

Message #31

Revelation 12:7-12

Even though we live in a time when there is an interest in Satan and demons, what people really need to know is that Satan and his demons have always been and will always be losers. The winner is always God.

A brief history of how God has dominated Satan shows this. There are two texts of Scripture that really describe the total control God has over Satan and those texts are Isaiah 14:12-15 and Ezekiel 28:12-18.

There are at least four times in Scriptures when Satan has been cast down or cast out or will be cast down and cast out:

1) Satan was cast out of heaven from the throne of God and from being in charge of all the angels who guarded the Throne of God (Ez. 28:14-16). We believe that when God said He would make man in God's image that prompted Satan to proudly rebel against God and want to be God (Is. 14:12-14). This is what caused God to remove him from heaven. Jesus referred to this moment, which He saw because He was there, in Luke 10:18. In fact, when Jesus was here on earth, He was completely aware of what Satan was doing even in getting permission from God the Father to do something (Luke 22:31).

2) Satan is cast down here in Revelation from any present position that God has permitted him to have. Satan appears to have some sort of permitted access to God at the present time when he may appear before God to request something - Job 1:12; I Kings 22:21; Zechariah 3:1; Luke 22:31; **Rev. 12:10**. At this point in the Great Tribulation, Satan is no longer permitted to have any more access to heaven.

3) Satan is cast into the abyss at the Second Coming of Jesus Christ and will remain in that abyss for 1,000 years (Rev. 20:1-3).

4) Satan is cast into everlasting fire after being released for a short time from the abyss (Rev. 20:10). This will be his end.

In this passage of Scripture, near the middle of the Great Tribulation, Satan is cast out of heaven and no longer is permitted to have any access to heaven. When he appears in the sky as the red dragon, he is going to lose a war. He will lose a war with Michael and his angels and when this happens, Satan will viciously attack Israel on earth.

We would like to analyze and systematize this text by asking and answering eight questions:

QUESTION #1 – When does this event take place?

This event takes place in close proximity to the two signs that appear in the sky. One of the signs pertains to Israel and the other pertains to Satan (Rev. 12:1, 3).

We suspect these signs will be very visible to people on earth as they look to the sky.

This specific event concerning Satan takes very near the 3 ½ year point of the Great Tribulation. We may mathematically conclude this based on the context which gives us the time – **Rev. 12:6, 14.**

We may also compare this in Revelation with Daniel 7:25 and Daniel 12:7 which clearly establishes a 3 ½ year event aimed at Israel.

In the first 3 ½ years of the Tribulation, God has been pouring out His wrath from Heaven and has been using demons here and there in the process. But at the 3 ½ year point, Satan and his demons will be confined to this earth only and they will target Israel.

QUESTION #2 – Why will this war in Revelation 12:7 take place in heaven?

There are at least three reasons why this war will take place in heaven:

Reason #1 - Satan is nearing the point when he is just about finished.

Reason #2 - Christ is nearing the point when He will be victorious.

Reason #3 - God is using Satan to finish His Great Tribulation judgments.

QUESTION #3 – Who are the combatants in this heavenly war of **Revelation 12:7**?

The combatants are clearly identified. **This war is a war between Michael and his angels versus Satan and his angels.**

QUESTION #4 – Who is Michael and why is he specifically singled out here?

There are six key facts that we want to observe about Michael:

Fact #1 - Michael is an arch-angel (Jude 9). The adjectival prefix “arch” (arci) means he is a very high ranked angel who holds a high office and chief position among angels (G. Abbott-Smith, *Greek Lexicon*, p. 62). He is the only angel specifically identified this way. We suspect there are other angels that have this rank, but he is the only one specifically identified. Only two times in the New Testament is this term used. Here and I Thessalonians 4:16 when an archangel will announce the Rapture of the Church. There the angel is not named.

Fact #2 - Michael’s name means “who is like God.”

Fact #3 - Michael is a high ranked angel who can reveal prophecy and can overrule and defeat world powers as it relates to Israel. Dan. 10:13, 21

Fact #4 - Michael is a specific archangel who watches over Israel. Daniel 12:1-2

Fact #5 - Michael is the specific archangel who prevented Satan from taking Moses’ body.
Jude 9

Fact #6 - Michael is apparently slightly outranked by Satan in the original angelic structure.
Jude 9

The reason he is specifically front and center here is because everything is turning to Israel and he is a very critical angel connected to Israel.

