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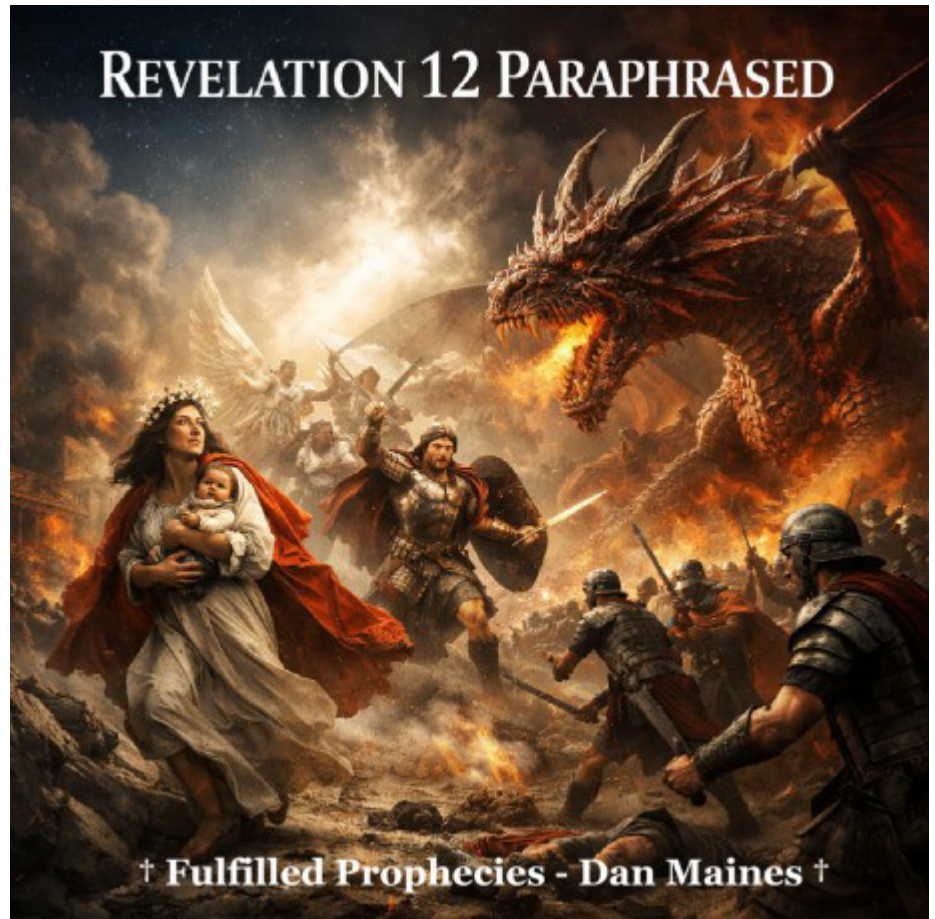
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Revelation 12 Paraphrased



By Dan Maines

Revelation 12 Paraphrased

Introduction

† Revelation 12 pulls back the curtain and shows the spiritual conflict behind the events that led to the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the Old Covenant age. (Matthew 24:34)

† The imagery of the woman, the dragon, and the child explains how the Messiah came through Israel and how Satan tried to

destroy Him and His people. (Genesis 3:15)

† This chapter is not about the end of the physical world, it is about the war surrounding the arrival and victory of Christ in that first century generation. (Hebrews 12:22-28)

Revelation 12:1

A great sign appeared in heaven, a woman clothed with the sun, the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown made of twelve stars.

† The woman represents covenant Israel, the people through whom the Messiah came. (Genesis 37:9-10)

† The twelve stars point to the twelve tribes, identifying the woman with the nation of Israel. (Genesis 49:28)

† This vision begins in heaven because prophetic language often places covenant realities in the heavenly realm. (Isaiah 1:2)

Revelation 12:2

She was pregnant and cried out in pain as the time came for her to give birth.

† Israel carried the promise of the Messiah for centuries before Christ was born. (Isaiah 9:6)

† The pain represents the long suffering and expectation leading to the arrival of the Savior. (Micah 5:2-3)

† The prophets repeatedly described Israel as a woman in labor waiting for deliverance. (Isaiah 26:17)

Revelation 12:3

Then another sign appeared in heaven, a huge red dragon with seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns on his heads.

