

REVELATION: CHAPTER 12

There has been spiritual warfare between good and evil, between Christ and Satan for the souls of mankind almost from the beginning of the creation (*Gen 3:15*) and this is where that, behind the scenes battle (*Dan 10*), continued. During the time of Christ's appearance on earth Satan, as the "roaring lion... seeking whom he may devour" (*1 Pet 5:8*), made every attempt to thwart the scheme of redemption but was no match for the "Lion of the tribe of Judah" (*5:5*). It seems he cannot help but make every effort, even knowing it would determine his own fate, to influence man to evil and cause pain and suffering. The fall of Jerusalem, having been influenced by Satan who was most willingly employed by God for this very purpose, was a part of God's plan to bring all of mankind into one body of believers, "the Israel of God" (*Gal 6:16*), so that "all Israel [would] be saved" (*Rom 11:26*).

Rev 12:1 And there appeared a great wonder in Heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars:

- Heaven- Gk.3772- (as the abode of God). Here it has to do with the spiritual realm: Eph 3:9-11.

- woman- (see notes on verse 13) this is the remnant of Old Testament "spiritual" Israel (*the Messianic community- O.T. looked for the Messiah's coming; N.T. looks for His return*); the eternal priesthood (*1 Sam 2:35*) now of the New Covenant since our High Priest (*Heb 7:14*), Christ, "continueth ever" (*Psa 110:4; Heb 7:24*). Read Joel 2:28-32; Rom 9:27; 11:5. (*Isa 51:7-8*)

- sun- the greater light. She is arrayed with the Gospel. She came from being in the presence of God. (*Ex 34:29-35*) See notes on 11:12; 21:2 concerning origin.

- moon- the lesser light, does not give off its own light and is only a reflection (*shadow- Heb 10:1*) of the sun

(*Heb 11:40*). This represents the Old Testament Law under her feet. The Law was a “*pale shadow compared to the brilliance of the gospel*.” Eldred Echols

- crown- Gk.4735-στέφανος- stephanos- *stef'-an-os*
Crown of victory. O.T. spiritual Israel was successful in bringing Christ into the world (*Gal 4:4*).

- twelve stars- Complete/perfect. Patriarchs- symbolic of O.T. spiritual Israel. The reason for their very existence was to bring the Messiah into the world, thus fulfilling God’s promise to Abraham, Isaac and Israel (*Act 3:25*).

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Rev 12:2 And she being with Child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.

- Speaking of Judah- *Heb 7:14; Isa 26:17-18*.
- *Mat 24:8; Act 7:37-38*. The destiny of the elect depended on this Child’s prophesied birth. Amongst great turmoil Christ came into the world. (*Herod- Mat 2:3-20*) See also *Jer 31:32*.

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Rev 12:3 And there appeared another wonder in Heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads.

- appeared- *Job 1:13; 2:1*.
- red- indicates his sinful nature (*6:4; Isa 1:18*). dragon- Satan (*v. 9*). See also *Jn 12:31; 14:30; 16:11*.
- seven heads and ten horns- to be discussed in detail in chapter 17:9-12.
- seven crowns- (*not stephanos which would indicate victory*) These diadems are royal in nature giving

status of rule by Satan having complete influence over the seven heads (17:10).

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Rev 12:4 And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her Child as soon as it was born.

- stars- Satan's angels that followed him in his rebellion against God when he was cast out of Heaven (v. 7; *Mat 25:41; 1 Cor 6:3; 2 Cor 11:14-15; 2 Pet 2:4; Jud 6, 13*).

- the third- partial. Not all the angels but, according to the number of those still surrounding the throne in Heaven (5:11; *Heb 12:22*), there was a great number of them in the insurrection showing the power and influence Satan commands: 2 Cor 11:3.

- *Mat 2:16-18*. Herod was a puppet king of Rome and thus under the influence of Satan. Through Herod, Satan thought he would have put an end to any victory God would have had in sending His Son. The political rule of the Jews would seal the fate of Jerusalem in 70 AD: 1 Cor 2:8.

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Rev 12:5 And she brought forth a man Child, Who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her Child was caught up unto God, and to His throne.

