

Revelation 12

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Revelation 12

YouTube Prayer Link

The Son of Man in the Seven Golden Menorings (1:12-20)

worship before the throne; The Seven Seals (4:1-5:14)

Opening the First to Sixth Seals: The Establishment of the Antichrist's Kingdom (6:1-17)

144,000 sealed Messianic believers; Thousands of Gentile Christians in White (7:1-17)

The seventh seal was opened, and seven trumpets were given to the seven angels; An angel with a golden censer stands by the altar, pours out the fire, and activates the seven trumpets (8:1-5)

Nos. 1 to 6 (8:6-9:19)..Nos. 1 to 5 are the first calamities (8:7-9:12); The sixth trumpet, the Second Calamity (8:13-19; 11:13), had 20,000 horses. The second plague spans chapters 10 and 11 and continues to 11:13

Angel of Might; Seven thunderbolts; Eating Books (10:1-11)

Two Witnesses: The Church of Israel and the Gentile Church Fight Against Satan's Kingdom (11:1-12)

Trumpet 7: The beginning of the third plague is the plague of the Antichrist and the accomplishment of Christ's kingdom (11:15-19)

Trumpet 7 declares the accomplishments of the kingdom (11:15), and the seven anomalies in chapters 12–15 are the battles that enlighten the kingdom.

Revelation 12

The first vision: a woman with a crown of twelve stars (12:1–2).

The second anomaly: the big red dragon (12:3-18).

The third vision: the beast that came up from the sea (13:1–10).

Fourth vision: The beast that came up from the earth (13:11–18).

The fifth anomaly: the Lamb and the 144,000 (14:1-5).

The sixth anomaly: the seven angels (14:6-20).

The seventh anomaly: the worship of the victorious (15:1-8).

The first vision: a woman with a crown of twelve stars (12:1–2).

The woman who appears at the beginning represents Israel, and the sun, moon, and twelve stars represent the twelve tribes of Israel as seen in Joseph's dream. Here it is said that the woman who gave birth to a male child will rule over the nations with a rod of iron, that is, the Lord Jesus Christ, who came out of Israel, and who was "caught up to the throne of God" to represent His resurrection and ascension into heaven. The time has come to "give birth" (v.2), from whom Christ the Messiah, the "seed of the woman," will be born. God prophesied about the pain of a woman's childbirth (Gen. 3:15-16), and the Old Testament often compared Messianic Israel to a woman in childbirth.

The second anomaly: the big red dragon (12:3-18).

Verses 3–18 are the second vision. This vision follows the first vision, and the two are inseparable (v.4). When Christ is coming, Satan is ready to destroy. The great red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns on his seven heads, this is Satan's description; The "seven heads" represent a lot of brains and evil wisdom; The "ten corners" represent ability, that is, political power; The "seven crowns" represent his possession of the earthly nations. Satan used earthly power to destroy Jesus and deal with Israel, Satan through Herod to kill Jesus, and through the Romans to crucify him. Satan also persecuted the Jews through the governments of the nations. "His tail dragged a third of the stars of heaven and fell to the earth" (4) means that three points of the day caused the fall with Satan. The number of angels, which the Bible never declares, but only says that there are thousands (Rev. 5:11), seems to be a secret that is not known to the world. The process by which God created angels is not disclosed in the Bible. But angels were created by God, and there is no doubt about it. The devil was originally the archangel, and his rebellion against God is only hinted at in Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28. But he also tempted many angels to rebel with him, and how many angels fell with him? No one knows, but by "one-third" of the stars here, that is, one-third of the angels rebelled against the devil.

'Boys' (v.5) symbolize Christ, 'the seed of the woman', who 'will rule over all nations with a rod of iron'. Although the big red dragon is watching from the sidelines (v.4), there is nothing to be done about it. Instead of being devoured by the dragon, the manger baby was victorious on the cross, resurrected into heaven, and 'caught up to the throne of God' (v.5).

