



Revelation

chapter 12

The Coronation of the Son of Man

In chapter twelve we are introduced to the conflict that has been raging behind the scenes. This struggle has been ongoing between Satan, the accuser of the brethren, and God ever since man sinned in the Garden of Eden. We see Jesus, the Son of Man, ascending to throne of God after His work on earth is completed. It is at this time that salvation comes as Satan is defeated and thrown down out of heaven. The imagery is rooted in the prophecy found in Daniel (7:9-28).

Outline of Chapter 12

- I. **The Son of Man:** The woman, red dragon, and the male child, 12:1-6
 - A. **The woman Israel** — ready to give birth, 12:1, 2
 - B. **The dragon, Satan** – ready to devour the child, 12:3, 4
 - C. **The male child**— caught up into heaven, 12:5, 6
- II. **The War in Heaven:** 12:7-12
 - A. **Michael and his angels** – war with the dragon, 10:7-9
 - B. **Victory** – devil thrown down, 12:10-12
- III. **The Persecution:** 12:13-17
 - A. **Persecution** – of the woman, 12:13-16
 - B. **Persecution** – of the offspring of the women; 12:17

The Woman Israel: with child, 12:1-6

This chapter begins with a picture of Jesus being born, accomplishing His work, and then ascending to the throne of God to reign as King. This picture is seen through several signs.

The Woman with Child: *A great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars; and she was with child; and she cried out, being in labor and in pain to give birth. (12:1, 2)*

This woman represents the **faithful remnant of Israel** who was promised to bring about the Christ to the world. We see the first announcement of His birth in Genesis 3:15 where God promises that the male child of the woman would be at enmity with Satan. Next, God promise Abraham that *through his seed* all nations of the earth will be blessed (Genesis 12:3). The great nation of Israel existed to preserve Abraham’s lineage until Jesus was born (Galatians 3:16).

It was for this reason that God has not *totally destroyed* Israel for her iniquities, but He kept a descendant of Abraham to fulfill His promise to him.¹

Recall that Jesus was sent only to the *lost sheep of the house of Israel*², but most of the Jews were not part of His sheep.³ It was only a few which remained faithful to God.

Now that fullness of time had come, this woman cries out to give birth to the Christ child which will bring salvation to the world.

The Red Dragon: *Then another sign appeared in heaven: and behold, a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads were seven diadems. (12:3)*

Later, this dragon is identified as the devil (12:9). He is waiting to devour the child who is to be born. We are reminded of Satan's attempts to destroy Jesus – the first being having each male child under the age of two killed in Bethlehem.⁴

The Male Child: *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. (12:5)*

Jesus is born, identified by the reference to the messianic Psalm:

*He said to Me, 'You are My Son, Today I have begotten You. Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance, And the very ends of the earth as Your possession. You shall break them with a **rod of iron**, You shall shatter them like earthenware.'* (Psalm 2:7-9).

Satan fails at his attempt to destroy Jesus, and he even plays into God's plan by having Jesus nailed to a cross. Afterwards, we see Jesus ascending to the throne of God (from where He originally came). The prophet Daniel sees this very same event in a vision where the Son of Man receives a kingdom as He ascends on the clouds, coming up to the Ancient of Days.⁵

The War in Heaven: Michael defeats Satan, 12:7-11

We now learn what actually happened when Jesus died on the cross. From Peter's sermon in Acts 2 we learn that while Jesus' body was in the grave, He actually went into the Hadean realm.⁶

*And so, because he was a prophet and knew that God had sworn to him with an oath to seat one of his descendants on his throne, he [David] looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that He was **neither abandoned to Hades**, nor did His **flesh suffer decay**. (Acts 2:30-31)*

¹ When God was going to destroy Israel for her idolatry, He was going to continue the lineage through Moses, Exodus 32:9-10; again when Israel tested God ten times, Numbers 14:11-12; and when God sent Israel into captivity, He brought back a remnant so as to fulfill His promise to Abraham, Jeremiah 29:10-11.

² Matthew 15:24 *"I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."*

³ John 10:26-27 *"But you do not believe because you are not of My sheep. 27 My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me."*

⁴ See Matt. 2:13-18; Tempted Jesus to sin, Luke 4:1-13; tried to have Him killed, Luke 4:28-29; got His disciple to betray Him, John 13:2, 27

⁵ Daniel 7:13-14

⁶ Acts 2:27; *'You will not abandon my soul to Hades'*

While in Hades, Jesus binds the strongman Satan so He can loot his house.⁷ After overcoming Satan and death⁸, Jesus leads the former captives of Satan to heaven⁹, transferring them from the kingdom of darkness into His own kingdom.¹⁰ All of this is depicted in John's description of the *war in heaven*, which results in Satan being cast down. Notice what happens at this very moment:

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. (Revelation 12:10)*

Salvation has now come because the one who used to accuse the brethren day and night has been cast down. John reveals to us that they overcame because of the *blood of the Lamb* and the *word of their testimony*, and because they *did not love their life even when faced with death*.

In recap, chapter twelve depicts what happened spiritually when Jesus physically died on the cross. He rendered Satan powerless and by doing so, salvation and His kingdom have now come. Enraged, Satan now goes after the offspring of the woman.

The Persecution: Satan goes after the church, 12:7-11

The church was originally comprised of those 3000 faithful Jews who believed that Jesus was the Christ and were added to His church at the moment of their baptism.¹¹ Another 5000 believe in Acts 4. Their numbers continued to multiply even when a persecution arose against the church.¹²

Satan has tuned his anger against the Christians. He tries to destroy the church by stirring up the unbelieving Jews against them. This persecution intensified as Satan even enlists the power of Rome (as seen in Revelation 13), eventually becoming the *great tribulation* which Jesus said would precede the destruction of Jerusalem.¹³

It was this persecution that resulted in John seeing the saints before the altar crying for vengeance (6:9-11), and the sealing of the 144,000 who had come out of the great tribulation (7:4, 14). It is these events that fills Israel's cup of iniquity to its full so as to bring God's judgment upon them.

Chapter 13-20 will depict God's judgment upon Israel as seen from earth's point of view. It has been called the '**earthly apocalypse**'. It will result in victory being given to the saints as the time arrives when the saints take possession of the kingdom.¹⁴ The Christians are given assurance, that Jesus built His church and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.¹⁵

⁷ Matthew 12:28-29

⁸ Hebrews 2:14-15

⁹ Ephesians 4:8 *When He ascended on high, He led captive a host of captives*

¹⁰ Colossians 1:13 *He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son*

¹¹ Acts 2:41, 47; *And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved. (NKJV)*

¹² Acts 8:1-4

¹³ Matthew 24:21-22

¹⁴ Daniel 7:22

¹⁵ Matthew 16:18