

THE REVELATION

JULY 14, 2024

Chapter 12:3-12a

(ii) His Ten Horns (12:3)

As just mentioned, “horns” are the symbols of countries in the Bible. The actual number of kings or rulers to lead each country makes no difference when considering the “horns.” Each horn is a country. With the takeover of the Western and Eastern Roman Empires, ten countries were formed. The Germanic Goths defeated the Western Empire in 476 AD and subsequently divided the land mass into the countries of *Britain, France (Gaul), Spain, Italy and North Africa*. The Ottoman Muslim Turks defeated the Eastern Empire in 1453 AD and subsequently divided the land mass into the countries of *Greece, Macedonia, Turkey, Syria and Egypt*. These are the ten countries that surround the *Great Sea*, known as the Mediterranean Sea, save for the horn of *Britain*.

(iii) His Seven Diadems (12:3)

The mention of the “seven diadems” is a confirmation that Satan was the ruling agent over the seven empires we have already mentioned in this passage. The word “Diadem” is another word for *crowns*. Each empire had a ruler, and each ruler wore a *diadem*. This great red dragon was seen wearing a *diadem* on each of his heads because he was, in essence, the ruler and power of the seven major empires of the world that inflicted great affliction on the Nation of Israel. We must remind ourselves that none of this was a surprise to the LORD. However, in this case, because it follows the ten horns, the seven diadems represent the seven rulers, or presidents of the ten countries, who survived the merger into the new Revived Roman Empire. Three will not survive.

(b) His Legion (12:4a)

Rev 12:4a And his tail swept away a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth.

Satan did not act alone in his dealings with the world and the Nation of Israel. Satan is only one creature and can be in only one place at one time. He cannot be in heaven and on earth simultaneously. Neither can he leave heaven but still know what is taking place in heaven. He is not all-knowing, all-powerful, or all-present. Therefore, he needed help in his devilish deeds. He recruited one-third of the angels in heaven to leave their positions of authority in the LORD’s work to take positions in Satan’s evil spiritual army. John saw it as a sweeping of Satan’s tail which is a way of symbolically saying that he successfully convinced them to rebel against the LORD and join his forces.

(c) His Longing (12:4b)

Rev 12:4b And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she gave birth he might devour her child.

Once Satan sinned against the LORD before entering the garden to tempt Adam and Eve, he knew the plan of the LORD and that He would one day come to the earth to be the Savior through the Nation of Israel. When Jacob had his twelve sons, Satan finagled a way to get them into Egypt, an empire he controlled. This, too, was no surprise to the LORD; He had already told Abraham that this would happen. Evidently, Satan was hoping to thwart the rise of the Nation of Israel by keeping them in bondage and slavery in Egypt, but that, too, was not unknown by the LORD; He had a plan to thwart Satan. Through each of the successive empires, the Nation of Israel survived. Finally, under the rule of the sixth empire, it was time for the birth of Jesus. Satan could not stop it. He was waiting with a plan! His faithful lunatic king, Herod the Great, would do the job. He would have all the babies under the age of two killed. The plan failed.

(4) The Child (12:5)

Rev 12:5 And she gave birth to a son, a male child, who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne.

Thirty-three years transpired in this one verse covering the birth of Jesus, the details of His life, the impact of His ministry, the establishment of His ultimate rule, the day of His death, His resurrection and His ascension to return to His seat on His throne with God the Father. Satan was definitely outwitted by the Creator.

(5) The Wilderness (12:6)

Rev 12:6 Then the woman fled into the wilderness where she had a place prepared by God, so that there she would be nourished for one thousand two hundred and sixty days.

After the LORD's resurrection, the Nation of Israel became the enemy of His followers. That, too, was not a surprise to the LORD. Forty years after His ascension, Satan's empire destroyed the Temple in Jerusalem and that was fine with the LORD. His people had rejected Him, He no longer inhabited the Temple. It was not needed any more. It was time for His nation, the Nation of Israel, to go into the wilderness. That was His plan and Satan unwillingly participated in it. It would have been better for Satan if the Temple still stood. It would have given him more authority as he hid in the recesses of its halls and walkways and ruled in the rituals put in place by the LORD. With the Temple gone, the leaders of the Nation of Israel recreated their faith into a Judaism barely recognizable in relations to the instructions of the LORD given at the foot of Mount Sinai when she was just a toddler.

But in the REVELATION, it was time for the LORD to bring the Nation of Israel back into a relationship with Him. He was going to provide for her for 1260 days. She did not understand yet; she was still rebellious, she, too, hated those dreaded two witnesses. She did not understand that they were there for her. They had stopped the rain, destroyed the crops, rid her of the ability to play the harlot with other nations and put her in position so that she had no other place to turn for help but the LORD. And if she thought her affliction had been bad in the past, she had no idea about what was coming to earth next.

Where are we in the story at this point? The history of the Nation of Israel has been told right up to the point of the appearance of the two witnesses. We already know their story; we are now going to learn about the Satanic attempt on earth. The 1260 days of Israel's tribulation that would lead to

their belief in the Messiah would soon start in the story! But first, all the characters that would cause their tribulation must be put in their respective places on earth.

