THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST
CHAPTER 12

Chapters 12-16 of John’s visit into the spirit realm (Rev 4:2) displayed the theme of the church in conflict with the dragon. The first section of this vision (chapters 4-11) displayed the view from the throne of the Lamb. From the throne he executed vengeance upon the land (ge) by destroying those who killed the witnesses and tread under foot the city. The second section gives several visions and mysteries. These will show the survival of the church and the gathering to Armageddon. We will see the vision of the woman, the vision of the dragon, the vision of the beast from the sea, and the vision of the beast from the land.

Many commentators divide the book at this point into part 2. We do not. John was in the middle of a vision. This would not be a proper place to divide the book. In so doing, we divide a vision.

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:

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

1 John saw a great wonder in heaven! The word wonder is semeion (Greek) and means “an indication.” Other translations say a great “sign” (NIV; NASV). Dispensationalists attempt to interpret the Revelation literally though it is given in signs (1:1). This section (chapters 12-16) give Dispensationalists tremendous difficulty. They must deal with pregnant women in heaven, a dragon, a sea monster, a great whore, etc. The Revelation was written in signs, not in literal events (1:1).

This sign (wonder) was not to be taken lightly. It was a great sign. We must be certain not miss it. It was dominant and necessary for the interpretation. It was a key thought. The word great is megas (Greek) and simply means “big.” This is a big sign!

The vision was of a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars: And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. A woman was observed in all her beauty and brilliancy. It does not matter if it was day (sun) or night (moon). She was heavenly! She was clothed with heaven (sun). She walked in the heavenlies (moon under her feet). She was heavenly-minded (twelve stars upon her head). She was in the final stages of pregnancy as she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.

Who was the woman? Perhaps that question is best answered by learning the identity of the baby. So for the moment, we will investigate verse 5.

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.

Is there any doubt with whom the woman was pregnant? This was obviously the Christ. The thought which John projected and that we need not skip is the being caught up unto God and to his throne being associated with ruling all nations. He began his rule when he ascended which is exactly what Daniel 7:13, 14 and 2:44, 45 teach. To teach he will rule the nations one day to come is not Biblical teaching. That doctrine is found no place in the scriptures.

The woman brought forth the Christ, the Messiah, the King who was caught up and ruled all nations. Dispensational teaching says he was caught up in the Ascension, but that he does not yet rule. Those two issues—“caught up” and “ruling” are connected. No one will argue the fact that Jesus Christ has come forth and been caught up. Dispensationalists see portions of chapter 12 as past (Ascension). Why then do they teach that chapters 1-11 and other portions of 12 are futuristic? If verse 1 and some of 5 have happened, then has not verse 4 happened? Verse 4 says, 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.

Jesus said the casting down of Satan had already happened. Jesus said, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven (Luk 10:18). Those of the contemporary, dispensational view say the war between Satan and Michael is yet to happen. Jesus said Satan has already fallen. Before his crucifixion, Jesus said he saw Satan fall. We will look more at this later. The question here is how can some of this be past and some future? How can 12:5 be past and 11:1 be future? Those of the dispensational persuasion twist the scriptures (2Pe 3:16).

The woman was the mother of Christ. However, to say she was only the Virgin Mary is insufficient to this megavision. Of course, Mary did her portion, but so did Mary’s mother. So did Rachel, Sarah, and even Rahab the harlot. All these were also mothers in the lineage.

John was giving a scriptural allusion to his readers. This one is about the woman with child (Isa 26:17). Isa 26:17 Like as a woman with child, that draweth near the time of her delivery, is in pain, and crieth out in her pangs; so have we been in thy sight, O LORD. (emphasis added)

The woman would be what Isaiah called we. This we goes all the way back to Genesis 3:15 where the woman would bring forth the seed. This would mean all those responsible to bring the promised seed that bruised the head of the serpent.

Is the woman then only the nation of Israel? The nation of Israel did its portion. However, Israel would not have begun until late into Jacob’s life. Eve was not a Hebrew and neither was Mrs. Noah. The Hebrews would have begun with Abraham and Sarah. Also to make the woman only female leaves the great sign lacking. Isaiah said, “. . . so have we been in thy sight, O Lord.” So we also
must include Noah, Shem, Terah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, David, Solomon, Isaiah, and so on.

The **woman** is more accurately interpreted as the glorious people of God. Those glorious people labored, pained, and travailed against the ever-present **dragon** to bring the **man child** forth. After all, this was the purpose of, what John calls, the **woman**.