- brought forth- Through His baptism (*introducing Him as God's "beloved son" - Mat 3:17*), Christ entered into fellowship with His creation as "the Son of man" (*Mat 8:20; and our High Priest- see notes on Mat 3:15*) so that through our baptism (*rebirth- Jn 3:5*) we can have "the right to become children of God" (*Jn 1:12; Heb 2:10, 14; now "qualified" [Col 1:12] to serve as the N.T. priesthood*): Gal 4:4; Heb 10:5.

Psa 2:6 "As for Me, I have set My King on Zion, My holy hill." 7 I will tell of the decree: The LORD said to Me, "You are My

Son; **today** (*specifically of the day Christ resurrected as being the “first born from the dead”- Col 1:18; Rev 1:5*) **I have begotten You.** 8 Ask of Me, and I will make the nations Your heritage, and the ends of the earth Your possession. 9 You shall break them with a **rod of iron** and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." (*Emp. added*) (ESV)

- His is an unbending rule (2:27; 19:15)! It will not change (*Mal 3:6*): Rom 1:3-4; 3:25; Dan 7:13-14.

- caught up- Christ's ascension (*40 days after His resurrection- Act 1:3*) to God's right hand: Act 1:9; 2:30; 1 Chr 29:23; Mk 16:19; Dan 7:13-14. (*Eph 4:8*)

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Rev 12:6 And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days.

- wilderness (*desert*)- Like Israel's wandering for forty years in the desert (*Ex 16:35*), God will take care of His people (*here the church as offspring of the Mosaic age; spiritual Israel- Eze 34:25-31*) during her years of persecution (*which would not be long*). Titus, in 70 AD, “withdrew the siege” against Jerusalem. “It was at this point that all the Christians in the city fled to Pella”. – Ray Murray, Jr.; *The Destruction of Jerusalem*. Here it pertains to the timeframe between when Vespasian began to conquer Palestine (*see notes on 11:2*) and when his son Titus finished it in 70 AD (*Heb 10:25*), which ended the practice of the sacrificial system and fulfilled the Law (*Mat 5:18: 24:15-22; Lk 24:44; Rev 11:12*): Act 8:1-4 (**Jas 1:1**; *Anytime “twelve tribes” is used in this context it refers to “spiritual Israel” and is addressing members of the church.*); Heb 11:13; 8:13.

- place prepared of God- Here, in this context, Pella was the specific place where the infant church was divinely protected and ministered to (*as was Christ- Mat 4:11; Mk 1:13*) until the ‘short’ period of persecution was over. See Mat 24:15-22, 34.

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- 1260 days- 3 ½ years- (*broken 7*) incomplete or short period concerning the destruction of Jerusalem; this was the same timeframe of the two witnesses' prophesying (*11:3*).

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Rev 12:7 And there was war in Heaven; Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels,

- And- during this event the woman was in Pella where she was protected from the onslaught against the city of Jerusalem. Satan, having been defeated because of Christ's resurrection, attempted to battle Him all the way back to Heaven in an attempt to keep Him from reigning over His kingdom, the church.

- Michael- prince: Dan 10:13, 21; 12:1.

Archangel- Gk.743- *chief angel*.

Jud 9 Yet Michael the **archangel**, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee. (*Emp. added*)

Michael, along with his heavenly host, meets Satan and his demonic horde at the pass, so to speak.

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Rev 12:8 And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in Heaven.

- The prosecutor, along with his minions of the insurrection (*v. 4*), loses the power of accusation now that the Advocate has assumed "all authority in Heaven and on earth" (*Mat 28:18*): Job 1:6, 11. There are those who believe that this "Heaven" is not the abode of God since nothing bad could exist in such a holy environment. When the earth was first created, God declared it "very good" (*Gen 1:31*), i.e., nothing bad had

yet to inhabit it until Satan tarnished it (*Jn 8:44*). Satan was not created evil since God is “of purer eyes than to behold evil” (*Hab 1:13*). Like fruit that is picked fresh but loses its goodness, so it must have been with Satan and his angels, who must have chosen, via free agency, to become evil.

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Rev 12:9 And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

Luke 10:18 And He said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven (*Gk.3772*).

