

Rev. 12:7-12 (ESV)

"Now a war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon. And the dragon and his angels fought back, but he was defeated."

In the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Intro: A most blessed feast of St. Michael and all angels to all of you, dear ones. I must say, it's a great joy for me to celebrate it with you today.

I love this feast in particular because it so powerfully readjusts our perspective as Christians. It reorients us and reminds us rather dramatically that there's so much more going on around us than we can even fathom, quite frankly. There's so much more to our existence as human beings than meets the eye.

When you look at just our country by itself and consider all of the social and political tumult and upheaval we've endured in recent years, it's easy to become so fixated on our own affairs, our own problems and issues and what's transpiring here in our backyard that we lose sight of the fact that the world doesn't revolve around us. We are not the center of all things. It's easy to forget that there are literally billions of other human beings across the planet who carry on each day like we do but whose manner of life is much, much different than our own--people whom Almighty God has also created and who are also dependent upon Him to sustain them and give them what they need in their own particular setting.

And I may be going out on a limb here, but I think it stands to reason, dear ones, that if it can be easy for us to lose sight of the bigger picture when it comes to human affairs the world over, how much more is this true when it comes to the cosmic powers and principalities in the heavenly places? How easy is it for us to think little, if anything at all, about the unseen realm of angelic beings and what goes on among them and what these things mean for us as the New Testament people of God? Well today we have an opportunity to contemplate all of this, and our Second Lesson from the Revelation of St. John presents us with a staggering, breathtaking narrative description of what has been and still is unfolding because of our Savior's death, resurrection, and ascension into heaven.

I. In the verses just before our text begins, we hear of a woman giving birth to 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.

I'll give you one guess as to who that is. It's the Lord Jesus, of course. And so our text begins by describing something that's frankly staggering to the imagination. It says that a war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the ancient serpent, the dragon, which is the devil, but he was defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. The devil and his angels were cast out of heaven. No longer will they defile the royal courts of heaven with their presence. No longer will God permit the devil to accuse the saints of God day and night. And why?

II. The Lord Jesus has redeemed us. He has ascended to the right hand of God now that He has accomplished the salvation of the world. No longer is the devil permitted to accuse the people of God and profane the heavenly courts with his presence and twisted words.

III. The devil has come down to earth in great wrath and this is why he's so intent on ravaging mankind--he knows his time is short. Don't lose sight of the bigger picture. Our struggle is not against flesh and blood.

IV. But God has not left us alone against such a fierce supernatural foe. God gives us the protection of the holy angels, the same angels who cast the accursed devil and his fallen angels out of heaven.

V. Here too, though, we mustn't lose sight of the bigger picture. There are some things we must recognize about those sent by God to protect us in our fight against Satan. St. Michael and the rest of the angelic host God sends for our benefit are holy, chaste creatures. They are immensely powerful, and yet they're humble enough even to minister to infants. We must not give offense to these creatures sent for our good. Pride is a most foul odor to them that drives them away like smoke drives away bees.

Conclusion: Don't lose sight of the bigger picture, dear ones. St. Michael and all the holy angels are working even here and now for our benefit--and this is because of the grace and mercy of the Lord, Who gives them charge to do these things. Give thanks that we have their help, and above all, give thanks to the Lord your God, that He has made known the depths of His love and care for you in the Lord Jesus Christ.

And to the same Jesus Christ be all the glory forever and ever. Amen