Everything else the people of God did prior to the birth of Christ is only relevant when compared to the number one priority of bringing the Christ. Their existence upon earth was for the purpose of bringing forth the Son of man. He is the seed of which is spoken in Genesis 3:15 who would bruise the head of the serpent. Whatever else the **woman** did was listed downward in the priorities. This was the ultimate purpose. All the people of God awaited the day of the Lord. So the **dragon** did wait for the man child to be born.

In David Chilton’s book, *The Days of Vengeance*, (which I suggest every believer read for insight into the Revelation), he includes several pages concerning the elements of this vision. He discusses the sun, moon, and stars projecting the possibility that John is giving us the day of the birth of Jesus Christ. The book gives several references to those who have researched this possibility. He does come up with an exact day. Since John is speaking of the birth of the **man child** in this context, then this could be a part of this great **wonder**. I will only quote a small portion from Chilton to give us the conclusion of those pages.

“But there is a way to arrive at a much closer time for Christ’s birth... The position of the Moon in John’s vision could pinpoint the nativity to within a day - perhaps to an hour period or less. This may seem absurd, but it is entirely possible. The key is the Moon. The apostle said it was located ‘under her feet.’...Since the feet of Virgo the Virgin represent the last 7 degrees of the constellation... But the Moon also has to be in that exact location when the Sun is mid bodied to Virgo. In the year 3 B.C., these two factors came to precise agreement for less than two hours, as observed from Palestine or Patmos, on September 11. The relationship began about 6:15 P.M. (sunset), and lasted until around 7:45 P.M. (moon set). This is the only day in the whole year that this could have taken place.”

Chilton adds that this day would be the first day of the feast of Trumpets. Amazingly, the trumpets are sounding in this section of Revelation. Chilton suggests that showing the actual birth date of Christ is why John used the sun, moon, stars and recording their various positions.

**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**.

3 John saw another **wonder** or another sign. A great **red dragon** was **standing before the woman** that was **ready to be delivered**. Once again, we know the man child had been delivered, thus we know this vision was a past event even when John wrote the Revelation. This point discredits the Dispensationalists futurist approach to Revelation.

This sign (**wonder**) was showing from the heavenly vantage point exactly what was actually happening at the time of Christ’s birth. A great **red dragon** was then on the scene doing all it could to devour the **child as soon as it was born**. We are told of this specific event in Matthew chapter 2. The **dragon** attempted to devour the man child.

**Mat 2:16** Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men.

Who or what was the **great red dragon**? This vision is one of those visions that John clearly explains to us. Of course, there is not much need to tell us what and who the **dragon** was. We know who it was. We can gain understanding about how the Revelation should be interpreted. John tells us in verse nine that the **dragon is that old serpent, called the devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world**. We see the serpent of Genesis 3 became known by the names of devil and Satan. John reaches into the Old Testament Scriptures and brings this deceiver into clear view. This is John’s technique and path for the entire Revelation. The answers for interpreting the Revelation are found in discovering the allusions to the Old Testament. It’s that simple.

Let’s see if we can understand what John is showing us using the **horns** and **heads**. John went straight to work by attaching this **dragon** to Daniel’s writings. The **great red dragon** John saw had **seven heads and ten horns** just as the beast(s) exhibited which Daniel saw (Dan 7:7).

John’s **dragon had seven heads** as the integrated picture in Daniel 7 also revealed. Daniel 7:3-8 gives us head number one which was the Chaldean Empire. Head number two would be the Medo-Persian kingdom. The Grecian (Macedonian) kingdom was heads three, four, five, and six with the Grecian kingdom’s successive rulers. Finally the Roman Empire gives us head number seven. **Wycliff Commentary** says,

“The lion symbolizes Babylon here and also in Jer 4:6,7. The eagle’s wings speak of swiftness, as the lion of strength. These are natural symbols scarcely needing explanation (cf. 2Sa 1:23; Jer 49:19-22; Eze 17:3-24). 5. The bear is an apt symbol of the Medo-Persian kingdom. Strength and ferocity figure in almost every Biblical use of the bear. The ponderous bulk fits the massive Persian armies. Xerxes is said to have moved two and one-half million men to attack Greece. Duality may be suggested by reference to the beast’s side. 6. The sinewy four-winged leopard speaks, without doubt, of Alexander's Grecian (Macedonian) kingdom. Ruler ship passed from Nineveh (Assyria) to Babylon in 612 B.C.; from Babylon to Persia in 539 B.C., and from Darius III to Alexander in 331 B.C. As in chapter 2, the fourth stage of empire is Roman.”

