

*A Biblical Guide to
The Rise and Fall of the Ancient Serpent*



AND THE ENSUING WARS IN HEAVEN AND ON EARTH AS DOCUMENTED
FROM GENESIS TO REVELATION



1. TWO SIGNS DEPICT THE CONTENTION UNDERLYING THE WARS IN HEAVEN AND ON EARTH, 12:1-6.

- (Revelation 12:1-6 ESV) And a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. 2 She was pregnant and was crying out in birth pains and the agony of giving birth. 3 And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads seven diadems. 4 His tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven and cast them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she bore her child he might devour it. 5 She gave birth to a male child, one who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron, but her child was caught up to God and to his throne, 6 and the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, in which she is to be nourished for 1,260 days.

A. A GREAT sign portrays a pregnant woman ready to give birth, 12:1-2.

This great sign—the woman about to give birth—depicts the nation Israel and the birth of their promised, coming Messiah.

B. A second sign depicts a great red dragon who is ready to devour the child when the woman gives birth, 12:3-4.

The great red dragon is Satan who has rebelled against God. One third of the third of the angels in heaven followed the dragon in rebellion and were cast to the earth.

C. The woman gave birth to the male child—Jesus Christ—who will rule the nations during the coming millennial kingdom, 12:5.

- (See also Psalm 2:9, Revelation 2:26-27, 20:1-6.)

D. Later during the great tribulation the woman—Israel—will once again be cared for by God and protected from the wrath of the dragon, 12:6.

Excursus: A Biblical Chronicle of the Wars in Heaven and on Earth



I. War in heaven: When? Sometime after the seventh day of creation Lucifer led a rebellion in which one third of the angels took his side against God.

- (Revelation 12:3a-4a ESV) And another

sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great red dragon ... His tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven and cast them to the earth.

- (Isaiah 14:12-15 NLT) How you are fallen from heaven, O shining star, son of the morning! **You have been thrown down to the earth, you who destroyed the nations of the world.** 13 For you said to yourself, “**I will** ascend to heaven and set my throne above God’s stars. **I will** preside on the mountain of the gods far away in the north. 14 **I will** climb to the highest heavens and be like the Most High.” 15 Instead, you will be brought down to the place of the dead, down to its lowest depths.

- (Ezekiel 28:12-17 NLT) Son of man, sing this funeral song for the king of Tyre. Give him this message from the Sovereign LORD: “**You were the model of perfection, full of wisdom and exquisite in beauty. 13 You were in Eden, the garden of God.** Your clothing was adorned with every precious stone— red carnelian, pale-green peridot, white moonstone, blue-green beryl, onyx, green jasper, blue lapis lazuli, turquoise, and emerald— all beautifully crafted for you and set in the finest gold. They were given to you on the day you were created. 14 **I ordained and anointed you as the mighty angelic guardian.** You had access to the holy mountain of God and walked among the stones of fire. 15 You were blameless in all you did from the day you were created until the day evil was found in you. 16 Your rich commerce led you to violence, and you sinned. **So I banished you in disgrace from the mountain of God. I expelled you,** O mighty guardian, from your place among the stones of fire. 17 **Your heart was filled with pride because of all your beauty. Your wisdom was corrupted by your love of splendor.** So I threw you to the ground and exposed you to the curious gaze of kings.”

II. War on earth: When? Shortly after the seventh day of creation and after his unsuccessful rebellion in heaven the ancient serpent brought the battle to earth.

The serpent deceived Eve, and Adam joined the rebellion against God when they ate the forbidden fruit.

- (Genesis 3:6 ESV) So when the woman saw

that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.

- (1 Timothy 2:14 ESV) And Adam was not deceived, but the woman was deceived and became a transgressor.
- (2 Corinthians 11:3 ESV) But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ.

III. War in heaven: When? Sometime during the second half of the tribulation period. Michael and his holy angels attack and defeat the dragon and his angels and expunge the devil from heaven for good.

- (Revelation 12:7–8 ESV) Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon. And the dragon and his angels fought back, 8 but he was defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven.

IV. War on earth: When? Sometime during the second half of the tribulation period. Satan has now been thrown out of heaven and vents his wrath on the earth after a period of false peace.

This war culminates with the battle of Armageddon at the end of the tribulation.

- (Revelation 16:16 ESV) And they assembled them at the place that in Hebrew is called Armageddon.

V. War on earth: When? At the end of the millennial kingdom. Satan leads one final rebellion against God when he is released from his thousand year captivity.

This is the very final war and the dragon's last hurrah. He is defeated and cast into the lake of fire.

