

December 15, 2019

ATTACK OF THE DRAGON  
Revelation 12:1-11

INTRODUCTION

In 2001 the Richards family of the city of Canberra in Australia went to the extreme in decorating their home for Christmas. They put up an outdoor display that according to the Guinness Book of Records established the world record for most Christmas lights on a house. They put up 331,038 lights. Even thinking about that gives me nightmares. I love Christmas lights. I wish everyone would put some up. I am enchanted by neighborhoods like Michael and Carissa's that have amazing displays on most of the homes. It grieves me that I am so inept at putting up such displays. My best efforts every year yield feeble results. But putting up that many lights? For me it would simply be impossible. That, however, is not true of everyone. In 2012 Tim Gay and his family, who live in New York, decided to challenge the Richards family's record. They succeeded by putting up a record breaking display with 346,283 lights. That didn't sit well with the Richards family. They fought back and upped the ante significantly, creating a Christmas display made up of 502,165 lights! But the Gays were not to be outdone. In 2014 they set a new record with a display of 601,736 lights! It took 2 months to build and it covers 2 acres!

Call it the Christmas lights war. That war is mostly humorous, and maybe a little expensive, but we've seen the past few weeks that there's another, far more serious war going on in our world. It is a spiritual war. The Christmas season actually reminds us that this war broke into this physical world. People have often asked me when I'm going to teach the book of Revelation. I usually say, "When I understand it." That's not totally true, because today I want us to look at a passage from that enigmatic book. This passage speaks to both what happened at Christmas and to the spiritual war. I think of this passage as zooming out and giving us a satellite's view of what's happening in the spiritual war. This is a big picture perspective on the spiritual battle. It is helpful for us to see this in order to know what's going on and to know how we should respond. Let's look at Revelation 12:1-11.

EXPOSITION

WHO IS THE WOMAN?

1. This passage reads like something out of a bad dream. There's a woman "clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and a crown of twelve stars on her head." Um, what? She's wearing the sun, standing on the moon and wearing a crown with 12 stars? Oh yes, and let's not forget

- that she's pregnant. That's weird enough, but then it gets even more bizarre. An enormous red dragon that has 7 heads and 10 horns appears. Right. A dragon. With 7 heads. It's hard not to wonder what John was smoking, or maybe he'd eaten some strange mushrooms.
2. Whatever John actually saw, it is crucial that we understand that these were all signs, meaning this is all symbolic, not literal. These images stand for something. Who does the woman stand for? Some scholars, including the Roman Catholic church interpretation, see this woman as Mary, the mother of Jesus. But that doesn't fit the passage, Verse 5 says the woman fled into the wilderness where she was taken care of by the Lord for 1260 days. That doesn't remotely apply to Mary.
  3. The key is that this woman had a crown of 12 stars. In the Old Testament the number 12 was important. It stood for the people of God, for Israel. Some scholars connect the mention of the sun and the moon back to Genesis 37:9-10 where Joseph had a dream that the sun and moon and 11 stars bowed down to him. That represented his family, which, at that point, was Israel. The sun was his father, Jacob, the moon, was his mother, Rebekah, and the stars represented the 12 brothers. In Isaiah 26:17 Israel in its difficulties was depicted as a pregnant woman in pain.
  4. To, me, the symbolism of the number 12 gives us the key to this sign. The woman is the people of God, which initially meant the nation of Israel.

#### WHO IS THE CHILD?

1. So Israel gives birth to a son, enduring the pain of childbirth. Who is this child? Think back to the great promise of Isaiah's prophecy in Isaiah 9:6. "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given." Who is this child? The child was the promised great deliverer, the king over all, the Messiah.
2. In Isaiah 9:2 the prophet said, "The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned." This was a message of tremendous hope. The truth is that we are the people walking in darkness. We are all the ones looking for light to dawn, for hope to come. The child that was to be born was the one who would bring that hope, who would be the light of the world.