"And she fled into the wilderness, where God prepared for him, that she might be fed for a thousand two hundred and sixty days." (v.6) The woman was supported by God for three and a half years, and no matter how Satan attacked Israel and the church, his plan failed. Israel will suffer great tribulation in the second half of this end-time tribulation, the first three and a half years, and the Lord has pointed out that it is truly unprecedented (Matthew 24:21). Fortunately, in the wilderness the Lord prepared a place for them to flee from in this day of perilous salvation.

Heavenly warfare (12:7-12)

Michael's account appears in three books of the Bible, Daniel, Jude, and Revelation. Michael, the archangel who blessed Israel, argued with the devil over Moses' corpse, and came to help defend Daniel against the devil while fasting and praying, John saw the battle in heaven, and this Michael led his messenger to fight the dragon and overcome! At this time, Satan was defeated in the battle for heaven and was thrown to the earth with his angels. From then on, the dragon and its angels could no longer return to heaven to accuse God's people. 'The salvation and power and kingdom of my God and the authority of his Christ have now come' (v.10), which indicates that this is the time of victory on the cross of the Lord Jesus, who overcame Satan through his death. 'The blood of the Lamb' (v.11) refers to the blood shed by the Lord Jesus on the Cross.

Verses 13–17 are earthly battles.

'The two wings of the eagle' (v.14) symbolize God's protection and guidance. The church is the body of Christ, and Satan, who has been "cast down to the earth," can no longer touch Christ himself, but persecuted Christ by persecuting the church on earth.

The vision of verse 15 may symbolize that the serpent will deceive the church with heretical teachings and world currents (II Thessalonians 2:9-11; "Wash the women away" and deprive the church of its witness. "Serpents" live in water, and floods are often used as a metaphor for suffering and persecution in the Old Testament.

The vision in verse 16 may have originated from the experience of the Israel people crossing the Red Sea when they were out of Egypt, and God opened his mouth to swallow up the Korah party who defied God (Numbers 16:30).

The vision in verse 17 may refer to Satan's knowledge that he cannot destroy the church and turn to attack individual believers. "The rest of the children" refers to the scattered Christians. They were all "the ones who kept the commandments of God and testified of Jesus," including Jews and Gentiles in the New Testament church.

Seeing that his plan had failed and could not hurt the woman, Satan (v17) "The dragon was angry with the woman and went to war against the rest of her children, who kept the commandments of God and testified about Jesus." Then the dragon stood on the sand by the sea."

If the woman refers to Israel and the boy refers to the incarnate Jesus Christ, then the rest of her children refer to the church. Unable to harm Israel, Satan turned to persecuting the church.

Verses 15 to 17 are the last three and a half years of tribulation, when Israel was delivered into the wilderness by God, and Satan was behind his back, and he wanted to harm the Jews with the flood. But God opened the mouth of the earth and swallowed up the water. So the serpent, that is, Satan, he was angry, he was angry, and he went to war with the Jews who were left in Israel, to persecute them, and this was what would have happened in three and a half years.

Let's pray:

Dear Heavenly Father, Lord Jesus, we thank You that this is "a battle to be won"! With the Lord in power, we will follow You with confidence!

In the holy name of Jesus Christ. Amen

Revelation 12

English Standard Version

The Woman and the Dragon

1 And a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. 2 She was pregnant and was crying out in birth pains and the agony of giving birth. 3 And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads seven diadems. 4 His tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven and cast them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she bore her child he might devour it. 5 She gave birth to a male child, one who is to rule[a] all the nations with a rod of iron, but her child was caught up to God and to his throne, 6 and the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, in which she is to be nourished for 1,260 days.

Satan Thrown Down to Earth

7 Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon. And the dragon and his angels fought back, 8 but he was defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. 9 And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. 10 And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, “Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers[b] has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God. 11 And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death. 12 Therefore, rejoice, O heavens and

you who dwell in them! But woe to you, O earth and sea, for the devil has come down to you in great wrath, because he knows that his time is short!”

13 And when the dragon saw that he had been thrown down to the earth, he pursued the woman who had given birth to the male child. 14 But the woman was given the two wings of the great eagle so that she might fly from the serpent into the wilderness, to the place where she is to be nourished for a time, and times, and half a time. 15 The serpent poured water like a river out of his mouth after the woman, to sweep her away with a flood. 16 But the earth came to the help of the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed the river that the dragon had poured from his mouth. 17 Then the dragon became furious with the woman and went off to make war on the rest of her offspring, on those who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus. And he stood[c] on the sand of the sea.