(6) The War (12:7-8)

Rev 12:7 And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. The dragon and his angels waged war, ⁸ and they were not strong enough, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven.

Following the story line, we are now looking past our future for a war to break out, not on earth, but in heaven. It will be a war that will result in the eternal eviction of heavenly creatures from God's home and throwing them to earth. It will be an angelic war – "Michael and his angels" against "the dragon and his angels."

Before we go any further in this story, we must address the place of the dragon in the here and now – where is Satan? For that answer we must go to the Scripture. In the book of Job, we found Satan, "roaming about the earth and walking around on it" (Job 1:7; 2:2). In the days of King David, we found Satan standing up "against Israel" (1Chronicles 21:1). In Zechariah, we found Satan in heaven before the LORD, "standing at his right hand to accuse him" – Joshua the priest (Zechariah 3:1-2). In that passage, Satan was attempting to prove that Joshua was not worthy to serve in the Temple as the priest. In the Gospels, Satan was in the wilderness with Jesus (Matthew 4; Mark 1).

With just that background we found Satan doing his work in both heaven and on earth. Now we must ask a question. "*Was Satan thrown out of heaven when he rebelled against the LORD in the beginning?*" This thought is based on words we find in Jude 1:6, "And angels who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode, He has kept in eternal bonds under darkness for the judgment of the great day." This verse is a direct reference to the extremely evil angels whom the LORD saw fit to put in an angelic jail until the time of the judgment. However, this verse has been applied to Satan in order to say that he was kicked out of heaven long, long ago. First, if that is the case, they were not kicked out of heaven because the text says, "angels who did not keep their own domain, but abandoned their proper abode." If anything, it was the angels who left their "domain" and "abode," on their own. But with a closer look we can find that the scholars tell us the word "domain" means *beginning or origin* and the word "abode" means *habitation*. Satan and these evil angels were not created without a purpose. They had a job to do in heaven. When they sinned, they were not kicked out of heaven. Think of it this way, Satan and the angels simply abandoned their jobs in heaven when they decided to rebel against God. Throughout all the centuries, they have been able to go and come from heaven as they wish or as directed by their leader, Satan. But, in the future, just before the beginning of the tribulation, the LORD will rid heaven of all the rebellious heavenly creatures once and for all. How will that happen?

A war will break out in heaven between Michael and a group of righteous angels against Satan and a group of rebellious angels. Satan's throng will not have enough power to win the battle. Heaven will have no place for evil any longer and the streets will be washed of evil forever. It is the place where sin began. At this point in the story, the angelic war will oust Satan once and for all.

(7) The Eviction (12:9)

Rev 12:9 And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.

The eviction of Satan from heaven and his evil band of angels will occur. In this passage, the LORD makes sure we know the identity of this character – without question. This great red dragon being thrown to earth from heaven is no other than “the devil and Satan.” We have both names for a reason. The name “devil” is found only in the New Testament, a translation of a Greek word. The name “Satan” is found in the complete Bible, both in Hebrew and Greek. With all the uses of the name “devil” in the New Testament, it is extremely important that he is directly identified as “Satan.” If this passage did not occur in the Scripture, we would have the possibility of the development of a theology that would have applied these two names to two different creatures. With this passage we know the two names apply to the same creature. This passage also applies another name to Satan, “the great dragon” or as in another location in the Revelation, “the great red dragon.” We saw him in Eden as a serpent; by the end of the Bible, he had grown into a “great dragon.”

(8) The Accuser (12:10)

Rev 12:10 Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, he who accuses them before our God day and night."

As this great red dragon is being identified, the little information that he had in the Scripture concerning the work of Satan is greatly expanded in just a few words, “for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, he who accuses them before our God day and night.” Just the words “day and night” indicate that Satan’s work of accusing believers has been constant, without a break, without a rest, without a vacation. Satan is not omnipresent. He cannot be at two places at one time. If Satan was accusing the believers “day and night,” he had little time to focus his attention on other details. Therefore, he needed a force to work with him and he found them in other angels who agreed to rebel with him and do the dirty work that he could not accomplish.

The eternal plan of the LORD was working its way to its conclusion. Therefore, the voice in heaven announced, “Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come.” Another step in that process had been completed with the ousting of the accuser. The time clock was ticking. But no one in all of humanity through the years has been immune from Satan’s influence. With his eviction, the LORD spoke to some of his victims.

(9) The Overcomer (12:11-12a)

Rev 12:11 "And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death."^{12a} "For this reason, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them."

The battle between Michael and his forces and Satan and his forces is over. Never again would Satan have a platform to accuse believers in heaven. Never again would the souls under the altar who have died and received their robes of white have to endure the sound of his voice railing against the beloved of the LORD. Those souls “overcame” because of the death of the LORD on the cross to be the Savior of those who would believe in Him. The souls under the altar “overcame” because of their belief. They “overcame” when they were killed by evil men under the control of Satan. Their reward became eternal life with Jesus and for that reason, with the eviction of Satan from heaven, the heavens rejoiced because of the eternal life given to the martyred souls of those believers.