- Jesus witnessed Satan’s fall in the beginning, and it wasn’t long after he was created, “as lightning” from the sky would indicate how quick he fell (*2 Pet 2:4; Jude 6*). His being cast out here (*Jn 12:31*) would indicate that he no longer has access to the throne in Heaven in order to accuse the saints (*Job 1 & 2*), the earth (*Gk.1093- [including the occupants]*) at this point becoming his battle ground where he continues to influence the human nature of the children of mankind: Eph 2:2.

- old (*Gk.744- original or primeval*) serpent- (*Gen. 3*) This is where we know for a fact that the serpent of Eden was Satan who took that form in order to tempt Eve: *Jn 8:44; 2 Cor 11:3; Ex 12:23; Job 1&2*. (*Nowhere in scripture is Satan referred to as Lucifer. Isaiah was to taunt the king of Babylon in referring to him as Lucifer a.k.a. “son of the morning” [14:12], and was not referencing Satan since besides the other appellations given here, why was Lucifer not listed?*)

- Although decisively defeated, Satan was **allowed** to continue (*limited as in Ex 12:23 and Job 1 & 2*) his work (*chained- 20:1-3*) on earth for a time. He can no longer “present” himself, along with the angels, “before

God” as a prosecuting attorney would before a judge.
His two-basic works: deceive and accuse.

- his angels- See Mat 25:41; 2 Pet 2:4; Jude 6.

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Rev 12:10 And I heard a loud voice saying in Heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.

- voice- (11:15) here the hosts of Heaven refer to the victors as their brethren (1:9; 19:10; 22:9).

- Jn 12:31-32; 13:14-15; Num 21:9; 1 Cor 15:55-56. Jesus here referring to the serpent of brass that Moses was instructed to fashion and put on a pole. Just as the serpent (*Satan*) strikes anyone with his venom (*death through sin*- 1 Cor 15:56) that person can look to Christ’s cross for relief of death through obedience: Heb 2:14-15; 9:15.

- Zec 14:8. Now is come- It was on the day of Pentecost when the church (*the kingdom*) was established and salvation came (*Heb 11:39-40*) in the strength (*Gk.1411- power*)...

Rom 1:16 ... of the **Gospel** (*the good news of Christ’s death, burial and resurrection*), for it is the power of God **for salvation** to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. (*Emp. added*) (*ESV*) (1 Cor 1:18, 23-24)

...and the kingdom... Read Act 2:33; Dan 2:44; 7:13-14; Mat 16:18; 24:31; Mk 9:1; Act 2:46-47; Col 1:12-13; Rev 11:15.

...and the power (*Gk.1849- delegated influence: - authority*) of His Christ: Mat 28:18; Eph 1:20-23.

- the accuser- (*Satan-Job 1:11*) cannot accuse the church (*our brethren*) because she now has an Advocate.

1Jn 2:1 My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an **Advocate** with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: (*Emp. added*)

Without the “law of sin and death” Satan has nothing by which to accuse us. The prosecutor lost his power to practice. Christ became our Representative before the Father: Rom 3:19; 8:1-4; Mat 10:28; 22:37-40; 25:40; Gal 3:22; 5:22-23; Heb 2:14; Rev 14:1-3.

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Rev 12:11 And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.

- they- referring to “our brethren” of the previous verse. These were the O.T. saints of 6:9-11: see **Heb 11:40**. Their “white robes” meant they were of the “sealed” (7:4) before Jerusalem was finally destroyed. Satan was defeated at Christ’s resurrection “by the blood of the Covenant” (*Heb 13:20*): Gen 3:15; Jn 8:44; 1 Jn 2:1-2; 3:8.

Heb 2:14 Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, He Himself likewise partook of the same things, that **through death** (*His heel was bruised*) He might **destroy** (*bruise the head of*) **the one** (*Satan*) who has the power of death, that is, the devil, (*Emp. added*) (*ESV*)

- Christ’s death was only a blow to His heel, but His rising was a blow to the head (*power*) of Satan (*Gen 3:14-15; Heb 2:14-15*). Christ’s resurrection removed the “fear of death” of which man was his entire “lifetime subject to bondage” (*Heb 2:15*). Satan was overcome because of the blood of the Passover Lamb... Read Ex 12:11-13; Heb 9:22-23; 1 Cor 5:7; Rom 5:8-10.