What we then see is a Biblical attachment of the **dragon** (the serpent, Devil, Satan) with these four world empires. These four culminated and came to fulfillment with the Roman Empire. It was the Roman Empire which existed when the kingdom of God was established (Dan 2:44, 45). This was the dragon attempting to devour the man child as soon as he was born. The **red dragon** was manifesting through the Roman Empire. This manifestation was specifically through Herod (Mat 2:13-16 see prior

1 Chilton, *The Days of Vengeance*, page 302, quoting Martin, Birth of Christ Recalculated

2 Wycliffe Bible Commentary, Bible Research System
The seventh head is the head functioning at the time John wrote the Revelation.

**Heads** become the empires to which dominion was given by the Lord God Almighty. This was established and spoken through the prophets of God prior to the coming of the man child. **Head or heads** in the Revelation and in Daniel’s vision announced to whom dominion was given. Though it is the **dragon** who actually is the Devil, and Satan, all kingdoms, even Satan’s, are under the direction of God (Dan 7:6, 12).

What about the **horns**? What do **horns** mean? The horn or **horns** will proclaim the kingdom’s ability to make war and dominate. Heavily horned (or antlered) animals in the natural will dominate their territory (ge earth) and land. The **horn(s)** is their weaponry for warfare. This thought shows the dominance of an empire in the land (Dan 7:21).

**Horns** are symbolic of pushing and dominance. The **horn** is both for offense and defense. When the horn is cut off or broken it is a sign that the nation will be or has been defeated by another nation (see Exo 21:29; Deu 33:17; 1Ki 22:11; Jer 48:25; Lam 2:3, 17; Zec 1:19).

Please read Zechariah 1:19. The Lord God Almighty said he would use the **horns** to scatter Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem. He did this just as he said he would.

**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.**

4 The great red dragon (the Devil, and Satan) drew the **third part of the stars of heaven**. We have all been programmed to think of these **stars of heaven** as fallen angels. However, the Scriptures do not refer to fallen angels as stars of heaven. The seed of Abraham are the stars of heaven (Gen 26:4; Exo 32:13; Deu 1:10, 22).

The Lord Jesus refers to the **stars of heaven** falling in his teachings of the destruction of Jerusalem. Those who were once supposed to be the lights of the universe were brought down by a foreign nation (Mat 13:25).

In this context of the **stars of heaven**, we see the **third part** of the nation thrown down by the devil’s **tail**. The great dragon, who is/was the devil and Satan, caused the fall of many by his tail. The people either followed the **tail** or were thrown down with violence by the **tail** of the dragon. Those people could have been the head and not the tail (Deu 28:13), but because of rebellion, apostasy, and false teachings, they became the **tail** and not the head (Deu 28:44). They listened to the wrong end! Rather than listening to the righteous and honorable, they listen to the false and the lie (Isa 9:15, 16).

The consistent plan of the dragon is to get people to listen to leaders who lie. Leaders who teach lies are the **tail**. They always cause the fall of the stars that should be lights. The dragon **did cast them to the earth**.

**Her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.**

He is in the **throne** and has been in the throne since he was **caught up** (ascension)! Jesus is the Son of man and now rules the nations with a rod of iron. He began doing this when he was **caught up at ascension**.

Dispensationalists will have us believe that the Lord must come back and establish the throne in natural Jerusalem and rule from there. That is not what the Scriptures teach. He rules from heaven, and he rules now!

When listening to the tail of the dragon, we will hear that Jesus “will be . . .” but he is not ‘just yet’ anything. The books and teaching of Dispensationalists remove Christ from the “is now” position. This is exactly what antichrist does. It denies that Jesus *IS* the Christ. The word *Christos* (Greek) means the Christ, Messiah, King. The lie is that Jesus is not the Christ now. The Pharisees and the religious system in the days of Jesus said that Christ had not come, but would one day. Our day says that Christ came, but he is not Christ yet. Both remove Jesus from being Christ–Messiah, King. That is antichrist teaching (1Jo 2:22; 4:3; 2Jo 1:7).

The entire purpose of antichrist is to remove Christ from the throne. Pentecost discusses how Jesus will be King one day when the millennium comes. Pentecost says, “In the millennial age Jesus Christ will be ‘King of kings, and Lord of lords’ (Rev 19:16).”

The dispensational teaching is that Jesus must come back because he was not successful the first advent. He must return to establish his throne in Jerusalem. Pentecost says, “Jerusalem will become the center of the messianic earth.... Because the world is under the dominion of Israel’s King, the center of Palestine becomes the center of the entire earth. Jerusalem will be the center of the kingdom rule.... The city that was the center of David’s government will become the center of the government of David’s greater Son. The city will become a glorious city, bringing honor unto Jehovah... Jerusalem will become the center of the worship of the age.”

The one thing that Dispensationalists have successfully accomplish is provide a false teaching that Jesus is not the Christ yet. However, the Bible clearly teaches that Jesus became the Christ / King at ascension. This happened as he came before the ancient of days and was given dominion, glory, and a kingdom which shall not pass away and which shall never be destroyed (Dan 7:13-14).