† The dragon represents Satan working through earthly kingdoms opposed to God. (Revelation 12:9)

† The seven heads and ten horns reflect the power structure of Rome, which Satan used to persecute Christ and His followers. (Daniel 7:7)

† The crowns show political authority exercised through rulers and kings. (Revelation 17:9-10)

Revelation 12:4

His tail swept away a third of the stars from heaven and threw them to the earth. The dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth so he could devour the child as soon as it was born.

† The attempt to devour the child reflects Satan's effort to destroy the Messiah through earthly rulers. (Matthew 2:16)

† Herod's slaughter of the infants in Bethlehem was one of those attempts. (Matthew 2:16)

† The stars being cast down symbolizes leaders or authorities being drawn into rebellion against God's plan. (Daniel 8:10)

Revelation 12:5

She gave birth to a son, a male child who would rule all the nations with a rod of iron, and her child was caught up to God and to His throne.

† The male child is clearly Jesus Christ, the promised Messiah. (Psalm 2:7-9)

† His ruling with a rod of iron comes directly from the Messianic prophecy in Psalm 2. (Psalm 2:9)

† The child being caught up to God summarizes Christ's resurrection and ascension. (Acts 1:9)

Revelation 12:6

Then the woman fled into the wilderness where God had prepared a place for her so she would be cared for for 1,260 days.

† The wilderness represents a place of protection during a time of persecution. (Exodus 19:4)

† The 1,260 days corresponds to the period of intense conflict leading up to the Jewish War. (Daniel 12:7)

† Believers were protected as the gospel spread beyond Jerusalem. (Acts 8:1)

Revelation 12:7

War broke out in heaven, Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back.

† This war symbolizes the spiritual defeat of Satan through the work of Christ. (John 12:31)

† Michael represents God's authority defending His people. (Daniel 12:1)

† The conflict reflects the spiritual shift that happened when Christ established His kingdom. (Colossians 2:15)

Revelation 12:8

But the dragon was not strong enough, and there was no longer a place for them in heaven.

† Satan lost his standing as the accuser once Christ accomplished redemption. (Revelation 12:10)

† The victory of Christ removed the legal ground Satan used to accuse God's people. (Romans 8:33-34)

† The heavenly court no longer recognized his accusations. (Hebrews 9:24)

Revelation 12:9

The great dragon was thrown down, the ancient serpent 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 ancient serpent connects this vision directly to Genesis 3. (Genesis 3:1)

† Satan's defeat means his authority to hold humanity under condemnation was broken. (Hebrews 2:14)

† The gospel victory stripped him of the power he once exercised over the nations. (Colossians 2:15)

Revelation 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, because the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, the one who accused them before our God

day and night.

† Christ's victory brought the full authority of the kingdom into effect. (Matthew 28:18)

† Satan had long been portrayed as an accuser in the heavenly court. (Job 1:9-11)

† With Christ's atonement complete, those accusations no longer stood. (Romans 8:1)

Revelation 12:11

They overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives even when facing death.

† The victory of believers comes through Christ's sacrifice. (Hebrews 9:12)

† Their testimony refers to faithful witness even during persecution. (Acts 4:33)

† Early Christians were willing to die rather than deny the truth of Christ. (Acts 7:55-60)

Revelation 12:12

For this reason rejoice, you heavens and you who live in them. But trouble is coming to the earth and the sea because the devil has come down to you with great anger, knowing that his time is short.

† The phrase his time is short confirms the first century timeframe of Revelation. (Revelation 1:1)

† Satan intensified persecution once he realized his defeat was certain. (1 Peter 5:8)

† This warning matches the growing hostility against believers before AD 70. (Matthew 24:9)

Revelation 12:13

When the dragon saw that he had been thrown down to the earth, he began to persecute the woman who had given birth to the male child.

† Satan turned his attack toward the people through whom the Messiah came. (Acts 8:1)

† Persecution of the early church came primarily from unbelieving Jewish authorities. (Acts 7:54)

† The struggle intensified throughout the first century. (1 Thessalonians 2:14-16)

Revelation 12:14

But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle so she could fly into the wilderness to her place where she was cared for for a time, times, and half a time away from the presence of the serpent.