3. Darkness is hard. Back when Laurie and I were young and our kids were little there was a time when I was contacted by a church in the Seattle area. They were looking for a new pastor and somehow had gotten my name. Laurie and I were at a place where we thought we should consider this possibility. It coincidentally happened that we planned to go to Seattle at Christmas to spend the holiday with our extended family. So we were there for about 9 days at Christmas time. One day about half way through the stay was remarkable. What made it so unusual was the sun actually made a brief, weak appearance for perhaps an hour. The rest of the time it was cold, raining and dark. That far north the days were very short. When we boarded the plane for our flight home we all got situated in our seats. After Laurie was buckled in she turned to me and said, "I can not live here." It was too dark and gloomy for her. She said, "I just want to see the sun."
4. It wasn't even that dark. There was daylight. But for both of us the short, gloomy days felt oppressive. It left us gasping for some sunlight. The Seattle area has a high incidence of both depression and suicide. It's not too hard to figure why. It's because darkness is depressing! We're just talking there about gray, sunless, short days. Isaiah said that the darkness we all face in the world is much worse than that. It is deep darkness. It is blackness, it is hopelessness. Into this darkness came light, a beacon of hope. That beacon was the Messiah, the Son of God, Jesus Christ. He said in John 8:12, "I am the light of the world." He is the physician who has come to heal the sick.
5. Verse 4 says of the son Israel would give birth to, "He will rule all the nations with an iron scepter." Iron symbolized strength. We think of iron as a symbol of rigidity and harshness. But in John's day it didn't mean that. It meant strength. It might be more analogous to steel in our day. In Psalm 2:9 God speaks to his son and says of the nations of the world, "You will break them with a rod of iron." He will rule with his great strength. This is the child that would be born to the woman.
6. Verse 4 goes on to say of the son that he was "snatched up to God and to his throne." It is easy to get confused because the prophet essentially jumped from the birth of the child to what happened at the end of his life on earth. This is a reference to Jesus' ascension into heaven. Philippians 2:9 says of Jesus, "Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and

gave him the name that is above every name.” Ephesians 1:20-22 says God exerted great power, “when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything.” There the child sits to this day ruling over all creation.

#### WHO IS THE DRAGON?

1. This is the easiest question to answer because the passage specifically tells us who it is. Verse 9 says, “The great dragon was hurled down, that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray.”
2. It doesn’t take great exegetical ability to determine who the dragon represents. It is Satan. John clearly identifies him in that verse. But please notice what Satan is doing in these verses.
  - a. According to verse 3, “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.” Satan was seeking to destroy the child, the Messiah.
  - b. That gives us a picture of how the spiritual war played out when Christ came into the world. Satan wanted to do everything he could to destroy him. Satan knew exactly who this child was. He knew he was God in human form. This was God’s great invasion of earth, his way of coming to the rescue of human beings. Satan was very clear that if he wanted to ruin God’s plan to save the human race, he had to stop it right there on the beachhead. He had to destroy the child who was coming to bring hope into the world.
  - c. We will look next week at one way he tried to make that happen in this world. But understand that throughout the life of Christ Satan was trying to at the very least divert Christ from his intended task, or at the most to destroy him. This is why when Peter told Jesus to stop being so defeatist with all this talk about dying, Jesus said, “Get behind me, Satan.” Unintentionally Peter was playing Satan’s card for him. He was trying to get Jesus to detour, to skip the whole point of his life.
  - d. It is helpful to remember that Satan is not omniscient. He did not know exactly what God’s plan was when Christ came into the world.

Did he have an inkling that Jesus was going to die? He must have had some sense of that because Jesus said it repeatedly. His followers didn't get it, but Satan probably believed it. I suspect that he didn't know how that would figure in to saving people, but that's just a guess on my part. What we do know is that Satan likely thought he had won a victory when Jesus died, but probably had an uneasy sense about that. The fact that Jesus said it was why he came to the world probably caused Satan some real concern.