- ...and by the word of their testimony- (6:9) they were not ashamed of Him being the Messiah that was promised (*Mat 16:16-19; Mk 8:38; Lk 9:26; Rom 1:16*).

Gk.3141-μαρτυρία- marturia- *mar-too-ree'-ah*

From G3144; **evidence** given (judicially or generally):
- record, report, testimony, **witness**. (*Emp. added*)

Mat 16:16 And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

- Having been united with the cross of Christ (*Rom 6*) and sharing in the “tribulation... kingdom... and patient endurance” (*1:9*), the ultimate victory anticipated, death is a small sacrifice in comparison.

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Rev 12:12 Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.

- heavens- Eph 1:3; 2:6; 3:10; Heb 12:22.
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- ye that dwell in them- The “accuser”, having been “cast down” is reason for this group to rejoice.
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- of the earth and of the sea- This is covered in chapter 13 concerning the two beasts.

Isa 57:20 But the **wicked** are like the **tossing sea**; for it **cannot be quiet**, and its **waters toss up mire and dirt**. 21 There is **no peace**," says my God, "**for the wicked**." (*Emp. added*) (*ESV*)

- Satan was angry. His time was short to persecute the church once the 1,000-year reign began (*Eph 1:20; Rev 20:2, 3, 5, 7*). He continued to sway the Romans to that end.

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Rev 12:13 And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man Child.

- the woman- here having now transformed, post Pentecost, into **spiritual** Israel (*the church- Isa 66:7-8; Act 2:41, 47*) of the New Covenant (*Rom 2:29*). (*It is the “everlasting priesthood” which began in Ex 40:15 & Num 25:13.*) She is presently (*New Testament- 7:9*) understood as being the church of Christ (*Rom 16:16*), “the wife of the Lamb” (*19:7; 21:9; Eph 5:23*). Including the 144,000 (*7:4*) her number continues to grow (*7:9*) and will do so (*Act 2:47*) until the time of the end (*20:7*).

Rom 11:5 Even so then at this present time also there is a **remnant according to the election of grace.** (*Emp. added*)

- The Messianic community-
Old Testament Israel waited for His coming.
New Testament Israel waits for His return.

1Pet 1:10 Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours **searched and inquired carefully**, **inquiring** what person or time the Spirit of Christ in them was indicating when He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the subsequent glories. (*Emp. added*) (*ESV*)

2 Pet 3:12 **waiting for and hastening the coming of the day of God**, because of which the heavens will be set on fire and dissolved, and the heavenly bodies will melt as they burn!
13 But according to His promise we are **waiting for** new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells. (*Emp. added*) (*ESV*)

In the context, this passage (*2 Pet 3:12*) refers to the end of all things physical and the reign of the glorified church which is to begin after the judgment. The saints will finally go home. This is Rev 21:1.

- The devil has from the beginning been “as a roaring lion [who] walketh about, seeking whom he may devour” (*1 Pet 5:8*) but at this time (*post Pentecost*) Satan continued to influence the Jews (*Act 8:1-3; 26:10-11*) and satellite nations of the Roman Empire. Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 AD by Rome through the influence of Satan via prophesy (*Dan 2, 7*). Maybe Satan thought that by destroying the birthplace of the church (*Isa 2:3; Act 1:4, 7-8; 2:1*) he would destroy the kingdom of Christ and end the plan of salvation forever (*Acts 8:1-4; see notes on 11:10*). Jesus spoke of this event in Jn 12:31.

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Rev 12:14 And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.

Exo 19:4 You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on **eagles' wings** and **brought you to Myself**. 5 Now therefore, if you will indeed obey My voice and keep My covenant, you shall be My **treasured possession among all peoples**, for all the earth is Mine; 6 and you shall be to Me a **kingdom of priests** and a **holy nation**. These are the words that you shall speak to the people of Israel." (*Emp. added*) (ESV)

- two wings of a great eagle- swift deliverance with divine protection. See Mat 24:15-18; Lk 21:20-22.

- wilderness, into her place- See notes above in verse 6.