**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.**

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

6, 7 Why did the woman flee into the **wilderness**? Was it because the **dragon** desired to destroy the man child? Or was it because **there was a war**? We can clearly see that John was describing a post-ascension, wilderness experience. The man child had already been caught up and had received his throne. Then -- after ascension -- the woman fled into the wilderness. The reason she fled was...
because **there was war.** Amazing! Did this happen historically? Yes it did happen.

Jesus gave clear and precise instructions about fleeing when the **war** began. What war? The war when the armies of Rome compassed about Jerusalem (Luk 19:43; 21:20) in 70 A.D. Jesus, in his Olivet Discourse, clearly told the disciples what would happen to Jerusalem. The following years led to the destruction of the temple and the sign showing the end of the age of Moses (Mat 24:15, 16).

We should by now know what the **abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel** is about. Luke, recording from a Gentile perspective, makes it very clear so that even we Gentiles would know what Jesus meant. The **abomination of desolation** was when Jerusalem was destroyed by Rome (Luk 21:20-22). The Lord instructed his people to **flee** (Luk 21:21). These were the days of the Lord God’s vengeance (Luk 21:22).

The woman was to **flee!** The place the **woman** would flee was **prepared of God.** There she would be led a **thousand two hundred and threescore days.** John helps us understand exactly what he was describing by using the same number previously used said differently. Earlier he said in Rev 11:2, . . . the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months. This is the same number the two witnesses prophesied in the city where our Lord was crucified. . . . they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth (11:3). . . . And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified (11:8). This number, in all its different forms, refers to the days that Jerusalem was to be **tread under foot** of the Gentiles (Rev 11:2). This is also the place where the prophets died (see discussion chapter 11). Jerusalem was the place from which to flee!

John now says that the **woman** would flee to a place **prepared for her.** There she would be cared for those days in which Jerusalem was destroyed. As we have noted (chapter 11), a **thousand two hundred and threescore days** is three and one half years. This is a Biblical time in which it may appear the wicked triumph. Elijah fled to the wilderness for three and one half years and was cared for by the Lord while Ahab and Jezebel worked their wickedness. After the three and one half years, Elijah appeared at Mount Carmel to bring the Lord’s vengeance. Three and a half is a broken seven showing that the total picture had not yet been seen. Although three and one half is a Biblical prophetic thought, we must note that Jerusalem was literally under the feet of the Romans three and a half years.

John says, . . . **there was war in heaven:** Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels.**” Rome became the hand of the Lord fighting against Israel the enemy of God (Mat 22:6-7).

When the King sat upon his throne and the **woman** was safe from the **dragon,** the **war** began in **heaven.** The war was between the forces of the Lord and the forces of the **dragon.** The primary force the dragon used against the forces of the Lord was false religion. Jesus never angered at or confronted anything other than the false religion of the Pharisees and Sadducees. Jesus never said, “Beware of the politicians and government.” He said, **Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and of the Sadducees** (Mat 16:6). Jesus was in constant confrontation (war) with the religious sect (see John chapters 2, 3, 5, 8, 9, 10, 18). He called those of that system serpents and vipers (Mat 23:33). This further linked the serpent dragon to the serpents of Jerusalem.

The war was between the dragon’s **angels** and Michael’s **angels.** If we only think of angels flying around in the sky (heaven) fighting with each other, we will miss what John desired that we see. This war was not in the sky. This war was in **heaven.** Heaven is a Biblical term which depicts rulership -- throne. Biblically the thought of **heaven** is another way to say throne (Isa 66:1). With just a little research, we find that **heaven** is in direct association with the throne and with the one who is ruling (1Ki 22:19; 2Ch 18:18; Psa 11:4; 89:29; Isa 14:13; 66:1; 2Ch 20:6).

This **war** was over rulership. The **war** was about who ruled. Does the great red dragon rule, or does the Lord Jesus Christ (Son of man) rule? It is that way today. Too many say that the devil is the god of this world (2Co 4:4). The devil is not my god. Does Moses rule, or does Jesus rule? Does Rome rule or does Jesus rule? Who is really on the throne?

John said, **Michael and his angels fought against the dragon.** John gave another allusion. The thought of “Michael” was the war angel. **Michael** was sent to help the messenger sent to answer Daniel. The messenger needed assistance against the **prince of Persia** (Dan 10:13). **Michael** is one of the chief princes of war. As we follow Michael in Scripture, we find him mentioned again in Daniel 10:20 and 12:1.

