

Revelation 12

I. What we know so far

- The book of Revelation unveils the future as it relates to the return of Jesus and the setting up of His eternal kingdom.
- In the book John is transported to the future where he watches the events of the book unfold.
- We should see this book as the culmination of all things that have been developing throughout the narrative of the Bible.

In other words, the Bible is filled with prophecies anticipating what is coming in the future and the book of Revelation explains how they will unfold.

The book of Revelation is not written from the past predicting future events but written from the future explaining them

- For example
 - Bible authors anticipate the Rapture

1 Thessalonians 4:17

*Then we who are alive and remain shall be **caught up** together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus, we shall always be with the Lord.*

1 Corinthians 15:51-52

*Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—**in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet**. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed.*

- In Revelation we watch as John experiences it

Revelation 4:1

*After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was **like a trumpet** speaking with me, saying, "Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this."*

- Once in Heaven John watches as judgment is released upon the earth
 - This was anticipated by Jeremiah

Jeremiah 30:7

*Alas! For that day is great,
So that none is like it;
And it is the **time of Jacob's trouble**,
But he shall be saved out of it.*

Jeremiah 30:11

*For I am with you,' says the LORD, 'to save you;
Though **I make a full end of all nations** where I have scattered you,
Yet I will not make a complete end of you.
But I will correct you in justice,
And will not let you go altogether unpunished.'*

Jeremiah 30:23-24

*Behold, **the whirlwind of the LORD**
Goes forth with fury,
A continuing whirlwind;
It will fall violently on the head of the wicked.
The fierce anger of the LORD will not return until He has done it,
And until He has performed the intents of His heart.
In the latter days you will consider it.*

- And by Jesus Himself

Matthew 24:21

*For then there will be **great tribulation**, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.*

- And in the book of Revelation John watches as these things are fulfilled

He describes the earth undergoing

Deception, warfare, famine, drought, pestilence and conducive disturbances

This will be caused partially by the removal of the church, partially by the judgment of God being poured out upon humanity for rebellion against the ways of God and partially by the fact that the devil knows his time is short and he unleashes all his fury upon humanity

- These judgments were introduced by opening of 7 seals and blowing of 7 trumpets.
- From chapter 10 - 15 we take a break from following the judgments and are allowed to peak behind the curtain and watch things that take place in the spiritual realm.

Chapter 10

John eats a book that tastes sweet but troubles his stomach. He is commissioned to prophecy of the things he has seen

Revelation 10:10-11

Then I took the little book out of the angel's hand and ate it, and it was as sweet as honey in my mouth. But when I had eaten it, my stomach became bitter. And he said to me, "You must prophesy again about many peoples, nations, tongues, and kings."

Since John is commissioned to declare these things, and they have been preserved for us in the word we can conclude that God is interested in delivering us

Chapter 11

2 witnesses are commissioned to preach in the midst of the troubles unfolding on the earth

These witnesses are divinely empowered and protected to carry out their calling.

When their course is complete, they are killed and the world rejoices

(These men are not alone; chapter 14 will introduce the 144k and an Angel who will be released upon the earth to proclaim the everlasting Gospel)

Revelation 14:6

*Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, **having the everlasting gospel to preach** to those who dwell on the earth—to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people—*

Again, since these 2 individuals (and others) are commissioned, empowered and protected as they proclaim the Word of God we can conclude that even in the midst of judgment God is interested in saving

James 2:13

*For judgment is without mercy to the one who has shown no mercy.
Mercy triumphs over judgment.*

During the tribulation period countless numbers will come to trust in Christ and be redeemed

Revelation 7:9

*After these things I looked, and behold, **a great multitude which no one could number**, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands*

Revelation 7:13-14

Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, "Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?"

And I said to him, "Sir, you know."