Revelation 12 is a key chapter in the Book of Revelation, full of vivid symbolism and dramatic scenes that portray spiritual conflict. This chapter is often seen as depicting the cosmic battle between good and evil, centering on the figures of a woman, a dragon, and a male child. It is frequently interpreted as a metaphorical depiction of the Church, Satan, and Jesus Christ, though other interpretations exist.

Summary of Revelation 12:

Verses 1-2: The Woman

A "great sign" appears in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and a crown of twelve stars on her head. She is pregnant and about to give birth, crying out in pain.

Symbolism:

The woman is often interpreted as representing the people of God (some say Israel, others say the Church or Mary, the mother of Jesus).

The twelve stars are generally seen as representing the twelve tribes of Israel or the twelve apostles.

Verses 3-4: The Red Dragon

Another sign appears: a great red dragon with seven heads, ten horns, and seven crowns on his heads. The dragon's tail sweeps a third of the stars out of the sky and hurls them to the earth.

Symbolism:

The dragon is typically identified as Satan or the devil. His seven heads and ten horns symbolize power and authority, and the stars being swept away often represent fallen angels or demonic forces.

Verses 5-6: The Male Child

The woman gives birth to a male child "who will rule all the nations with an iron scepter." However, the child is snatched up to God and His throne. The woman flees into the wilderness where God has prepared a place for her for 1,260 days.

Symbolism:

The male child is widely interpreted as Jesus Christ. The phrase "rule with an iron scepter" comes from Psalm 2:9, a Messianic prophecy.

The woman's flight into the wilderness is often seen as the Church's protection from Satan during a time of tribulation.

Verses 7-9: War in Heaven

A war breaks out in heaven. Michael and his angels fight against the dragon, who fights back with his angels. The dragon is not strong enough and is cast out of heaven, along with his angels. The dragon, identified as the "ancient serpent" or the devil, is hurled to the earth.

Symbolism:

Michael is often regarded as the chief of God's angels, a warrior archangel. The casting out of the dragon represents the final defeat of Satan in the heavenly realm.

Verses 10-12: The Accuser Is Thrown Down

A loud voice in heaven declares that salvation, power, and the kingdom of God have come, for the accuser of the brethren (Satan) has been thrown down. The saints have overcome him by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death. Rejoice, heavens! But woe to the earth and sea, for the devil has come down to you in great wrath, knowing that his time is short.

Important Themes:

This passage speaks of Satan as the "accuser" who accuses humanity before God.

It emphasizes the role of Christ's sacrifice ("the blood of the Lamb") and the faithful testimony of believers in overcoming the powers of evil.

Verses 13-17: The Dragon Pursues the Woman

The dragon, angry at being cast to the earth, pursues the woman who had given birth to the male child. The woman is given the wings of a great eagle to fly into the wilderness, where she is taken care of for "a time, times, and half a time." The serpent spews water like a river to sweep her away, but the earth helps the woman by swallowing the river. Enraged, the dragon goes off to make war against the rest of her offspring—those who keep God's commands and hold to the testimony of Jesus.

Symbolism:

The wings of the eagle symbolize divine protection and strength.

The dragon's persecution of the woman and her offspring is seen as representing Satan's ongoing war against the Church and believers.

Key Verses and Their Importance:

Revelation 12:1:

"A great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and a crown of twelve stars on her head."

Importance: The woman is a central figure, often symbolizing God's people, and this vision introduces the cosmic struggle.

Revelation 12:4:

"Its tail swept a third of the stars out of the sky and flung them to the earth."

Importance: This is often interpreted as the fall of Satan and the demonic angels.

Revelation 12:5:

"She gave birth to a son, a male child, who 'will rule all the nations with an iron scepter.'"

Importance: A reference to Jesus, the Messiah, and His authority over all nations.

Revelation 12:7-9:

"Then war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. But he was not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven."

