

Revelation 12:1-6

Overview of Chapter 12

12:1-6 War on earth, phase 1

12:7-12 War in heaven

12:13-17 War in heaven, phase 2

Verse 1

A great sign *appeared in heaven* – Some refer to chapters 12 to 19 as the Book of Signs. No signs are mentioned in chapters 1 to 11 and at least seven are mentioned in chapters 12 to 19.

A woman... She represents the nation of Israel.

Clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet – A similar description is seen in Joseph's dream in Genesis 37:9. Note also Isaiah 60.1-3, 20.

On her head a crown of twelve stars – An allusion to the twelve tribes of Israel.

Verse 2

And she was with child; and she cried out, being in labor and in pain to give birth – An allusion to Israel's national spiritual pain before Jesus' appearing at His first coming.

Verse 3

And another sign appeared in heaven...

-A great red dragon – The word dragon (Greek is *drakon*) occurs 13 times in the New Testament, all in the book of Revelation. Every instance refers to Satan. A dragon symbolizes a powerful, aggressive, deadly foe. Red suggests bloodshed.

-Having seven heads and ten horns – This most likely refers to seven nations and ten rulers (17:12). When Antichrist rises to preeminence among them, he will subdue three of them leaving only seven (Daniel 7:7-8, 24)

-On his head were seven diadems – These seven kings will have political authority.

Verse 4

And his tail swept away a third of the stars of heaven, and threw them to the earth – This represents the angels Satan led in rebellion against God. Note verses 8-9, Daniel 8:10, Jude 6, 2 Peter 2:4. Satan's fall is described in Isaiah 14:12-17 and Ezekiel 28:12-19.

And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she gave birth he might devour her child – Satan put into the heart of Herod to kill Jesus at His birth (Matthew 2:13-16) yet God protected His Son.

Verse 5

And she gave birth to a son, a male child, who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron – Four times this phrase is used of Jesus, the Messiah (Psalm 2:9, Revelation 2:27, 12:5, 19:15).

And her child was caught up to God and to His throne – This speaks of Christ's ascension into heaven where He now waits at the right hand of the Father (Hebrews 1:3, 13, 8:1, 10:12, 12:2, 1Peter 3:22).

Verse 6

And the woman fled into the wilderness where she had a place prepared by God, so that there she might be nourished for one thousand two hundred and sixty days (3 ½ years) – This is the second half of the tribulation period, the Great Tribulation spoken of by Jesus in Matthew 24:15-22. God and His angels and perhaps Gentiles will care for Israel during this time. Note Daniel 12:1 and the judgment of Matthew 25:31-46.

Matthew 25:40, *And the King will answer and say to them, "Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me."*

Genesis 12:3, *And I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse. And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.*