

Revelation Chapter Twelve

- Chapter 12 is a shift from literal descriptions of heavenly and earthly scenes to symbolic language.
- We have seen the symbolic language of apocalyptic literature in Daniel chapters two, seven and eight as well as in Revelation chapter one.
- Chapters 12-13 give us a panoramic view of the angelic conflict underlying the Tribulation.
- Chapters 14-15 describe the heavenly scene in preparation of the pouring out of the seven bowls.
- In the chapter 12 panorama John sees a symbolic representation of Satan's opposition to Israel.
- The woman with the crown of twelve stars represents Israel [Rev 12:1-2; Gen 37:9-11].
 - The sun is Jacob, the moon is Leah and the stars in her crown represent the twelve tribes of Israel.
 - Note that this woman cannot represent the Church [Rev 12:5 cp. Rom 9:5].
 - The woman is in labor with child – the child is the Christ child, the King of the Jews [Mark 15:2].
- The great red dragon is Satan [12:9] who stands on the earth and desires to devour the child [12:3-4].
 - This passage tells us that 1/3 of the angels followed Satan in his rebellion when he fell.
 - Herod was the tool of Satan in his attempt to destroy the Christ child [Matt 2:2, 16].
- The birth [12:5a] and ascension [12:5b] of the Christ child do not highlight His 1st Advent or His death on the Cross, but instead relate to His work as the King of Israel and point to the 2nd Advent of Christ.
- The Tribulational provision for Israel is described in relation to her King who has ascended, but has not yet returned [12:6].
 - God will prepare a place for the remnant of Israel to flee [Matt 24:16].
 - God will protect the remnant during the 3 ½ years of the Great Tribulation [12:6, 14].
- Michael (Israel's archangel – Dan 10:21; 12:1) and his angels will wage war against Satan and his angels [12:7] as God once again deals directly with Israel.
- Satan and his angels will be defeated, thrown down to the earth, and will lose all remaining access to heaven (judicial access) [12:8-9].

- The heavenly response is one of rejoicing [12:10-12a].
 - The accuser has been thrown down and Christ's kingdom on earth is coming [12:10].
 - The martyrs in heaven rejoice because they took part in the victory over Satan [12:11].
- Satan goes insane with wrath on the earth, knowing that he has only a short time [12:10b].
- Satan does anything he can to thwart God's promises to His people Israel [12:13-17].
 - Satan persecutes Israel, but God provides a way of escape to His place of protection [12:13-14].
 - Satan continues to pursue the people of Israel, but God provides the necessary protection [12:15-16].
 - Satan is frustrated and directs his attention to Gentile believers in the Tribulation [12:17].
- Chapter 12 highlights four important characters of the Tribulation – Israel, Satan, Christ and Michael.