- nourished- Gk.5142- Thayer: “to nourish, support, to feed”. (*Jn 6:58; James 1:2-4*)

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- time, times, and half a time- (*Rev 13:5- “forty two months” or 3 ½ years, thus an incomplete 7- Gen 2:1-3*) (see notes on verse 6) Short, incomplete period. First their persecution (*O.T. remnant of spiritual Israel*) came from the Jews (*still following the Old Covenant- Isa 66:5-7*) where they were told to “rest a little longer” (*6:11*). This is the timeframe of the Jew/Gentile church (*spiritual Israel*) post 70 AD. Num 14:39-45

Dan 7:25 He (*Caesar- [13:5] 81-96 AD*) shall speak words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and shall think to change the times and the law; and they shall be given into his hand for a **time** (1), **times** (*plus 2*), and (*plus*) **half a time** (*1/2*). = 3 ½ (*Emp. added*) (*ESV*)

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Rev 12:15 And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood.

- out of his mouth water as a flood- current. (Ps 18:4) Frustrated that he no longer had the power of accusation against the church, Satan attempted a last-ditch effort to destroy it, along with the Gospel (*using Rome’s paganism- 2:20*), via a flood of lies and intimidation (*2 Thes 2:10-12*). (*Num 22-25; Balaam finally informed Balak that in order to destroy the people of God, they needed to be influenced by the heathens through idolatry*): Rev 18:4.

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Rev 12:16 And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.

- According to Foy E. Wallace, Jr.*, “The rebellions and uprisings and local wars which were occurring and increasing at this time, causing many conflicts among subordinate kingdoms and nations of the empire, diverted the attention and action of Rome, and thus

detracted Roman authorities from the persecutions.”
 Dan 2:42-43; Mat 24:7 *The Book of Revelation, pg.
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Rev 12:17 And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

- the remnant of her seed- Christ having been “brought forth” (v. 5), the remnant (Gk.3062- rest) of her seed (Gk.4690- offspring) are His brethren (Heb 2:11). Satan couldn’t destroy the man Child so he next moved to attempt to defeat Christians (i.e., the church- **Isa 53:10**) post 70 AD.

- keep- Gk.5083-guard.

Joh 14:15 "If you love Me, you will **keep** (Gk.5083) **My commandments**. (Emp. added)

- commandments of God- the word of God (1:2, 9; 19:10): Mat 4:4.

- have- possess (implies adherence to) to the point of dying for it: Rom 1:18.

- testimony- (Gk.3141-evidence) of Jesus Christ. Paul in Gal 6:17 called it a mark (Gk.4742) of ownership (Zec 13:6). He suffered because he proved, by evidence, that Jesus “is the Christ” (Act 17:3). the remnant of her seed is the “great multitude that no one could number” (7:9). Both “those who keep” and those who “hold to” represent the 144,000, the group being “added to... day by day those who are being saved” (Act 2:47).

Worksheet
Revelation: Chapter 12

1. Who does the “woman” represent and what does it mean that she was “clothed with the sun”? (*v. 1*)
2. Why is “the moon under her feet” and what does the “crown of twelve stars” represent? (*v. 1*)
3. What was her condition and what was the mission of the “great red dragon”? (*v. 2*)
4. How does the dragons “tail” affect “a third of the stars of heaven” and what do they represent? (*v. 4*)
5. What happened to the “male Child” and what was meant that He is “to rule all nations with a rod of iron”? (*v. 5*)
6. Where did “the woman” flee to and for how long? (*v. 6*)
7. Who fought “against the dragon” and who won? (*v. 7*)
8. Why is “the great red dragon” referred to as “that ancient serpent” and “called the devil and Satan”? (*v. 9*)
9. Who is “the accuser of our brothers” and what could he no longer do? (*v. 10*)
10. By what did they conquer him? Explain why that is so significant. (*v. 11*)
11. Why the phrase “woe to you, O earth and sea” and who does this reference? (*v. 12*)
12. What did “the dragon” do when “he pursued the woman”, what was she given to escape, where did she go and for what purpose? (*v. 14*)
13. What did “the serpent” do as a last-ditch effort to try and stop the woman? (*v. 15*)
14. Who helped “the woman” and who then did the serpent “make war on”? (*vs. 16, 17*)