3. Satan was to get a rude shock when he thought he had defeated the Messiah by having him rejected by his own people and then executed by the Romans, only to see him then defeat death. I suspect it was only then that he realized what a breathtaking thing Jesus had done. He had turned what seemed like complete defeat into God's greatest victory. The resurrection of Jesus spelled final defeat for Satan.
4. But Satan is not totally sane. His hatred for God has made him irrational. In the grip of his insane anger he continues to lash out, flailing like some wounded and cornered wild animal. Toby and Anna had this dog that I have told you about before. His name was Doc. I said repeatedly that I have never experienced a dog like this one. He was just not right. He was desperately in need of doggy Valium, if there is such a thing. He would make a hyperactive child look comatose in comparison. Eventually Toby and Anna admitted that he was the world's worst dog. One day when Laurie and I were babysitting Ella and Cara, Doc and their other dog, Banjo, the good one, were in the back yard. Unfortunately their neighbors had a dog that both Banjo and Doc hated for some reason. Laurie and I were in the house when we heard what sounded like Armageddon break out in the back yard. The neighbors had let their dog out and as a result Doc and Banjo had gone ballistic. They were just barking, but that doesn't do justice to what was really going on. They were doing the canine equivalent of screaming curses at the dog next door. The volume and intensity were the loudest I've ever heard. I ran out to try to calm the storm. I added my yelling at the dogs to the commotion, to little avail. I finally got Banjo to head back inside the house, but Doc just got worse. He was literally flinging himself at the fence, snarling and barking non-stop the entire time. He had literally lost his mind. He's not a very big dog, so in a desperate effort to try to get him to stop I foolishly reached out and tried to take hold of him, thinking if nothing else I could drag him into the house. But Doc was enraged, and nothing mattered to him

but trying to kill the dog next door. When I grabbed him he reacted, because I potentially was trying to keep him from the one thing that had totally possessed him, which was killing that dog. He reacted by instantly snapping and biting my hand. This was the beginning of the end for Doc at that house. Toby and Anna now knew they had a dog that could not be trusted. He lasted a little longer until he bit Anna. He is now at that ranch up above where a dog can roam freely. Oh, I don't mean he's dead. He just went to live on the ranch up in the mountains that Anna's parents own. He's now getting into trouble up there, and if it gets much worse I suspect he will soon end up in that other ranch up above. But I have this vivid image in my head of that dog, so possessed that he attacked his own grandpa who has always been kind to him. I can see those bared teeth and the fury in his face. It gave me a little, trivial reminder of what Satan is like at this point. He is filled with fury and is lashing out in his insane anger to destroy anyone and anything in his way.

5. In verse 7 we see that "war broke out in heaven." He's continuing to fight against God. He can no longer directly attack the Messiah, but he can attack his people. So verse 17 tells us what happened next. "Then the dragon was enraged at the woman and went off to wage war against the rest of her offspring, those who keep God's commands and hold fast their testimony about Jesus." He is enraged and is unleashing his fury against those who believe in Jesus.
  - a. The offspring of the woman, the ultimate descendants of Israel, are described in verse 17 as "those who keep God's commands and hold fast their testimony about Jesus." Many scholars believe that this specifically refers to Jewish followers of Jesus during the period of horror called the Great Tribulation that will happen during the end times. There is not total agreement about that. It may well be. But the larger truth is, Satan is today waging war against those who believe in Jesus. He is that snarling animal trying to devour us.
  - b. But here's the great news. Verse 11 says of the followers of Jesus, "They triumphed over him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony; they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death." God's people will triumph over Satan. So verse 12 says, "Therefore rejoice, you heavens and you who dwell in them."

## IMPLICATIONS

We have seen in the past few weeks that there is a spiritual war going on. This passage gives us a glimpse of that war. It reminds us that the birth of Jesus Christ, the thing we celebrate at Christmas, was that war breaking into the physical realm in a spectacular way. This was God invading this broken, dark world in physical form to fight the battle. It was the turning point of the war.