Importance: Depicts the spiritual battle in the heavenly realm, ultimately leading to the expulsion of Satan from heaven.

Revelation 12:11:

"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."

Importance: This verse highlights how believers overcome Satan—through the sacrifice of Jesus and their faithful testimony, even at the cost of their lives.

Revelation 12:17:

"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."

Importance: Reflects Satan's continued persecution of the Church and believers.

Themes of Revelation 12:

Spiritual Warfare: The chapter vividly portrays the battle between good and evil, both in heaven and on earth.

Protection of God's People: The woman is protected by God throughout her persecution, symbolizing divine care for the faithful.

The Role of Jesus Christ: The male child who is destined to rule emphasizes Christ's central role in defeating Satan and establishing God's kingdom.

End-Time Persecution: The dragon's pursuit of the woman and her offspring represents the tribulations that believers may face before the ultimate victory of God.

This chapter is crucial to understanding the overarching conflict described in Revelation, symbolizing the cosmic struggle between Christ and Satan, with the promise of ultimate victory for those who remain faithful to God.

Revelation 12 is deeply rich in theological symbolism and spiritual meaning. Its imagery, primarily involving the woman, the dragon, and the male child, invites interpretations that speak to the cosmic battle between good and evil. From a theological and spiritual perspective, this chapter is foundational in understanding the nature of spiritual warfare, the victory of Christ, and the ongoing protection of God's people.

Theological Thought in Revelation 12:

The Woman as the People of God:

Interpretation of the Woman:

Theologically, the woman is often seen as representing Israel or the Church. Some also see her as a dual figure that reflects both the historical role of Israel in bringing forth the Messiah (Jesus) and the Church's ongoing witness to Christ.

The woman's association with the sun, moon, and stars has echoes of Joseph's dream (Genesis 37:9-11), where these celestial symbols represent Israel. This draws a connection between Israel as the covenant people and the role of the Church as the spiritual offspring of Israel.

Theological Implication:

God's covenant relationship with His people is evident here, emphasizing both His faithfulness and His protection over them. The woman's fleeing into the wilderness for 1,260 days (often understood as three and a half years, a period of tribulation) signifies divine protection during trials.

Christology: The Male Child

Symbol of the Male Child:

The male child is theologically interpreted as Jesus Christ, who is "to rule all the nations with a rod of iron" (a reference to Psalm 2:9). This child represents the Messiah who, despite Satan's attempts to destroy Him, is exalted to God's throne.

Theologically, this scene mirrors the Incarnation and the Ascension of Christ, emphasizing His sovereign authority over the nations and His ultimate victory over Satan.

Theological Implication:

This passage points to the fulfillment of Messianic prophecy. Jesus, as the sovereign ruler, is central to God's plan of redemption, and His victory over Satan is secure.

The ascension of the child signifies that despite earthly tribulation, Christ is already enthroned, ensuring that evil will not triumph over God's redemptive purposes.

The Dragon as Satan:

Representation of Evil:

Theologically, the dragon is identified as Satan (v.9: "that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan"). He is shown in his role as the deceiver and accuser, a cosmic antagonist who opposes God's plan.

The description of the dragon sweeping down a third of the stars (often interpreted as fallen angels) highlights Satan's rebellion and fall from heaven, aligning with other scriptural depictions of Satan's rebellion (Isaiah 14:12-15, Ezekiel 28:12-17).

Theological Implication:

Satan's persistent efforts to thwart God's plan, especially through his attack on the woman and her child, symbolize the ongoing conflict between evil and God's purposes. However, his defeat by Michael and the angels shows that Satan's power, while formidable, is ultimately limited.

Satan's expulsion from heaven is a reminder that evil has no place in God's kingdom. His defeat in the heavenly realm prefigures his eventual defeat on earth.

Spiritual Warfare and the Role of Believers:

Overcoming by the Blood of the Lamb:

Revelation 12:11 is one of the most significant theological statements in this chapter: "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony." This emphasizes the centrality of Christ's sacrificial death (the blood of the Lamb) and the believers' faithful witness in overcoming evil.

