

## The War in Revelation 12

- A. Foreword. Chapters 12-14 are parenthetical (parenthesis) chapters that do not advance the narrative of the chronological order of the events of the Tribulation Period but focus on important characters of the events of the period.

Chapter	Period in parenthesis	Characters
12	Great War in heaven and on earth	The nation Israel, Jesus Christ, satan and Michael
13	Future world ruler and details of their world government	The beast out of the sea (antichrist) and his associate, the beast out of the earth (false prophet)
14	The ultimate triumph of the Lamb (Jesus Christ), the judgment of the wicked	Jesus and the 144,000 Jews in chapter 7

As we have previously studied, the Tribulation is not for the church but for Israel as explained by the angel Gabriel to the prophet Daniel (Daniel 9:24 “Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people (*Israel*) and upon thy holy city (*Jerusalem*)...” and *the last week of the 70 weeks of years is the Tribulation period*, emphasis mine.) I am pointing this out because many take passages that relate to Israel and interpret them as dealing with the church in the present age.

The final battles waged by satan against God are still to be fought in the future during the second half of the 7-year tribulation period. At this time, the church is already raptured and taken into heaven and the influential work of the Holy Spirit through the Church in restraining evil in this world and the revelation of the antichrist, the lawless one, is now absent.

- B. Characters Involved in Chapter 12. This study will be broken down into three sections: (1) the characters involved for the period, (2) the war in heaven and (3) the war on earth.
1. The Woman with a Child. Revelation 12:1 Then a great and mysterious sight appeared in the sky. There was a woman, whose dress was the sun and who had the moon under her feet and a crown of twelve stars on her head. 2 She was soon to give birth, and the pains and suffering of childbirth made her cry out.
    - a. The great sign or wonder the apostle John saw was a woman. The woman is not an actual woman but one of the four symbolic women mentioned in

Revelation. The first was an actual woman with a symbolic name of Jezebel, representing paganism. The third is a harlot, representing the apostate church. The fourth is the bride of the Lamb, representing the true Church.

- b. This woman that is clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet and a crown of 12 stars is an allusion to Joseph's dream in Genesis 37:9. The sun and moon in this dream refer to Jacob and Rachel and the 11 stars refer to the sons of Jacob or Israel with Joseph making up the 12<sup>th</sup> star. This is a familiar imagery describing Israel.

**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.

**Isa 26:18** We have been with child, we have been in pain, we have as it was brought forth wind; we have not wrought any deliverance in the earth; neither have the inhabitants of the world fallen.

Also in

**Isa 66:7** Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child.

**Isa 66:8** Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? *or* shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children.

**Isa 66:9** Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith the LORD: shall I cause to bring forth, and shut *the womb*? saith thy God.

- c. The woman who is pregnant and in pain refers to Israel waiting for the coming of her Messiah for centuries. Her sufferings refer to the nation as a whole and not to Mary.
- d. The woman is definitely not Mary, an actual woman who could not be dressed as described in the passage. Also, the woman is not the church because the church did not bring forth the Messiah but instead, Christ brought forth the church.

- 2. The Dragon. Revelation 12 3 Another mysterious sight appeared in the sky. There was a huge red dragon with seven heads and ten horns and a crown on each of his heads. 4 With his tail he dragged a third of the stars out of the sky and threw them down to the earth. He stood in front of the woman, to eat her child as soon as it was born.
  - a. The second sign is a new character but the dragon is identified in verse 9 to be the old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world. Satan is not a dragon but a fallen angel but the symbolic description as a red dragon tells of his thirst for blood and deadly nature. It has 7 heads and 10 horns with diadems on its 7 heads. The 7 heads refer to the 7 consecutive world empires under satan's dominion: Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome, and the ten-toes in Nebuchadnezzars dream which is the Revived Roman Empire which will be the one-world government by the