Laurie and I went recently to see the movie *Midway*. That movie did a good job of depicting that pivotal battle. But in some ways it didn't get across as clearly as I would have liked what a miracle it was. Up until that battle the forces of Imperial Japan had rolled throughout the Pacific Theater of War like a steamroller. They were undefeated, and in most cases had gone over Allied forces like they were nothing more than a speed bump. The Japanese sent a combined force of naval and army forces to capture the island of Midway, which was a little over 1000 miles from Hawaii. Were they able to take Midway, the Hawaiian islands would have been wide open for them to conquer. From Hawaii they could have threatened the west coast of the mainland. The Japanese sent an overwhelming force. They had 6 aircraft carriers and 11 battleships. The US forces had 3 carriers, one of which was barely functional after suffering severe damage in the Coral Sea, and no battleships, because all of ours had been taken out at Pearl Harbor 6 months earlier. It was established doctrine that you could not sink carriers with bombs. You had to hit them repeatedly with torpedoes. Amazingly the US Forces found the Japanese fleet first, but as a result of confusion and different units getting lost, their attack was totally uncoordinated. It was so uncoordinated that it seemed to have no chance at success. The torpedo bombers were destroyed completely without getting a single hit on a Japanese ship. But to the shock of all, through a series of unique factors, in the space of 5 minutes American dive bombers, which were thought to be ineffective against aircraft carriers, sank 3 of the Japanese carriers. They sank a 4<sup>th</sup> later, and the Japanese had to admit defeat. They turned their massive fleet around and sailed back to Japan. Not many realized it at that moment, but that was the turning point of the war in the Pacific. From that point on Japan was in retreat, and never won another major battle. Christmas and the life of Jesus Christ, was the pivotal battle of the spiritual war. The enemy was defeated there. The war continues, but he is losing, and is truly, in the larger picture, already defeated.

This passage tells us that we are indeed in a fight. The cornered, wounded, savage enemy is lashing out and trying to inflict damage on anything and anyone that is connected to God. In his book, *Celebrating The Wrath Of God*, Jim McGuigan wrote, "Isn't this what so much of life cries out to us, Christian and non-Christian alike? Everyone and everything is against you! The powers that be, the insinuating

cancer, the arguments, the wrecked marriage, the baby shoes that were never worn, the spindly legged children with their distended bellies and sunken eyes, the recurring seizures, the stubborn local authorities who defend the wicked status quo, the unanswered questions, the bedlam of the cities, the empty church buildings and dwindling congregations, all against you! Your speech is pathetic, your skills are meager, and your opposition is well entrenched. In our saner moments, we know all that's true. Everyone and everything *is* against us. When was it any different? When *wasn't* the world against us?"

But this passage is good news. Verse 10 says John heard a loud voice in heaven say, "Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Messiah. For the accuser of our brothers and sisters, who accuses them before our God day and night, has been hurled down. They triumphed over him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death." The brothers and sisters, those who keep God's commands and hold fast their testimony about Jesus, will triumph. We will win. In verse 11 we see 3 elements of how to win.

#### WE WIN BY THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB

1. There is an old time hymn that has the lyrics, "There is power, power, wonder-working power in the blood of the Lamb." According to verse 11 that is absolutely true. The blood of the Lamb of God, of Jesus Christ, is what enables us to triumph over the enemy.
2. The key to this is to notice how the enemy is described in verse 10. He is the accuser of God's people. He accuses them before God day and night. Have you ever had the experience of learning that a person or some people were accusing you, criticizing you to other people when you didn't know about it? Unfortunately that kind of thing is one of the perks of being a pastor. It is going to happen to you, because it happens to anyone in any leadership position in a human organization. But it feels bad to know that people are taking potshots at you. It's really bad when they are saying things about you that aren't true. But maybe it's worse when they're saying things about you that are true.
3. We have had a neighbor who has been a real problem. They actually don't live in our neighborhood. They are in the neighborhood behind ours. Their house is down a hill from us. They are not directly behind us, but are behind the house next door to us. The problem people in that house down the hill don't seem like great people. We can hear them



yelling harsh things at their own children. They often have parties in their back yard that last longer than they should. But one of the killers is they built a wood burning fireplace in their back yard. Having an outdoor wood burning fireplace in the tinder box that is San Diego County is a dumb idea. But beyond the potential threat is the annoyance. The smoke from this guy's fires floats right up the hill into our yards and our houses. Our house literally begins to smell like a fireplace. We can't be out in our backyard because it's so bad. Even closing up the house doesn't keep the smoke from getting in somehow. This is been bad for all the houses around us, but seriously bad for our next door neighbors. They have called several city agencies to check into whether what he's doing is legal, leading to inspectors going to the house. They called the police once. And recently when the idiot neighbor was having one of his fires on an afternoon during a Santa Ana, they called the fire department. As you can imagine, this has not gone well with Attila the Neighbor. When the fire truck pulled up and the fire fighters came and had a discussion with him, Laurie happened to be standing looking down at what was doing on. Attila looked up and saw her. He had apparently formed the idea that she was the one who called the various agencies. He yelled up at her, calling her some bad names and saluted her with an infamous gesture. That made me mad. He was in his own way accusing her, when in fact he was the evil one and she was innocent. Don't you just get peeved at least by the idea that Satan, of all beings, is accusing you, picking out all your weaknesses and failings? Talk about the pot calling the kettle black. Sheesh. Mr. Evil himself claiming I'm evil. What a joke!

