

HEALING STREAM MINISTRIES presents...

**THE UNDILUTED, FULL STRENGTH, THREE ANGELS' MESSAGES
with enough power to...**

- **cleanse from all sin**
- **set us free from all bondage**
- **break all the power of the enemy over us**
- **restore us to total spiritual health**
- **develop immunity to all last-day deceptions**

#20 –The Dragon, the Baby and Christmas

Christmas is a time for reading the Biblical accounts of the birth of Jesus. Matthew in his gospel presents this event emphasizing God's miraculous interventions in the events surrounding the birth of Jesus. Through angels and dreams, God gave Joseph direct communication on how to proceed through some most difficult circumstances, such as the flight into Egypt to avoid the murderous intents of King Herod.

The Gospel of Mark is silent about the birth of Jesus, but in Luke you will find the account of the trip of Mary and Joseph to Bethlehem, the story of the shepherds and the singing of the heavenly choir of angels on the hills outside Bethlehem.

The Gospel of John makes no mention of the birth of Jesus, except to note that "*the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us*" (John 1:14). But in the Book of Revelation John the Revelator pulls aside the curtain and we see the picture of a dragon present at the manger scene in Bethlehem.

When you look at paintings depicting the manger scene in Bethlehem, you have no doubt seen Joseph and Mary, baby Jesus, contented cows, sheep, donkeys, and wise men. But have you ever seen a dragon in any such pictures? If we are to be faithful to Scripture, the dragon should also be included. "*The dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that he might devour her child the moment it was born*" (Revelation 12:4). What happened in Bethlehem in that night? The dragon, though unseen to us, was also present.

If you were to place bets on who is most likely to win a match between the dragon and the baby, on whom would you place your bets? Who appears to be the strongest? But who wins in Revelation? It reminds us of the words from a well-known hymn which say, "*That though the wrong is oft so strong, God is the Ruler yet.*"

In a few verses John the Revelator condenses the great controversy between Christ and Satan: "*She gave birth to a son, a male child...and her child was snatched up to God and to his throne*" (Revelation 12:6). But then the scene changes and we see things from heaven's perspective. We get the BIG picture about a war in heaven (though it was fought out on earth at Calvary's cross), which closed the door of accusations against God. "*The great dragon was hurled down...he was cast down to the earth, and his angels were cast out with Him*" (Revelation 12:9).

At Calvary's cross the thirty-three year old Jesus, the man-child, fought a battle that cost Him His life. But the victory He won there forever changed the balance of power in God's universe. It set up a new world order. Listen to this judicial declaration from heaven's courtroom: "*Now is come salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God*

and the authority of His Christ, for the accuser of our brothers, who accuses them before our God day and night has been cast down" (Revelation 12:10). But that is not all. We can reap the benefits of that victory as we join in giving our judicial testimony. "*They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony*" (Revelation 12:11). Do you believe the witnesses in heaven's courtroom? Do you agree with their testimonies? Do you trust in the sufficiency of the shed blood of the Lamb as atonement for all your sins?

Not having been raised in the United States, the game of American football has always been somewhat of a mystery to me. However, by attending a football game some years ago I learned a great deal about the game by watching the spectators. As the fans for the winning team exited from the stadium, they gave each other high-five hand gestures, shouting with exhilaration, "We won! We won!" Yet none of them had played the game. None of them had been down of the field. None of them had even touched the football. But their identification with the players on the field was so intense that they could literally say, We won!

We were not there in Bethlehem. We were not there at Calvary's cross when the battle between the man-child and the dragon was fought. But God wants us to be so identified with Jesus Christ and His redeeming work that we can say, even in advance of the 2nd coming, "We won! We won!" Through our identification with His life, His death, His resurrection and His ascension, we can even now say, We won!

The Book of Revelation should enable us to see the big picture. It should teach us to see things from God's perspective. Accepting and entering into His perspective enables us to confidently engage in heavenly logic and reasoning as we draw certain unassailable conclusions from Christ's victory: "*He who spared not His own Son, but freely delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things*" (Romans 8:32). We were not there, but we can still participate in the benefits of that victory. Now!