When **Michael** stands, it is in a time of trouble. This trouble is a trouble like none since there was a nation of Israel. The people of God shall be delivered -- every one that shall be found written in the book. This is the allusion to which John refers. Michael stood in the day of trouble which was a day unlike any that ever existed (Mat 24:21).

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

**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.

8, 9 The dragon, manifesting through the false religion of Israel, **prevailed not.** The **dragon** and his **angels were cast out.** Neither was their **place found any more in heaven.** The false religion of Judaism was no longer ruling. It had been defeated by Christ. The law of Moses was dead and cast out of its position of ruling. Its **place** was no longer found in heaven -- the throne.

The summation of the devil and Satan was he **deceiveth the whole world.** The sure recognition of the presence of the Devil and Satan, who is the red dragon, was / is deception. His target is the **whole world.** Here the word for **world** is *oikoumenē* and means “land and dwelling.” Every land and every dwelling will suffer the deception of Satan the devil unless the truth is known. Every church and every preacher will suffer the deception of Satan and the devil, that is, unless the truth is known. Every man, woman, boy, and girl will suffer the deception of Satan and the devil unless the truth is known. What is truth? Jesus said in his prayer of John 17, *Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth* (Joh 17:17). The source of truth is the word of God.

However, as we know, one way to defeat an enemy is to cut off or poison the enemy’s water supply. This is exactly what the red dragon has done. In all of us, there has been a poisoning because the word we have drunk was defiled--wormwood. One of today’s largest concerns is a pure water of the word (Eph 5:26). Naturally if the
water is cut off, there is no truth supplied.

We note that the term **cast out** is used three times in this one verse. This would show that John was truly desiring we grasp his emphasis. The **great dragon was cast out**. He was **cast out into the earth**. His angels were **cast out with him**. As we have noted already, the dragon, manifesting through the apostasy of Israel, was cast out. It had its place no more. The teachings of Judaism, Moses, and the Law are thrown down and will not reign ever again. This is true for all the work of the **great red dragon**. He is absolutely thrown out of a place of ruling. He has no authority and no throne. He and his are **cast out, cast out, cast out** of heaven.

The dragon is cast out of heaven, but will become more active in the **earth**. The devil continues his rage upon the **earth** (ge Greek) or region (natural). Before the war, during, after and even until now, the dragon has used Judaism and every religion to war against Christianity. Their authority is gone and cast out, yet they continue to rage against the Christ and his people. It has but a short time and does all it can to destroy the woman.

**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.**

10 **Salvation** came when the dragon, who is that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, was **cast out**. Here it is said, **Now is salvation**. If the book of Revelation is futuristic in its content, then **salvation** is futuristic. We have a problem. If the devil has not been cast out of heaven as of yet, then salvation is not yet. We have a problem. We are not “saved” or experiencing salvation if this is passage is futuristic. Salvation is for **now** because the dragon has been **cast out**. The war in heaven has already happened! All that Judaism or any other false religion can do is express great wrath because false religion knows that it has but a short time. So was it with the world power of Rome. It had but a short time.

The voice declaring **salvation** was not only a voice. It was a **loud voice**. The phrase **loud voice** is used by John twelve times in the Revelation. The thought is something said and made loudly and extremely clear. Notice the remainder of what the **loud voice** proclaims. Not only had **salvation come**, and that made clear by the **loud voice**, but the **kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ** was also made clear by the **loud voice**. The **kingdom of God** was not going to come at a future event. The **POWER OF HIS CHRIST** was not going to come at the second advent. It had come. This happened when Jesus defeated the dragon. Is this not what this verse says **LOUDLY**? If **salvation** has come, then the **kingdom** has come! All this has come because the **accuser of our brethren IS CAST DOWN!** The dragon called the serpent, the Devil, and Satan has been cast down. This event brought the availability of salvation, which brought the kingdom and strength and the power of Christ!

The **power of Christ** has come. What does that mean? First, we must recall what the term “Christ” means. **Chrístos** (Greek) is translated as Christ and means “anointed and Messiah.” “Messiah” means “the anticipated deliverer and king.” The Jews anticipated the coming of the Messiah or King. The primary thought for the word “Christ” is not of the man Jesus who died for our sins. What we should think of when we think of the “Christ” is the **KING**! When we pray and say, “In the name of Jesus Christ,” we are literally saying, “In the name of Jesus the **KING**.” We decree a prayer. Prayer is decreeing. A king does not ask. A king decrees. We should understand his will enough to know what to decree in his name. The **power of his Christ is come**.

The **accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night**. Often we hear that the devil is now the accuser of the brethren. This verse is stated in past tense. It says, **which accused them before our God.** He is **cast down**.