Theologically, this connects to the doctrine of atonement—Christ's death on the cross provides the basis for defeating sin and Satan. Believers, through their union with Christ, share in this victory.

Theological Implication:

This verse illustrates that the believer's victory over evil is not achieved through human strength but through reliance on the atoning work of Christ. The "word of their testimony" signifies the power of faithful confession and living out the gospel, even in the face of persecution.

The fact that believers "did not love their lives so much as to shrink from death" points to the call to radical discipleship. It is a theological affirmation of the Christian belief in martyrdom and sacrificial witness as a means of spiritual triumph.

The Cosmic Battle:

War in Heaven:

The battle between Michael and the dragon symbolizes the larger cosmic struggle between good and evil, reflecting the invisible spiritual warfare that is happening behind the scenes of human history.

Theologically, this highlights the role of angels in God's plan and the reality of spiritual warfare. Michael, as the archangel, represents God's power in executing judgment on Satan.

Theological Implication:

The war in heaven is a reminder that the conflict between good and evil is not just an earthly one, but a cosmic and spiritual reality. It points to the theological truth that evil is a force that has been active since the beginning but is ultimately doomed to defeat.

The expulsion of Satan from heaven speaks to the inaugurated aspect of the kingdom of God—Christ's victory over Satan is secure, but the final consummation of that victory awaits at the end of time.

Persecution of the Church:

The Woman's Offspring:

Revelation 12:17 speaks of the dragon's rage against the rest of the woman's offspring, "those who keep God's commands and hold fast their testimony about Jesus." Theologically, this is often interpreted as the Church or believers who suffer persecution for their faith.

The chapter depicts Satan's anger directed at the Church, which is seen as the spiritual descendants of the woman.

Theological Implication:

This persecution motif is central to the Book of Revelation. It reflects the New Testament's teaching that believers will face tribulation and suffering in the present age (John 16:33, 1 Peter 5:8-9). However, this suffering is not without hope, as God continues to protect and sustain His people.

Theologically, this encourages believers to endure and remain faithful, trusting in God's ultimate victory over Satan.

Spiritual Influence of Revelation 12:

Assurance of Victory in Spiritual Warfare:

Spiritually, Revelation 12 provides profound assurance that, despite the visible chaos and persecution, victory is already secured through Christ. The cosmic battle between good and evil may rage on earth, but Satan's defeat is certain.

Believers are spiritually empowered by the knowledge that Christ has already triumphed and that their testimony and faith are part of this larger victory.

Call to Faithfulness Amid Persecution:

This chapter serves as a call to perseverance for the Christian community. The image of the dragon pursuing the woman and her offspring symbolizes the ongoing trials faced by believers.

Spiritually, it challenges Christians to hold fast to their faith, even in the face of suffering, persecution, or martyrdom. The encouragement that they overcome by the "blood of the Lamb" and their "testimony" offers a powerful model for enduring hardship.

Spiritual Encouragement in Times of Tribulation:

The woman being given refuge in the wilderness for 1,260 days is a spiritual metaphor for divine protection and provision during trials. Just as God provided for Israel in the wilderness (Exodus), He continues to spiritually nourish and protect His people in times of tribulation.

This encourages believers to trust in God's care, knowing that, even when under attack, He is in control and will sustain them through the darkest times.

A Call to Spiritual Readiness:

Revelation 12, with its imagery of spiritual warfare, encourages believers to be spiritually vigilant. Satan's war against the Church is ongoing, and the dragon's wrath is fierce. Christians are reminded to stay faithful, obedient, and firm in their testimony.

Spiritually, this chapter heightens the awareness that believers are engaged in a spiritual battle and need to put on the "full armor of God" (Ephesians 6:10-18) to resist the attacks of Satan.

Conclusion:

Revelation 12 is not just a dramatic vision of cosmic events; it is a deeply theological and spiritually significant chapter. It speaks to the ultimate victory of Christ, the ongoing battle between good and evil, and the role of believers in this conflict. It assures Christians of God's protection and Christ's victory while calling them to remain faithful in the face of opposition, knowing that their spiritual triumph is secured through the blood of the Lamb.