† The eagle imagery echoes God's protection of Israel during the Exodus. (Exodus 19:4)

† Time, times, and half a time equals the same period as 1,260 days. (Daniel 7:25)

† God preserved His people even during the chaos of the Jewish War. (Matthew 24:16)

Revelation 12:15

Then the serpent poured water like a river out of his mouth after the woman so he could sweep her away with the flood.

† The flood represents overwhelming persecution and opposition. (Isaiah 59:19)

† Political and religious forces attempted to destroy the church. (Acts 12:1-3)

† The imagery shows the scale of hostility faced by believers. (Matthew 24:9)

Revelation 12:16

But the earth helped the woman by opening its mouth and swallowing the river that the dragon poured out of his mouth.

† God repeatedly intervened to protect the church during persecution. (Acts 5:19)

† The spread of the gospel into the nations helped relieve pressure on believers in Jerusalem. (Acts 13:46)

† Divine protection preserved the church until the Old Covenant system ended. (Hebrews 12:27)

Revelation 12:17

So the dragon became furious with the woman and went off to make war with the rest of her children, those who keep the commandments of God and hold firmly to the testimony of Jesus.

† The rest of her children refers to Christians throughout the Roman world. (Galatians 3:29)

† The persecution spread beyond Judea as the church expanded. (Acts 14:22)

† Satan's war against believers continued throughout that generation. (Revelation 2:10)

Historical References

† Josephus described the extreme turmoil and persecution surrounding the Jewish War leading to the destruction of Jerusalem. (Josephus, Wars of the Jews 5.1)

† Eusebius recorded that Christians fled Jerusalem before the destruction of the city. (Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History 3.5)

† Tacitus confirmed the persecution of Christians during the Roman period. (Tacitus, Annals 15.44)

How It Applies To Us Today

† Christ has already defeated the accuser, so believers live under grace and not condemnation. (Romans 8:1)

† The victory described in this chapter reminds us that God's kingdom cannot be stopped. (Hebrews 12:28)

† Even when opposition rises, the church continues because Christ already won the battle. (Matthew 16:18)

Q & A Appendix

Q: Who is the woman in Revelation 12?

A: The woman represents covenant Israel, the people through whom the Messiah came. (Genesis 37:9-10)

Q: Who is the male child?

A: The male child is Jesus Christ, the promised ruler of the nations. (Psalm 2:7-9)

Q: What does the dragon represent?

A: The dragon represents Satan working through earthly kingdoms like Rome to oppose Christ and His people. (Revelation 12:9)

Q: What does the war in heaven mean?

A: It represents the spiritual defeat of Satan through the victory of Christ. (John 12:31)

Q: What does it mean that the dragon knew his time was short?

A: It means Satan's ability to accuse and oppose God's covenant plan was coming to an end in that generation as the Old Covenant system was about to pass away. (Revelation 12:12; Hebrews 8:13)

Q: Why did the woman flee into the wilderness?

A: The wilderness represents God's protection of His people during the persecution leading up to the destruction of Jerusalem. Jesus warned believers to flee when the signs appeared. (Matthew 24:15-16; Revelation 12:6)

Q: Who are the rest of the woman's children?

A: They are believers in Christ who hold to the testimony of Jesus and obey God, the expanding church throughout the nations. (Revelation 12:17; Galatians 3:29)

Q: How did believers overcome the dragon?

A: They overcame through the sacrifice of Christ and their faithful testimony, even when facing persecution and death. (Revelation 12:11; Hebrews 9:12)

† This is the fulfilled perspective we proclaim at Fulfilled Prophecies †

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Source Index

† Revelation 12; Genesis 3:15; Genesis 37:9-10; Psalm 2:7-9; Daniel 7:7; Daniel 12:7; Matthew 2:16; Matthew 24:9, 34; Matthew 28:18; Acts 1:9; Acts 8:1; Romans 8:1, 33-34; Hebrews 9:24; Hebrews 12:22-28

† Josephus, Wars of the Jews; Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History; Tacitus, Annals

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