

Week of January 13-19

FALLEN

Scripture Reading: Read Revelation Chapter 12



For years, the picture to the left has been a familiar sight to motorists traveling in hilly areas. Recently, it's been updated to be more pictorial as the diagram at the right reveals. Both signs alert drivers to the fact that a danger exists due to the possibility of falling rocks.



In today's chapter reading, the apostle John warns us about the danger of fallen objects too. It isn't rocks that he cautions us to avoid but the devil and his angels. Take a look at the 12th verse: *"But woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has gone down to you! He is filled with fury, because he knows that his time is short."* This verse follows two important visions the Lord gave John. The first one in verses 1-6 illustrates the battle between Satan (the dragon) and Christ (the man child) who was born into the faithful community of believers (the woman). Satan sought to destroy Christ in Bethlehem and continually opposed him his whole life. Ultimately, though, he failed and Jesus died on the cross for our sins, was raised to life and ascended to his Father in heaven. In the second vision (verses 7-9), Michael the archangel and his angelic armies take on the devil and his demon forces and overcome him.

This second vision is only made possible because of what took place in the first vision. Prior to Christ's death and resurrection, Satan had a legitimate claim on the human race. We had rebelled against God and the wages of sin is death. The Old Testament sacrifices did not atone for sin but simply pushed them forward. As a result, although Satan rebelled against God in the beginning and was kicked out of heaven according to both Jewish and Christian teaching, he seems to have some kind of access to God to make accusations against us (compare Job's experience in Job 1:6ff). With Christ's victory at the cross and the payment made for our sins, the basis for accusation has been removed. Michael was able to defeat the devil and his armies as a result (Rev 12:10). There is no longer any place for condemnation of believers (Romans 8:1). We have overcome by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of our testimony (Revelation 12:11). We don't have to be crushed under the weight of his lies, accusations and intimidation any longer.

Satan has fallen but he is not out yet for the count. He is filled with rage because he lost and he knows his time is short. With everything he has, he is striking out against the church (John 10:10; 1 Peter 5:8; Rev 12:17). We've been warned about this fallen object. Let's use wisdom, live soberly, stand firm in the faith and resist him (1 Peter 5:9).

Action Step & Prayer Focus: Read Revelation 20:1-3, 7-10 to see the final fall of Satan. Rejoice in Christ's victory on your behalf, both at the cross and the future victory at Christ's return. Pray for wisdom to see and avoid the fallen devil's snares.

Take-a-way: *Falling rocks are dangerous. A fallen devil even more so. Use caution!*