



I AM

# THE GREAT DRAGON

Revelation 12

The Daily Word from Laura Martin

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Two signs appeared to John. First, a pregnant woman was crying out in labor before giving birth. Symbolically, this most likely represents the Messiah's birth in Israel. Second, a fiery red dragon, a symbol of Satan, was standing in front of the pregnant woman, ready to devour her child. The woman gave birth to a son, a male who would shepherd all nations. In the vision, the child was *not devoured by Satan* but rather caught up to God to His throne. In the end, *the dragon did not win the war against the woman*, and he did not gain her baby son. This vision likely illustrates Jesus remaining on the throne and Satan left to wage war against those who have kept God's commands and have the testimony about Jesus.

From the beginning, the enemy has attempted to defeat the plans of God. Even today, victory belongs to the Lord and to His people who keep His commands and hold fast to the testimony of Jesus. Satan seeks to steal, kill, and destroy. Be ready. Stand strong in the battle. You are equipped. *The enemy is defeated by the power of Jesus' name.* Jesus is the Good Shepherd to the nations. Therefore, follow His voice and hold fast to Jesus.

*"And the dragon stood in front of the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she did give birth he might devour her child. But she gave birth to a Son—a male who is going to shepherd all nations with an iron scepter—and her child was caught up to God and to His throne."*

— Revelation 12:4b–5

## FURTHER SCRIPTURE

- *Genesis 3:15* — "I will put hostility between you and the woman, and between your seed and her seed. He will strike your head, and you will strike his heel."
- *John 10:10–11* — "A thief comes only to steal and to kill and to destroy. I have come so that they may have life and have it in abundance. 'I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.'"
- *Revelation 12:17* — "So the dragon was furious with the woman and left to wage war against the rest of her offspring—those who keep God's commands and have the testimony about Jesus."



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Teaching Notes

## INTRO

We are plowing through the book of Revelation, the 10th and final section of reviveSCHOOL. It's crazy that we have been doing this for two years! The book of Revelation is the revelation of Christ. Christ is coming back, so you and I can have hope. Typically, when thinking of the book of Revelation, one is afraid of the scary end times. However, the book of Revelation should really bring you hope, a sense of peace, and victory. The word for this book is *I AM*. Christ is the beginning and the end. We have nothing to fear because Christ is in control. In this chapter, we are going to see a transition into the seven signs. Chapter 12 takes place after the seventh trumpet.

## TEACHING

Revelation 12:1-2: The heaven discussed here is the third heaven—the heaven in the presence of the Lord. In the course of the book of Revelation, there are seven signs. These signs are both divine and demonic. There are many different theories as to who the woman described here is. Some believe she represents the church; some say she represents believing Jews; others say she represents the ethnic Jews. I believe she is the representation of Israel. Throughout the Old Testament, Israel was referred to as a woman or a wife of God.

There are other women mentioned in Revelation: Jezebel (2:20), the scarlet woman (17:3-6), and the wife of the Lamb (19:7). I am bringing them up because of the images used in Revelation. As you read through this book, you have to use Scripture to discern who or what the Scriptures are talking about. Comparing the Scripture to the other women mentioned leads me to believe that the pregnant woman described is the nation of Israel. The first sign is a pregnant lady.

Revelation 12:3-4: Picture this: a pregnant woman is about to give birth and then a dragon enters the picture. This is the second sign. The dragon has seven heads and 10 horns. This dragon is the woman's mortal enemy. The whole purpose of the dragon is to devour the Child. The dragon is representative of Satan. The dragon's tail knocked one-third of the stars to earth. Many believe that the stars hurled to the ground represent the angels that joined Satan's rebellion and became demons. One-third of the angel population joined Satan. The entire goal of Satan and his angels is to destroy the pregnant woman, and if not her, her child.

There is a lot of symbolism and language that can be examined, discerned, and debated. The seven heads could be seven nations, seven mountains, or seven kings. I think it is fair to say that whatever the seven are, the Antichrist will be involved with them. The whole goal of the Antichrist is to go after the child.

Revelation 12:5-6: The woman (Israel) gave birth to a son. The son is Jesus. Jesus is delivered from the dragon and is enthroned in heaven. This is a beautiful picture of His ascension. Also, compare this picture to the birth of Jesus on earth. After Jesus was born, Mary and Joseph were forced to flee to Egypt in order to escape Herod, who was killing baby boys.

The woman fled to the wilderness. We have seen this language before in the book of Exodus. I love this picture because God is constantly taking care of His people in the wilderness. The big questions here are: Where does this event fit? Before the Great Tribulation? Or, is it part of the Great Tribulation? We will get back to these questions later.

Revelation 12:7-9: A war broke out in heaven. Michael, the top angel, and his angels battled against the dragon and his angels/demons. The dragon and his angels/demons were cast out of heaven. There is no question about who the great dragon is. John wrote that he is called the Devil and Satan. He is the deceiver of the whole world.

Satan was thrown out of heaven onto the earth. We get this picture of Satan just hanging out and messing around on earth. He is known as god of this world. Even though Satan and his demons were thrown out of heaven they still have access to it (Job 1:6). We have the imagery that Satan is going back and forth from heaven to earth. *Nelson's Commentary* states, "The devil's expulsion from heaven to the earth means that this world becomes his base of operations."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Earl Radmacher, Ronald B. Allen, and H Wayne House, eds., *Nelson's New Illustrated Bible Commentary* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1999), p. 1752.



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Revelation 12:10-12: *Nelson's Commentary* explains that Satan was conquered three times: "By the blood of the lamb; the word of their testimony; and the martyrdom of some of the brethren."<sup>2</sup> While here on earth, Satan will do anything to kill, steal, and destroy. He knows he is on borrowed time. Satan cannot win against Christ.

Revelation 12:13-14: Israel will continually and constantly be attacked by Satan as the seed of the Messiah came from Israel. The goal of the dragon at this point is to prolong his time on earth by keeping Jesus from coming back.

The image we have in this passage is that in the first three and a half years, we have the attack against the pregnant woman. During the second three and half years, the woman is protected from the dragon.

Revelation 12:15-17: Satan is trying to flood the Israelites. Even though the enemy tried to attack them, God saved the Israelites. We do know that over time, there will be a group of Israelites that die. God is going to spare at least one-third of His people.

Satan is frustrated with his war against the woman, so he will go after all the other followers of Christ— those who keep Gods words and do His commands. Satan, the dragon, is ready for battle.

## CLOSING

It is safe to say, that for three and a half years, God is protecting the Israelites and that is why everything else continues to break loose. Join us as we dive in again tomorrow in the book of Revelation 13.



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Reading Guide Questions

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1. Who is the son that the woman gives birth to (Psalm 2:9; Revelation 12:5)? What people group, then, would the woman symbolize? (Romans 1:3; 9:4–5)
  2. Who is depicted as the fiery red dragon (Revelation 12:9; 20:2)? What will be the signal that Satan’s reign is over? (Revelation 11:15)
  3. What happens at the midpoint of the tribulation (Daniel 9:27; Matthew 24:15; Revelation 11:2)? How does God protect and preserve Israel during this time? (Daniel 11:41; Revelation 12:6)
  4. What does Satan know about himself? Who will he specifically target knowing this about himself? (Revelation 12:13, 17)
  5. What should you keep doing despite persecution that may come? (John 8:31–32)
  6. When the dragon goes off to make war with the rest of the woman’s children in Revelation 12:17, do you think these are Jews or Christians? (Galatians 4:26, 31; Revelation 13:7)
  7. What did the Holy Spirit highlight to you in Revelation 12 through the reading or the teaching?



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