4. But that is going on day and night, John tells us. He never stops. And I have to admit, on a daily basis I give him plenty of grist for his mill, plenty of ammo for his gun. He has no difficulty finding reason to accuse me. And one of his favorite tactics for trying to ruin us is to also accuse us directly, to continually harp on every wrong, every flaw, every failure, of which we have plenty.
5. Here's how we defeat him. It is by the blood of the Lamb. Hey, Satan, you're right. I'm a mess, and there's ample proof of that. But the Lord Jesus Christ has paid for every single bit of it by his death. The penalty for all that is wrong with me is death, and he paid it. It's like I owed a bunch of money to someone and Jesus came along with his unlimited resources and paid for all my debts. Here's what I know Satan. If my debts are all paid, then I don't own anything. And my debts are all paid

before God by the blood of Jesus Christ. So here's what you can do, Satan. Pound sand. Get lost. Take a long walk off a short pier, because nothing you say matters. God says so. And I know that when you accuse me before God, that's exactly what he says. He says I am his beloved, and in his eyes I am blameless.

6. When we live in the power of the blood of the Lamb we are free to be who we are, free to admit our flaws and failings, free to fail some more, and free to be in the presence of God boldly and openly, safe in his grace and his love.

### WE WIN BY OUR TESTIMONY

1. Verse 11 says we defeat the enemy by the word of our testimony. Testimony to what? Testimony that Jesus Christ is Lord, that he has indeed rescued us, that he has given us joy, peace and new life, that he is with us, caring for us, directing us every day.
2. The problem for us it can be difficult to have that testimony when we are being continually attacked by a vicious, ruthless enemy. He is throwing everything he can at us, and at times he shakes our world. This can create a problem for us. In John 17:11 Jesus prayed about his followers, "I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name." In verse 15 he prayed, "I do not ask that you take them out of the world, but that you keep them from the evil one." Doesn't God answer that prayer? Why do so many terrible things happen to believers, to people we know and love, to us?
3. 2 Thessalonians 3:3 says, "The Lord is faithful, and he will strengthen you and protect you from the evil one." Psalm 91:9-12 says, "If you say, 'The Lord is my refuge,' and you make the Most High your dwelling, no harm will overtake you, no disaster will come near your tent. For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways, they will lift you up in their hands, so you will not strike your foot against a stone." That seems to promise no harm will happen to you, to the extent that you won't even stub your toe.
4. How are we supposed to live with that promise? It just doesn't turn out that way in the real world, does it? Do you believe there were no

- Christians in the twin towers in New York when they came down? Do you believe no Christian kids are ever killed when a damaged, unhinged person opens fire on a school? Do you think no Christians ever suffer from cancer or some other terrible disease? We know that's not true. So where is God's protection of us?
5. One of the truths that we so often lose track of is that the Old Testament is full of promises of physical blessing to a physical people group. We love those promises of physical blessing. We want that. And we forget that all of that was intended as pictures of spiritual blessings to a spiritual group. We will not inherit a physical promised land, we will inherit another far greater land, the kingdom of God. And when we see these promises of blessing and protection we need to remember that they are pictures of what is happening right now spiritually.
  6. God is protecting his children right this minute. We don't understand how deep, how fierce and malevolent Satan's hatred for us is. Were he to have his way we would not just have some trials from time to time, our lives would be a living hell. And they would be a short living hell, because what Satan really wants us to destroy us, to literally kill us. He has the ability to see to it that you die. Did you notice that Satan here is depicted as a red dragon? Why red? What does the color red symbolize? Uh, Santa Claus? No. It symbolizes blood. Have you noticed that human beings come in diverse varieties? We have different colors of skin, eyes and hair. We have different sizes and shapes to some extent. But one thing we have in common is our blood is red. Regardless of our race, nationality, culture, gender, religion or anything else, we have red blood. So why the red dragon? Because he's out for blood. He is a bloody beast if you will, who deeply desires to spill your blood and mine.
  7. There is only one thing that is stopping him. It is God's divine protection. Should he remove it for even a moment, our lives would come to an end, and they would do so in the most gruesome and excruciating way possible. That is what Satan wants for you, it is what he would do to you, except that Almighty God is stopping him this very minute. This is what John meant when he said that the dragon is enraged, full of fury and according to verse 17 waging war against the woman's offspring.
  8. But why doesn't God protect us from the travails and pains of this world? It is because we live in a cursed world. God cursed it when evil entered in