**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.**

11 The **they** in context of this verse speaks of Michael and his angels. However the **blood, testimony, and not loving their lives unto the death** speaks of believers. Who was it then that really overcame the dragon? Who are the **they** actually speaking? Was it Michael and his angels, or was it actually the saints and martyrs for whom the **blood of the Lamb** was shed? Who had a **testimony**, and who **loved not their lives unto the death**? Is John describing a war in the sky as we have taught to think? Is it only then does Michael and Michael’s angels need the **blood**? **The blood** is for the redeemed it is not. Do angels (as we have been traditionally taught about angels) need a **word of their testimony**? What about not loving their **lives unto the death**, does that speak of angels? Traditionally we are told that angels are immortal. They have no need to think of death.

Actually, when we look at this we see this war in Revelation 12 speaks of the believers who defeated the dragon. The war of Revelation 12 was actually the war waged on earth in the heavenlies as believers waged war with the dragon. Overcomers cast him down and believers cast him out. They do this by the **blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death**.

When was the dragon cast out of heaven? As we have already seen, the dragon was cast out (12:9) when there was a war in heaven. Let’s now see when this war happened and when the dragon was cast out of his authority. Jesus preached the kingdom. He wasn’t preaching something that would come in the distant future. He proclaimed a kingdom that was at hand (Mat 4:23). Jesus began to war with the dragon and he clearly said and gave evidence that the kingdom had come by casting out devils by the Spirit of God (Mat 12:28).

Jesus was both proclaiming his kingdom and demonstrating that it “IS COME UNTO YOU.” He said this to believers nearly 2,000 years ago. Jesus also sent out his disciples (messengers / angels) with instructions to war. They were to war by preaching the kingdom. They were given authority to demonstrate its presence and the authority of the King’s name (Mat 10:7, 8).

This war and authority was not only given to the twelve. This war was given to all those who followed Jesus. He also sent out others. He appointed other disciples with the same weapons, message of the kingdom, and with the same authority to demonstrate the kingdom (Luk 10:1, 9).

Notice what happened as the seventy came back with the results of their ministry. They came back excited about the war they went out to wage. They introduced the new kingdom and proclaimed the new King with a loud voice (Luk 10:17-22).

When did Satan as lightning fall from heaven? This happened during the ministry of Jesus Christ as he
preached with a loud voice and displayed the kingdom. His army destroyed the enemy and the dragon’s angels as they proclaimed with a loud voice the kingdom of God.

The Scriptures say very little about demons in the Old Testament. They seem nearly non-existent. However, in the Gospels they are constantly coming forth as Jesus challenges them and defeats them. The kingdom of God wages war with Satan and his kingdom. The demons became aware they had but a short time. Remember at the Ascension of Jesus Christ he proclaimed with a loud voice, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth (Mat 28:18). Salvation is come, strength is come, the kingdom is come, and the power of his Christ is come because the accuser of our brethren is cast down.

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.

12 To be a verified citizen of the United States, I must have “my name written.” Without my name being written, there is no proof of my citizenship. This is the simple thought here. Jesus told those in Luke 10 whom he sent out that they were not to rejoice because of their power. They were to rejoice because their names were written in heaven (Luk 10:20).

Those in that army were verified and certified citizens of heaven. Their names were written. Heaven is the place of authority. The throne is where those in authority resided as citizens. There is a book written that continues listing the citizens of heaven. Moses, David, Isaiah, Daniel, and John spoke of it Exo 32:32; Psa 69:28; Isa 4:3; Dan 12:1).

In the next chapter, we will find this truth again. Those whose names were not written in the book worshiped the beast of the sea. Those whose names were written in the book of the Lamb could not and would not worship the beast (Rev 13:8).

Paul writes in Eph 2:19, Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God. John says, Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. If my name is written in the book, then I am a citizen of heaven. I am a citizen of the kingdom of heaven! I am to rejoice because my name is written. I have been given authority to preach the kingdom, to cast out devils, to heal the sick, to speak in tongues, and do great exploits (Mar 16:16-18).

Those written in heaven can and should rejoice. However, 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.

Like a cornered animal, the devil did his violence. He attacked and clawed and killed and looked for an escape from the doom of his future. There is no escape, and he knows this is true. He continued his brutality upon the inhabitants of the earth (ge in Greek meaning “soil and region”). This is speaking of the land and region of Israel as we have noted. Also the inhabitants of the sea (nations, see discussion 7:1) will experience the dragons great wrath.