- (Revelation 20:7–10 ESV) And when the thousand years are ended, Satan will be released from his prison 8 and will come out to deceive the nations that are at the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle; their number is like the sand of the sea. 9 And they marched up over the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, but fire came down from heaven and consumed them, 10 and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

VI. War in the human heart: When? From birth until

the person conquers the accuser by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony.

- (Romans 5:1 ESV) Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

End Excursus

2. WAR AROSE IN HEAVEN—MICHAEL AND THE HOLY ANGELS DEFEATED THE DRAGON AND HIS ANGELS, 12:7-12.

- (Revelation 12:7–12 ESV) Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon. And the dragon and his angels fought back, 8 but he was defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. 9 And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. 10 And 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 brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God. 11 And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death. 12 Therefore, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them! But woe to you, O earth and sea, for the devil has come down to you in great wrath, because he knows that his time is short!”

A LOUD VOICE PROCLAIMS VINDICATION FOR “THE SALVATION AND THE POWER AND THE KINGDOM OF OUR GOD AND THE AUTHORITY OF HIS CHRIST” ...

VINDICATE ... show or prove to be right; to uphold or justify by argument or evidence; to prove that what someone said or did was right and true; to assert, maintain, or defend (a right, cause, etc.) against opposition.

A. GOD'S HOLY ANGELS VINDICATE GOD, 12:7-9.

The power of God and his authority are on open display as Michael and his angels defeat the dragon and his angels.

It is very important to note that it is Michael and his angels who fought against and defeated the dragon and his angels. Consequently the

dragon and his angels lost their place in heaven and are thrown down to the earth.

B. The full identify of the great dragon is revealed, 12:9.

The great dragon is identified as “that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world.”

C. GOD'S HOLY PEOPLE VINDICATE GOD, 12:10-11.

The vindication of God and his salvation and power and kingdom comes full circle as the accuser of our brothers is thrown down. What joy and vindication for our God to see the accused conquer the accuser by the blood of the Lamb and the word of our testimony.

D. Rejoicing for those in heaven but woe to those on earth, 12:12.

3. THE DRAGON IS THWARTED IN HIS PURSUIT OF THE WOMAN ON EARTH SO TURNS HIS FURY ON HER “OTHER” OFFSPRING, 12:13-17.

- (Revelation 12:13–17 ESV) And when the dragon saw that he had been thrown down to the earth, he pursued the woman who had given birth to the male child. 14 But the woman was given the two wings of the great eagle so that she might fly from the serpent into the wilderness, to the place where she is to be nourished for a time, and times, and half a time. 15 The serpent poured water like a river out of his mouth after the woman, to sweep her away with a flood. 16 But the earth came to the help of the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed the river that the dragon had poured from his mouth. 17 **Then the dragon became furious with the woman and went off to make war on the rest of her offspring, on those who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus.** And he stood on the sand of the sea.

A. The dragon attempts again to destroy Israel but Israel is protected and cared for by God, 12:13-16.

B. Thwarted in his attempt to destroy Israel the dragon turns his fury on the rest of her offspring, 12:17.

The rest of her offspring ...

- Keep the commandments of God.
- Hold to the testimony of Jesus.

The rest of her offspring ... Revelation 12:11 ...

- Conquered him by the blood of the Lamb.
- By the word of their testimony.
- Loved not their lives even unto death.

A brief and partial overview of the enmity between the offspring of the serpent and the offspring of the woman.

THE ENMITY PROPHESED ...

- (Genesis 3:14–15 ESV) **The LORD God said to the serpent, “Because you have done this,** cursed are you above all livestock and above all beasts of the field; on your belly you shall go, and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. 15 **I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring;** he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.”

CAIN MURDERS RIGHTEOUS ABEL ...

- (1 John 3:12 ESV) We should not be like Cain, who was of the evil one and murdered his brother. And why did he murder him? Because his own deeds were evil and his brother’s righteous.
- (Matthew 23:35 ESV) ... the blood of righteous Abel.

ATHALIAH MURDERS ALL HER GRANDSONS EXCEPT ONE ...

- Read 2 Kings 11.

HAMAN WANTS TO EXTERMINATE THE JEWS ...

- (Esther 3:6b ESV) **Haman sought to destroy all the Jews,** the people of Mordecai, throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus.

HEROD ATTEMPTS TO DESTROY THE CHRIST CHILD ...

- Read Matthew 2.

And we have various accounts in history of attempts to eliminate the Jewish people. Most notably six million Jews killed by Hitler.