

Satan's Opposition to God

Part 1: Two Signs in Heaven – The Woman and the Dragon Study 12. Revelation 12

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A. The Sign of the Woman. 12:1-2

1. John saw a great sign.¹ Where did it appear? 12:1 _____
2. The great sign John saw was a woman. 12:1
 - a. With what was she clothed? _____
 - b. What was under her feet? _____
 - c. What did she wear on her head? _____
 - d. This language is strongly reminiscent of Joseph's dream recorded in Genesis 37:9-10. Assuming a deliberate correspondence, to what does the woman John saw refer? _____
3. What was the condition of the woman John saw? 12:2a _____
4. How near was she to giving birth? 12:2b _____

B. The Sign of the Dragon. 12:3-4

1. What other sign did John see up in heaven? 12:3 _____
 - a. Whom did the dragon represent? (12:9) _____
 - b. What color was it? (12:3) _____
 - c. It had 7 _____
 - d. It had 10 _____

¹ 12:1 - sign: Obviously the term "sign" means that something is signified. The woman is called a sign in 12:1. The dragon is called a sign in 12:3. In 15:1 John saw another great sign in heaven – 7 angels who had 7 plagues which complete the wrath of God.

- e. What were on its heads? 7 _____²
2. What did the dragon do with its tail? 12:4 _____³

C. The Woman and Her Baby. 12:5-6

1. To whom did the woman⁴ give birth? 12:5a _____
2. What is the destiny of this child? 12:5b _____
3. What happened to the child? 12:5c _____
4. To what place did the woman flee? 12:6a _____
5. How long would she be nourished there in a place prepared for her by God? 12:6b _____. How many months is that? _____
How many years? _____.

² 12:3 - The dragon had 7 heads, 10 horns, and 7 diadems on its heads. Significantly, John would shortly see a beast rise up from the sea (Rev. 13:1) having 7 heads and sporting 10 horns, on which were 10 diadems. This beast, in turn, seems to coincide with a fourth composite beast which Daniel saw in a dream. It also had 10 horns (Dan. 7:7-8, 20) which were said to represent 10 kings (Dan. 7:24). Furthermore, John would also see a prostitute named "Babylon" sitting on a scarlet beast that had 7 heads and 10 horns (Rev. 17:3, 7-12-13). It is likely that there is coherence between these visions. The beasts represent an end-time kingdom controlled by the dragon, Satan. It is likely that the 10 horns represent 10 kings which will reign contemporaneously with a future world dictator (see the study on Revelation 13).

³ 12:4 - the dragon's tail swept away a third of the stars: This refers to a time in the distant past when Satan deluded a third of the angels in heaven to revolt against God and follow him. In judgment, these fallen angels (demons) were cast down to earth. There will be a time in the future, during the Tribulation period, when Satan will once again attempt to overthrow God and His rule. See Rev. 12:7-9; 9:1; Dan. 8:10.

⁴ 12:5 - the woman: It is tempting to think that this woman is Mary, the mother of Jesus. Nevertheless, based on the description given in 12:1 compared to Genesis 37:9-10, it seems more likely that the woman is the nation of Israel. The woman's flight into the wilderness for 1260 days has no parallel in the life of Mary. Somehow, God will protect the people of Israel some place in the wilderness for 1260 days, likely the last half of the Tribulation period. Not all Jewish people, however, will escape to the wilderness. According to Zechariah 12:1-9; 14:1-2, Israel, and Jerusalem in particular, will suffer a debilitating siege, and two-thirds of Israelis will be killed (Zech. 13:8-9) before Christ returns (Zech. 14:3-5).

D. Confrontation in Heaven. 12:7-9

1. What took place up in heaven? 12:7a _____
2. Who were the opposing forces?
 - a. _____⁵ and his _____
 - b. The _____ and his _____
3. Who won? 12:8 _____
4. Who was thrown down to the earth? 12:9 _____
5. List all the descriptions given to the sinister rebel in 12:9:
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____⁶
 - d. _____⁷
 - e. _____

E. The Loud Voice in Heaven. 12:10-12

1. What did a loud voice in heaven say had come? 12:10
 - a. _____
 - b. _____
 - c. _____ of our God;
 - d. _____ of His Christ ("anointed" King)

⁵ 12:7 - Michael: Michael is called "the archangel" in Jude 1:9.

⁶ 12:9 - devil: means "over thrower," hence, "slanderer"

⁷ 12:9 - Satan: means "adversary"

2. Why was this true? 12:10b _____⁸

- a. How is Satan described? _____⁹
- b. How often does he persist at his self-appointed task? _____

3. Revelation 12:11 appears to speak of the Tribulation saints already up in heaven (Rev. 6:9-11). On what bases did they conquer Satan?
- a. Because of _____ 12:11a
- b. Because of _____ 12:11b
- c. What could be said of these tribulation saints? 12:11c _____

- d. Apparently the victory of these Tribulation martyrs had to do with Satan and his demon/angels being thrown out of heaven onto the earth.
4. What were the heavens and those who lived there call on to do? 12:12a

5. What was pronounced on the earth and the sea? 12:12b _____
- a. Why? _____ 12:12c
- b. What will be Satan's disposition when this occurs? 12:12d _____

- c. Why? _____ 12:12e

⁸ 12:10 - the overthrow in heaven of Satan and his demonic angel army is seen as an enormous victory. The exuberance and jubilation of the participants, including, somehow, the humans already in heaven, are something akin to the joy of the victorious team having won a Super Bowl victory. For those of us reading, it may seem as "no big deal" because the outcome was a foregone conclusion. But to those pitted in battle against the combined forces of Satan and his hordes (Michael and the elect angels), the conflict was enormous, and the victory sweet! As the saying goes, "You have to play the game. You don't win it on paper!"