We have two nationalities in this verse. We see those who dwell in heaven and those that inhabit the earth. Heaven was to rejoice. The earth (ge) was to woe and beware. The devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time. The place to which each person must come is to an understanding of where he or she dwells. The thought of dwelling is where we spend the majority of our time and energy. Is it for the earthly, or for the heavenly? Where do we dwell? If we dwell in the heavenly, then we are citizens there and rejoice. If we dwell upon the earth, then we need to beware and understand the scriptures. The scriptures teach woe to the inhabitants of the earth. Heaven is not in the future only. We are to dwell there now. We have been brought up, and we sit with Christ on the throne now (Eph 2:6). We have been translated into the Kingdom of Jesus Christ (Col 1:13).

We term this dimension of thinking “kingdom thinking.” It is the thinking that we now are overcomers and sit with Christ in his throne. It is contrary to religious thinking that says the kingdom will come one day and we will one day be with Jesus in heaven. As we overcome, he grants the right to sit with him on his throne (Rev 3:21).

Each time we overcome, we gain more authority. We gain authority over the devils and enemies of God (Rev 3:21).

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.

13 The dragon did not simply know he was defeated. The dragon saw that he was defeated. He has no authority in the heavenly dimension. Simply saying the devil is defeated does not bother the devil. We must show him that he is defeated. He must see he is defeated. A person saying he is a Christian does not upset the devil. The devil must see that he is cast out.

When the dragon does see that he is defeated, he will persecute. The very reason given for the persecution of the woman which brought forth the man child is when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth. The dragon does not persecute the church because he is “just that way.” He persecutes because Jesus defeated him and because he saw that he was cast down.

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.

14 We once again meet an allusion from the Old Testament that shows us what John was portraying to us. Moses wrote how the Lord delivered his people from harm as an eagle would bear her young on her wings (Deu 32:9-12). The deliverance would again be from a place spiritually called Egypt which was Jerusalem (11:8, see discussion). The woman is delivered into the wilderness into her place, where she is nourished. Those who heeded the warnings of Christ did flee Jerusalem and Judah when the armies came (Luk 21:20, 21). They fled to the area of Asia. There they found the churches in Asia of which John is writing this Revelation (Rev 1:4, 11). There they were safe and nourished.

John again used the figure of three and one half. This was the amount of time that the woman was nourished. This broken seven is said as time, and times, and half a time (see 11:2). As noted, this was in the period of time of the fourth beast of Daniel (Rome). Specifically it was the period of time Jerusalem was under siege (Dan 7:25) and under the control of Rome (see discussion 11:8).

This was the time that the power of the holy people was scattered, and the time that Jerusalem was trodden under the feet of the Gentiles (Dan 12:7). Clearly it was the time of great tribulation of which Jesus spoke in Matthew 24:21 and Luke 21:20. The Lord’s people escaped and
went into a place of nourishment.

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.

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.

15, 16 John’s imagery continued with allusions from the Old Testament. There was the Nile into which Pharaoh demanded the children be thrown. There was the Red Sea that Satan thought would block and cause the destruction of the people. There was the overflowing Jordan attempting to keep the people out of the promise. Though each was devised by the power of the dragon, none accomplished its intent. The Lord God Almighty moved. In each situation the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth was swallowed up. No matter what came from the mouth of the dragon, the people of God were always cared for. David said it this way. I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread (Psa 37:25).

John says the earth helped the woman. Earth (ge in Greek) is, as we have seen so often, means “land and region.” The land and region of Asia provided a place for the saints to be nourished. The flood would come from the dragon and the Lord provided churches for his woman to be cared and nourished. By the time the armies encompassed Jerusalem, there were churches established in every place.

Churches helping churches is the way of the Lord to defeat the dragon. Every true church goes through times of flooding coming from the mouth of the dragon. Each church must have relations with other churches. That way nourishment will never be an issue.

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.

17 In the discussion in the first of the chapter we learn that the child of the woman was the man child (Son of man). He was caught up to heaven. The woman had more seed. The woman is productive. We know that the woman could not only be Israel or Mary. The woman is all those producing the seed of the heavenly Jerusalem (Gal 4:26). She is the wife of God. She is the bride, the Lamb’s wife (Rev 21:9, 10). She is the New Jerusalem which produces the seed of God. She brought forth the man child. She brought forth seed.

This is the woman the dragon was wroth with. The dragon went to make war with the remnant of her seed. Notice the word remnant. The thought of remnant includes what is left. This shows that many or most have been destroyed. From the woman who was once of Moses, there comes a remnant. This remnant becomes known as the church. We saw the hundred and forty and four thousand of chapter seven. Again we note the allusion to Ezekiel 5:1-12. Ezekiel was instructed to shave his head and beard and weigh the hair into third parts. Each part was a depiction of what would happen to Israel. Out of all the hair, Ezekiel only tucked a few hairs into the folds of his garment. This was the remnant (Eze 5:3).

