Who is My mother and who are My brothers?”

(Matthew 12:49) And stretching out His hand toward His disciples, He said, “Behold My mother and My brothers!

(Matthew 12:50) For whoever does the will of My Father who is in heaven, he is My brother and sister and mother.””

I mean, everything starts changing at this juncture.

And what's interesting is, you go to Luke 4, and Jesus in the synagogue begins to say, “You know there was more faith outside of Jerusalem than there was in Jerusalem.”

Now, He's preaching this in a synagogue. Now, they want to throw Him off the cliff after He finishes. But He brings this up, and He says, “Remember that woman that Elijah went to see? Well, she wasn't a Jew.” He said, “Weren't there a lot of widows that needed help in Jerusalem? Why didn't He go to them?” He said, “Because there wasn't one of faith.” He then turns and He says, “Remember that Syrian general, that Naaman guy?” He goes, “There weren't any other generals or anybody else in Jerusalem

that had leprosy? Why did he heal him?" He goes, "Because you guys weren't believing. I tell you, they have more faith than you."

He tells us in Luke 7, a centurion comes and he goes, "I've got this servant that needs to be healed. Can You help?" And He goes, "Yeah, I'm coming." He goes, "You don't need to come. You've got enough power. Just say the word. You have the authority to do it." And Jesus says, "There has not been faith like this in all of Israel." And He's got to include His disciples in that one. It's Jesus that goes to the Samaritan. It's a Samaritan woman that we are so drawn to, and she's not even a part of the family. It was Rahab, the harlot in the Old Testament, and it was the Moabite of Ruth that God was calling in. He's been calling in, but the personification of that longing was the Jewish nation. We have now become attached by our longing for the Messiah. And from day one, those who have longed and attached themselves to this longing, like a bride would long for her husband; as Scripture says, everyone who has this hope in him not only purifies himself, but Scripture goes on to say that we have a

crown of righteousness because we have loved His appearing. Because we long for this. So, we become attached to this wonderful picture.

So, what is God telling us in this particular passage? Here again, this is what you have to take home. What is God telling us that we have to do? Okay, here's the point. Run. Because the evil one is out to get you. Why? You've attached yourself to the Messiah. And what you're going to see in Revelation 12 is that she's going to have to run. Actually, he's going to tie in Satan.

If you were confused about the dragon, by the way, (Revelation 12:9) "And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth..."

And then it goes on and says there is great praise, (Revelation 12:10) "... “Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ...”

That's the word "Messiah," by the way,

“... have come, for the accuser of our brethren...”

So, now He ties them together.

“... has been thrown down, he who accuses them before our God day and night.”

What is Scripture telling you to do? Well, the same thing He's telling this woman. And what we're going to see is that this picture of the woman is going to consummate at the very end in which God's going to preserve that 144,000. And of course, ultimately, in Revelation 14, we're going to see Him on top of the hill. God's going to say, “Okay, time to come out,” and does a little choir practice, and then they all start singing and saying, “We've won,” basically. In the worst part of the moment, where it looks like they're the most vulnerable, they're going to stand with the Lamb, and they're going to say, “The Messiah is here,” and they're going to welcome Him. So, the consummation of the picture is going to be fulfilled, and this is what the text is bringing us to. In between, what has the woman been doing all along? Running.

Now, let me see if I can clarify that running. You go all the way back to Genesis, and the serpent comes to deceive Eve, right? In 2 Corinthians 11, Paul talks specifically as he quotes this in verse 3, and he says, “I'm amazed that you're so quickly deserting Him, and that somehow, you've allowed the serpent to come in,” and I quote the text, “You've been led astray by him, by his deceitfulness, from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ.” Now, what he's talking about is that the serpent came into Eve, and what she should have done when he started coming in and questioning God was what? Run. But what she did was tarry. And this is one of the problems that you and I have. Look, evil's out to get you. It's smarter than you. It's smarter than me. “Oh, I can handle that.” No, you cannot handle it. Run.

So, the woman's there, and what he always does is he uses lesser glories to allure. An example, you go to Genesis 3:1-7, and here the serpent goes, and you begin to go, “Okay, how is he tempting?” First of all, the thing he's saying is, “You'll know something that you didn't know before.” Now, there's something glorious about

investigating the unknown. In fact, it's very entertaining. If in fact, you're in a room and there's somebody whispering, you just can't help but try to lean in because you don't know what they're talking about. And it's the fact that you don't know what they're talking about that makes it more alluring. Now, is there anything wrong with desiring to know more? No. But when the allurement of knowing more is what your hope is and what your focus is and what your love is; in other words, when you love learning things, it's one of the reasons why witchcraft is called "curious religion". Did you ever know that? And that it was invented by the serpent who whispers. Serpent actually means hissing or whispering. So, exactly how he allured her? Well, I have a suspicion. But he begins to use what I would call lesser glories, unknown. If you look in Genesis 3:6, he uses visual delights. What's wrong with something really, really looking beautiful? Nothing. Unless it allures you from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ. So, Ezekiel 28, who is the most beautiful being in all of heaven? Satan. There's nothing wrong with perfect beauty, unless perfect beauty

would cause you to leave fidelity. That's when it becomes wrong.