*So, he said to me, "**These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation**, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.*

Chapter 12

John watches a scene play out that illustrates Christ coming into the world and the defeat of the devil

The characters

- A woman
- A child
- A dragon
- His angels
- Michael
- His angels

- The inhabitants of the earth

Before we seek to unmask the characters in the drama of chapter 12 it is important to notice that John makes it clear that these things are “signs”

Revelation 12:1

*Now a great **sign** appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars.*

Sign - This refers to an image that represents a reality

- The image itself is not the reality but represents something else
- The image is not arbitrary but represents something specific and real
- The image is not open to multiple interpretations
- If we do not know what the image represents we must consider if there is a answer key

The symbolisms within the book of Revelation falls into one of three categories

- Symbols defined within Revelation itself
- Symbols defined elsewhere within the Bible
- Symbols without a Key. In this case we are purposely left in the dark by the author

In chapter 12 the signs or symbols are defined for us

- The woman

Revelation 12:1-2

Now a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars. Then being with child, she cried out in labor and in pain to give birth.

She is described as being clothed with the sun, having the moon under her feet and wearing a garland of 12 stars

This would naturally take the reader back to the beginning of the Bible where Joseph had a dream concerning his father (Israel), his mother and his brothers

Genesis 37:9-10

*Then he dreamed still another dream and told it to his brothers, and said, "Look, I have dreamed another dream. And this time, **the sun, the moon, and the eleven stars bowed down to me.**"*

*So, he told it to his father and his brothers; and his father rebuked him and said to him, "What is this dream that you have dreamed? **Shall your mother and I and your brothers** indeed come to bow down to the earth before you?"*

- The Dragon

Revelation 12:3-4

*And **another sign** appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads. His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born.*

Revelation 12:9

*So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, **called the Devil and Satan**, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.*

- The Child

We also read that the woman's in John's vision gave birth to a child who was destined to rule the world but was attacked by the dragon and ascended to the throne of God.

Revelation 12:5-6

*She bore a male Child who was **to rule all nations** with a rod of iron. And her Child **was caught up to God and His throne**. Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days.*

John is seeing a scene that portrays Christ being born of Israel and attacked by Satan and ascending to the throne of heaven

The scene does not end here

John watches as a war breaks out in heaven.

Revelation 12:7-9

And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in

heaven any longer. So, **the great dragon was cast out**, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

- A war takes place in the spirit realm between the forces of the devil and the forces of God.

Satan is defeated

- Elsewhere the Bible teaches that the place of victory was at the cross

Colossians 2:14-15

*having wiped out the handwriting of requirements that was against us, which was contrary to us. And He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross. **Having disarmed principalities and powers**, He made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them in it.*

On the Cross Jesus defeated Satan. Now he is cast out of heaven

- For unexplained reasons the Bible explains that Satan has access to God

Job 1:6-7

Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them. And the LORD said to Satan, "From where do you come?"

So, Satan answered the LORD and said, "**From going to and fro on the earth, and from walking back and forth on it.**"

It seems that Satan has access to heaven and earth

It is clear that Satan is in fact roaming throughout the whole earth

He has found a place in politics, entertainment, media and education. He is reading havoc in marriages, families, within and between nations.

But here we see that he is defeated and cast out of Heaven.

- Two simultaneous scenes transpire
 - First, a celebration in heaven

Revelation 12:10-12

Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser

of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death. Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time."

They celebrate that the dragon is cast out of heaven and his days are numbered

They celebrate that the long awaited the kingdom of God has come

And they provide an explanation of how the they saints have prevailed against the devil down through the ages

They overcame by

Blood of Lamb

Word of God

And living fearlessly

- Second disastrous consequences on earth

Revelation 12:13-17

Now when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male Child. But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent. So the serpent spewed water out of his mouth like a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood. But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth. And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

While the battle takes place in another realm the real casualties will pile up on earth

Satan knowing his time is short increases his unrelenting hatred on mankind

While his hatred is for all mankind, he has a special hatred for Israel

What a contrast between what is unleashed when Satan is cast to the earth and what was unleashed when Jesus came.