order to turn us back to him. But because it is a cursed, broken world, all who live in it will share in the effects of that curse. The good news of this passage is God even uses that for good. It is our testimony that God is faithful, that he loves us, that he gives us grace and life itself even in the midst of our hardships, that defeats the enemy. When you and I stay faithful to God, when we trust him despite great loss or difficulty or pain, it is like rubbing Satan's face in his defeat.

9. In his book, *Celebrating The Wrath Of God*, Jim McGuigan wrote that this is a call to respond gallantly to our God. He says, "To respond gallantly won't mean we're made of stone, and we may well weep in anguish at our awful losses, but there are things we will not do. We won't join the peevish deserters who serve God (only) as long as they see him as the best meal ticket in the universe."
10. In his book, *Jesus, Hero Of Thy Soul*, McGuigan wrote, "Dare we say that you from whom health is gone, never to return, that you are left alive to bear witness to a gallant and noble devotion to a God who will not make pets of us? Would it make you mad if somebody suggested that your loved one lingers over the weeks, months, and years, in depression as well as much discomfort, always in need of care, would it make you made if someone suggested that she's left alive so that another point of light is kept burning brightly in a world so in need of it? Would you think it a terrible insult if someone thought that you're to live and not die so you can walk with God through your awful loneliness? Could it be that you're here to be another servant of God 'without pay'...that God might be seen to be loved and trusted for himself and not his gifts or his protection?" When we indeed stand firm in rock solid trust in our loving God, we are defeating Satan.
11. Henry McKeating of Wesley College said, "Whenever humans live gallantly and cheerfully with suffering and do it in the name of God, they are somehow fighting God's fight for him against the dark forces of cynicism and evil in the universe."

## WE WIN WITH OUR COMMITMENT

1. Verse 11 says the people of God triumphed because "they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death." They loved God more than they loved even their own lives. This is how we defeat Satan. We choose

- to love God above all else. We love him more than money, more than houses, more than acclaim and approval from other people, more than respect or fame, more than power, more than status, more than even life itself. That kind of love for God totally defeats the enemy because he loves himself above all else. He cannot imagine ever loving God like that. He hates it when he sees it, but it totally destroys him.
2. Writer Annie Dillard issues a call to that kind of dedication. She wrote, “A life without sacrifices is an abomination.” In the 1960’s a man named J. W. Tucker believed God was calling him to bring the Gospel to the people of what was then the Belgian Congo. It was a place seething with unrest and violence. A fellow missionary friend named Morris Plotts tried to convince Tucker not to go there, that it was too dangerous. He said, “If you go in, you won’t come out.” Tucker answered, “God didn’t tell me I had to come out. He only told me I had to go in.” He did go in, and Plotts’ warning proved prophetic. During the unrest there he was attacked by a mob and beaten with sticks, clubs and broken bottles until he was dead. His body was thrown into the Bomokande River along with a number of colleagues. He loved God more than he loved his own life.
  3. Because of that he defeated Satan. Thirty years later John Weidman, who had been a friend of Tucker, learned that his sacrifice had not been for nothing. Eventually a man had gone to one of the tribes in that area and told them about Jesus. At first he had no success. But then he learned that the tribe had a tradition that said, “If the blood of any man flows in the Bomokande River you must listen to his message.” He told the tribe of Tucker and how his blood flowed in that river. Then he told them Tucker’s message, the message of Jesus Christ. As a result thousands of members of that tribe, the Mangbeto tribe, became followers of Jesus.