- antichrist. The final kingdom ruled by the antichrist will be a ten-nation or ten-region confederacy. The ten horns represent the ten kings who will rule under the antichrist with 3 kings uprooted by the antichrist. (Daniel chapters 2 and 7; Revelation 13)
- b. The apostle John predicted that the tail of the dragon will throw a third part of the stars to the earth. These are the angelic host that rebelled along with him and cast down from heaven to earth together with satan (Isaiah 14:12-25; Ezekiel 28:12-17). If 1/3 of all the angels are fallen and the holy angels in Revelation 5:11 are numbered as ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands or 100 trillion ( $1 \times 10^{14}$ ), therefore the fallen angel must be 50 trillion.
  - c. The dragon is pictured as awaiting the birth of the child to devour Him as soon as the child is born. This refers to the birth of Jesus Christ and the attempts of Herod to kill the infant Jesus. Advised in a dream, Joseph had to take Mary and the child to Egypt because Herod has issued a decree that all male children from two years old and below in Bethlehem must be killed because of Herod's jealousy of his throne to be taken away by the King of the Jews as inquired by the wise men from the east. (Matthew 2:16-18)
3. The Male Child. Revelation 12 <sup>5</sup> **Then she gave birth to a son, who will rule over all nations with an iron rod. But the child was snatched away and taken to God and his throne.** <sup>6</sup> The woman fled to the desert, to a place God had prepared for her, where she will be taken care of for 1,260 days.
    - a. The "male child" the woman bears, the one who is caught up to God's throne is Jesus. We know that from the two psalms alluded to in verse 5. Psalm 2 and Psalm 110 both speak of the Messiah, that He will "rule the nations with a rod of iron" (Psalm 2:9), and that He will "sit at [God's] right hand until [He] makes [his] enemies a footstool for [his] feet" (Psalm 110:1). Jesus' rule over all nations with a rod of iron refers to the triumphant return of Jesus when He sets up His Millennial Kingdom.
    - b. The Devil sought to kill Him or kept Jesus from saving the world. That continued throughout Christ's ministry as satan tempted Jesus from going to the cross (Matthew 4:1-11). (John 8:58-59 People wanted to stone Him but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.) (Mark 4:35-41 a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full. And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish?) (Luk 4:29 People thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong. Luk 4:30 But he passing through the midst of them went his way.) (Luke 22:3 Then Satan entered Judas, called Iscariot, one of the Twelve.) And up to His betrayal and death on the Cross. At every turn, Satan was at work to "devour" God's Son. But he failed

- c. Despite Satan's relentless efforts to prevent the prophecy of the birth of the seed of the woman to bruise the head of satan, the old serpent (Genesis 3:15), the fulfillment of the prophecy came when God the Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, came in the flesh, born of a virgin, a descendant of David according to the flesh (Romans 1:3) satan could not stop Christ from accomplishing redemption saving the world and was exalted to the right hand of the Father. The Lord will frustrate satan's attempt to destroy Israel during the tribulation by hiding His people for 1,260 days in a place prepared for them in the wilderness and protecting them and nourishing them there as the Lord Jesus predicted in Matthew 24:15-21.
- C. This kind of parenthesis is the very thing we should have learned from the 7 letters to the 7 churches in Asia Minor, (Revelation chapters 2 and 3) Many of the followers of Jesus in these churches faced opposition from those who belonged to a "synagogue of Satan" (2:9; 3:9) or warding off false teaching that Jesus described as "the deep things of Satan" (2:24) and some of these disciples were feeling pressure from the civil authorities, authorities Jesus designated "Satan's throne" (2:13). The devil, that furious and frustrated dragon was making war on them. What we have here in Revelation 12 is a symbolic description of the very truth that Paul laid out in his letter to the Ephesians. "For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places." (Ephesians 6:12)
1. We are at war. Keep this in mind:
    - a. Our enemy is one of the most powerful of all God's created beings.
    - b. Our enemy is on the prowl. "Your adversary, the devil goes about as a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour."
    - c. Our enemy is not invincible.
    - d. The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God. The problem many have is trying to fight the superior enemy in their own strength with carnal weapons. ( "I am determined," "I promise," "I vow." Many times, this is not true. s it's not true, sometimes you're not good enough or smart enough, and the people who like you today will probably hate you tomorrow. The Gospel is "I'm not good enough, I'm never been smart enough, but Jesus died for me and He is my perfecter, completer and I lack nothing."
    - e. We will take more of this up next week: Revelation 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.
      - 1) Satan is an accuser. Revelation 12:10 "...for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night." Remember: Both Satan and the Lord point out sin in our lives. The difference is: Satan accuses and condemns. God calls us and

redeems. If satan keeps on accusing you of your past, remind him of his future (in the lake of fire and brimstone).

- 2) "...they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb". Remember the cleansing blood of the Lamb of God, Jesus Christ, who sacrificed Himself once and for all for our sanctification. Jesus said through the prophet Isaiah, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." (Isaiah 1:18)
- 3) "...by the word of their testimony". Testimony here means the story of what Jesus did for you but what Jesus did on the cross that Jesus has won the battle against our sin and all the forces of evil and has been raised to begin a new life in us. As you testify to that victory, as you declare it, and people believe it, the work of Satan is overcome in their lives. The apostle Paul said, "the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God." (Acts 20:24) When we become witnesses of the Lord Jesus, we testify of the gospel of the grace of God.
- 4) "... they loved not their lives to the death." Not only did they believe the Gospel in their own lives and preach the Gospel to others, but they also poured out their lives for the Gospel. You may not physically die but this happens when you sacrifice your dreams or personal conveniences for the advancement of the gospel. Jesus said, "Mat 16:25 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it." (Matthew 16:25)  
Noong panahon na na-assasinate si Ninoy Aquino sa tarmac ng International Airport at si Marcos ay sakitin na noong panahon na iyon, sabi ni Rev. Medina, ang founding Archbishop ng TAFJELG, "marami ang nagpapakamatay para sa namatay, marami ang nagpapakamatay para sa malapit nang mamatay, ngunit iilan ang nagaalay ng buhay sa hindi mamamatay, sa buhay magpakailanman, samakatuwid sa Panginoong Jesucristo!"