⁹ 12:10 - accuser of the brethren: Note Satan's accusations against Job (Job 1:8-11; 2:3-5).

F. The Dragon Targets the Woman on Earth. 12:13-17

1. When the dragon saw that he had been defeated up in heaven and had been hurled down upon the earth, what did he do? 12:13 _____
_____ ¹⁰
2. What were given to the woman? 12:14a _____
_____ ¹¹
3. To what place was she able to fly? 12:14b _____
_____ ¹²
4. For how long would the woman be preserved from the serpent? 12:14c _____
_____ ¹³
5. In what way would the serpent attempt to harm the woman? 12:15 _____
_____ ¹⁴

¹⁰ 12:13 - he persecuted the woman: Again, we believe that the woman symbolizes Israel. This passage should give the reader some idea of the source of rabid, irrational Antisemitism rampant across our earth today even seven decades after the Holocaust. At this point in the Tribulation, Antisemitism will explode geometrically, fostered and amplified by Satan. It will result in the United Nations' troops attacking Israel, laying siege to Jerusalem, killing two-thirds of Jewish people, and carrying many off into captivity (Zechariah 12:1-3; 13:8-9; 14:1-2). The earth's nations will not ultimately succeed, but their actions will precipitate a blood bath.

¹¹ 12:14 - the two wings of the great eagle: Some have speculated that this refers to air travel. Know one will know for certain until the time arrives. Some OT passages refer to God's caring for His people as an eagle would care for its young (Exod. 19:4; Deut. 32:11-12).

¹² 12:14 - fly into the wilderness: Some have speculated that this is the secluded retreat of Petra, lying 3-5 hours south of Amman, Jordan, and 2 hours north of Aqaba. There is no way to know in advance what this location will be. Jesus urged the Jewish people to flee to the mountains during the Tribulation: Matthew 24:16-21; Mark 13:14-20; Luke 21:20-26 (this latter passage probably also refers to Rome's siege of Jerusalem that ended in terrible destruction for Israel in A.D. 70).

¹³ 12:14 - time, times, and half a time: Instead of the frequently used 1260 days, here "time" probably means a year, "times" means two years, and "half a time" means half a year. The period is 3.5 years or 42 months designating, most likely, the last half of the Tribulation period. Other uses of this time frame include Daniel 7:25; 12:7; Revelation 11:2; 13:5.

¹⁴ 12:15 - flood: This may be a literal flood (more likely, in my estimation), or it may simply indicate Satan's overwhelming attempts (possibly the earth's combined military forces?) to exterminate Israel. Amillennialists today think that Israel no longer has a place as a nation in God's kingdom program. Satan thinks otherwise and does his best to annihilate the Jewish people. Two thirds will be killed (Zech. 13:8-9).

6. In what way would the earth come to the aid of the woman? 12:16 _____
_____ ¹⁵
7. The dragon was furious when his forces could not defeat God's army up in heaven. Now he is enraged that he cannot destroy the portion of Israel, God's chosen people, who are preserved in this special wilderness sanctuary. So what does the dragon do? 12:17 _____
_____ ¹⁶ These are identified as:
- a. The rest of her _____
 - b. Who keep _____
 - c. And who hold to _____

G. Follow Up Questions

1. Satan undoubtedly accuses you before the Father. What is your defense?
2. Are you prepared to identify yourself publicly as a follower of Jesus Christ even if it means being killed?
3. Are you prepared to obey God even if it means being killed?
4. Are you a defender of Israel?
5. Do you see any signs of increasing Antisemitism in our world today?
6. Have you ever experienced opposition from Satan or his demons?

¹⁵ 12:16 - the earth ... drank up the river: Assuming this is a literal flood that Satan uses, God will enable the earth to swallow up the excess water to save the lives of Israelis.

¹⁶ 12:17 - make war with the rest of her children: The following descriptions indicate that these whom the devil seeks to destroy are (a) Jewish, (b) not in the same location, so evidently scattered around the world, (c) obedient followers of God, and (d) believers in Jesus, thus, Messianic Jews. Chapter 13 will demonstrate the world-wide influence and control of Satan's version of the Messiah, as he seeks to exterminate all around the world who do not worship him. He is the Beast arising out of the sea (Rev. 13:1-10), the Antichrist (1 John 2:18), and he is served by his lieutenant, the beast arising out of the earth (Rev. 13:11-18), also known as the false prophet (Rev. 16:13; 19:20; 20:10).

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