And the same thing is true when you think about how she looked at the tree, and it was good for the appetite. And a sensual appetite and even taste; sometimes it's the sensual ears, the music. Isaiah 14 talks about the fact that Satan and his harps and his music, he was basically the music director of heaven. So, the power to allure, Revelation 18 makes reference to this specifically, Babylon and their music. "What a beautiful song." Nothing wrong with beautiful songs. Unless they allure you from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ. So, he'll use the unknown. He'll use visual delights. He'll use sensual appetites. He'll use superior wisdom. "What's wrong with me being wise above anybody else?" Nothing. Unless... So, it's the lesser glories that he always draws us with. See, the worst question to me that I could ever hear from a believer is, "What's wrong with...?" Because if you don't know, you're not listening to the Spirit of God. What the woman should have done was run. That's what she should have done.

Right away, when you go into Genesis 4:7, you have Cain, right? What is Satan alluring Cain with? I'm going to tell you. He's alluring him with recognition, affirmation, and competition. "There's nothing wrong with competition." Would it cause you to hate your brother? "Maybe." Then I wouldn't do it. I'd run. Run. As Ecclesiastes says, almost everything under the sun is a result of rivalry. And why is it that he wanted to kill his brother? Because his offering was not accepted. He was not at the center of the stage. He did not have the recognition that he felt like he deserved. And it was his brother's fault. So, he kills his brother. Now, what's interesting about the passage is what God says to Cain.

And I'm going to give you a direct quote, (Genesis 4:7) "... sin is crouching at the door; and its desire is for you..."

What should he have done? Run. He should have run. Paul will write to Timothy, and he'll write this in 2 Timothy 2:22, "Now flee from youthful lusts..."

Run.

(1 Timothy 4:7) “But have nothing to do with worldly fables...”

(2 Timothy 2:16) “But avoid worldly and empty chatter...”

That means run from arguments, run from speculations, run from philosophical debates, and theoretical debates.

Run.

It says in 1 Timothy 6:9-11, it actually uses, “Flee from these things.” What things is he talking about? Money. The love of money. “Oh, I just love money.” Run. You know, the moment I start holding money too tight, I can hear God's voice going, “Why don't you give some away?” And it just clears the spiderwebs. You go, “This isn't even mine.” Just get rid of that stuff. It starts attaching to you. As Timothy writes in 1 Timothy 6, it becomes a snare. I'm quoting the text. It becomes a snare, (1 Timothy 6:9) “and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction.

(1 Timothy 6:10) For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil...”

Just by simply longing for it. You don't even have to have it. All you have to do is say, "I want it." That's all you have to do. And it will plunge you into ruin. Think about that.

"... and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs."

Run. Don't have anything to do with it. Obviously, it got Demas, it got the rich young ruler, it got Judas. I mean, shall we go on? I mean, Simon the magician, Balaam the prophet; it snared all of them. Run.

Peter writes this in 1 Peter 5:8,

"... Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour."

Wait a minute. Wait a minute.

(Revelation 12:4) "... And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she gave birth he might devour her child."

Run. You say, "Well, how can I be protected if I run?" You know, it is in the running that you really demonstrate who you love. And it is in the act of love that God embraces you. James says, "Resist the devil and he will flee from

you." But in the same text, it basically says, "But embrace God." Now, what it's saying is, if you'll run from these things, God will bring you safely home, and that's the picture of the child going home. What is it that pleased the Father about Christ? He loved not the world, nor the things that are in the world. He loved not His own life, even to death on the cross. He had the same heart of God, and God says, "You're coming home with Me. You're coming home."

I think it's interesting, you come to the end of 2 Timothy, in Chapter 4, and Paul is making reference to the fact, he says, "I know it's time to go. The time of my death has come, and I know that I'm about to leave this place." He turns and he says this, "But I know that God will bring me safely home." And that's an interesting picture, because we know Christ died on the cross. We know that Paul was beheaded. But God brought them home. They were home. And that's why Paul will write, "Christ in you, the hope of glory." You know, there's a little bit in all of us of love for the Messiah. And that love for the Messiah is in

our hearts. And God goes, “That's My kid. You're coming home with Me” and He pulls you up into the heavens.

What's the message to the woman? Run. Because the destruction of man, and you read Acts 1 and you see that picture of Christ going up before the apostles, and the angel goes, “What are you staring for? You guys are going to go up just like this.” And I look forward to that day in which we go up to be with the Lord, but it's because we embody that Spirit of God's love in our hearts and He has called us home. So, a wonderful passage. If you haven't learned anything today, maybe just a reminder, run.

Closing Prayer:

Father, we give You thanks for Your lovingkindness to us and for this grand, marvelous picture as we step back and we see the panoramic view of Your love and sentiment for us. There's certainly nothing wrong with perfect beauty, and there's certainly nothing wrong with wonderful music. There's nothing wrong with great

wisdom, and there's nothing wrong with power. But when it separates us from a relationship, it becomes evil. It's no wonder You tell us in Your word that if I was able to sing like the angels, but I didn't have love, it would just be a bunch of noise. I mean, it wouldn't matter if I gave my body to be burned. It wouldn't matter if I just gave everything away. If I didn't have love, it wouldn't profit me, not one thing. It really is about the relationship. It's something the dragon never could understand. Perfection was always on his mind. Prosperity was always on his mind. But not love.

Your heads bowed and your eyes closed. The Spirit of God is drawing you to God in a relationship. He's telling you that everything was made for those that would love Him back. If that longing is within you, it will transform your life. It will keep you safe. It will bring you home.