It was these with which the dragon will make war. John gives the qualification for this remnant. We are clearly told the seed remnant are those which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. These are not remnants of Judaism which rejected Jesus Christ. We are told these have the testimony of Jesus Christ. The true seed must keep the commandments of God, and must have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Contemporary Theological View(s)

1. Revelation 12:1 And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun....

Jimmy Swaggart says, “The woman is Israel in her own land in the Middle East. Israel has been a nation since 1948. However, there will be many Jews who will not return to Israel until Jesus Christ comes back. So how do we know that the woman spoken of here is symbolic of Israel? 1. Israel is often spoken of as a woman married to God under the terms of the Old Covenant ( Isa. 54:106; Jer. 3:1-14; Hos. 2:14-23). 2. Many feel this is the church and it is speaking of the rapture. But the church is never symbolized by a woman, married or unmarried. And even though it may come as a surprise to many people, the church is not called the bride of Christ.”

Swaggart says the church is never called the bride of Christ. We ask, “What do the following verses mean?”

Ephesians 5:24 Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.

Ephesians 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

Ephesians 5:26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

Ephesians 5:27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

Ephesians 5:32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

The church is to be presented to the Lord without spot or wrinkle as wives are to their husbands. The church is subject to Christ as wives are supposed to be to their own husbands. Husbands are to love their wives as Christ loves the church. Christ gave Himself for the church. Paul says in these verses that he is actually speaking about Christ and his church. It seems this is saying that the church is the bride of Christ.

Nearly all contemporaries see the woman as the nation of Israel only. No one argues with that. Our questions are, “What about Eve or Mrs. Noah? What about Sarah and Rebekah and Rachel?” These were not of the nation of Israel. They lived before the nation of Israel. However these played their parts in bringing forth the man child also.

2. Revelation 12:7 And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels,

Contemporaries teach a literal future war in the sky. This war will be between Lucifer and Michael. John Phillips commenting on the war says, “It did not originate on earth; it originated in heaven and began, not in a human breast, but in the soul of Lucifer. So this war is fought in heaven.”

5 Jimmy Swaggart, The Prophecies and Symbols of Revelation, page 83
Isn’t it interesting? Of all the terms used by both Old and New Testament writers to describe Satan, Lucifer is never one of them. Lucifer is only found once in the Bible. That is in Isaiah 14:12. There Lucifer is not the devil. He is a man.

Isaiah 14:16 They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms? (emphasis added)

Lucifer is the king of Babylon (Isa 14:4). Isaiah has been prophesying to the nations for many chapters. For him to stop and do a teaching on the devil here is totally out of context. No New Testament or Old Testament writer ever calls Satan by the name Lucifer.

War in heaven, biblically, is not the same as war in the sky. Biblically, heaven is the throne of God. The war was in the throne (Isa 66:1; Act 7:49).

3. Revelation 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

This is a most amazing interpretation by the Dispensationalists. All recognize that salvation is present and available since the resurrection of Christ. This verse says, Now is come salvation. Not only does the verse say Now is come salvation. It also says, Now is come the kingdom of our God. As surely as salvation is come since the resurrection, so has the kingdom come. It seems clear enough, but the Dispensationalists do not agree with this. Listen to the remarks of McGee.

“The salvation -- its consummation is in the person of Christ....’and the kingdom of our God’ is going to be established on the earth. Not until then will there be peace and righteousness and freedom on this earth.... It will be wonderful when his Kingdom comes on this earth. This very statement reveals that the Kingdom was not established at the first coming of Christ.”

McGee said that this verse is proof that the kingdom was not established at the first coming. Strange scriptural interpretation, is it not? The verse also says Now is come, the power of his Christ. When did the power come?

Matthew 28:18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

Jesus declared at the Ascension that All power is given unto him. That event was historic, not future. That has happened. There will not be a day when he receives “all-er” authority. The word for power is exousia (Strong’s #1849). The same word is used in both Matthew 28:18 and here in Revelation 12:10.

Allowing the doctrines of men to interpret scriptures in this way is dangerous. As surely as salvation came at the resurrection and Ascension of Jesus Christ, so did the kingdom of our God and Christ. As surely as “all power” was given Jesus at the Ascension, so did the kingdom of God and Christ come.

4. Revelation 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.

The Dispensationalists see this as the last three and one-half years of their future tribulation. Dake says, “He will vent his wrath on the woman, remnant, and many other classes of people during the last three and one-half years. His wrath will be great for he knows he will have but a short time.”

6 John Phillips, Exploring Revelation, page 158
7 J. Vernon McGee, Revelation Chapters 6-13, page 159
8 Rev. Finis Jennings Dake, Revelation Expounded, Tenth Printing July 1991, page 141