QUESTION #5 – Who is Satan? **12:7-9**

In this text of Scripture, Satan is given five descriptive names and titles. Let us remember that John is in heaven and he is getting these titles in heaven:

Title #1 - Satan is “the dragon.” **12:7**

We saw back in Revelation 12:3 that Satan was called the “great red dragon.” Satan is an untamable, powerful, vicious monster and killer. He is against God and against God’s people.

Title #2 - Satan is “the serpent.” **12:9a**

He is identified as the “serpent of old.” What this means is that he started his attack in Eden and ever since then he has been slithering around in a secretive way trying to poison and destroy everything and everyone. He secretly slithers around and tries to destroy and devour any that he can. He is not the friend of people; he is a deadly, venomous serpent.

Title #3 - Satan is “the devil.” **12:9b**

The word “devil” literally refers to the fact that he is a false, slanderous accuser. He does much of his work through false allegations. He is a liar. In Eden he lied and told Eve she would not die if she ate the fruit (Gen. 3:4).

Title #4 - Satan is “the Satan.” **12:9c**

This title literally means that Satan is an adversary of God. He is the evil opponent of God. He is an adversary of God’s word. He is an adversary of God’s work, God’s program and God’s people. He opposes everything that God is and everything that God does.

Title #5 - Satan is “the deceiver.” **12:9d**

Satan is not a truth setter or a straight shooter; he is a deceiver. His goal is to deceive the world. He has deceived many angels into following him, but now his goal is to deceive people and lead them away from God and His word and His will. He is deceptively trying to lead people away from the good and true ways of God. He is trying to deceive nations in regard to Israel, to the Bible, to methods of salvation and to concepts of God. He is a deceiver, not a truth setter.

There is nothing in any of these titles that is positive. We are no match for Satan, but Satan is no match for God. So we need to fear God and not Satan.

QUESTION #6 – Who starts the war between Michael and Satan? **12:7**

The grammar is very clear here that the instigator of this war is Michael. Michael is the one who starts the fight with Satan and his angels. We certainly learn that when Michael and his angels started this war, Satan and his forces did not surrender, but they fought back.

QUESTION #7 – Where is this war fought? **12:7**

It is clearly stated that there was war “in the heaven.” There are three heavens mentioned in the Bible:

Heaven #1 - The atmospheric heaven where the birds fly and clouds are - Jeremiah 4:25.

Heaven #2 - The stellar heaven where the sun, moon, galaxies and planets are - Is. 13:10.

Heaven #3 - The throne of God heaven where God’s throne and home are - Rev. 4:2.

This third heaven is the heaven Paul referred to when he said he was caught up to the third heaven (II Cor. 12:2). This is “the” heaven where Satan is apparently permitted from time to time to come appear before God (Job 1:6; 2:1).

It is somewhere in this third heaven where this war apparently occurs.

QUESTION #8 – What is the outcome of this war? **12:7-12**

Notice carefully that five times in this text John stresses the outcome of this war- Satan was “thrown down.”

- 1) In **verse 9** he mentions it three times.
- 2) In **verse 10** he mentions it one time.
- 3) In **verse 13** he mentions it one time.

Obviously by virtue of the repetition of this point, this is a very critical event in the Great Tribulation.

The verb “thrown down” (eblhqh) is aorist passive. The word literally means to cast something or throw something from its place (*Ibid.*, p. 74). The word is used to refer to action performed on an object that is not positive (John 15:6).

The aorist tense means this is a key point or moment of time in the Tribulation. The passive verb means that Satan and his forces are the recipients of this action. If they could prevent this, they would. But they cannot.

When this war occurs there will be four main results:

Result #1 - Satan and his forces are no longer permitted to go any place in heaven. **12:8**

There is somewhat of a mystery here but apparently they are permitted to go to certain locations in heaven, but at this point they are no longer permitted to do so. This certainly would mean they can no longer have access to God and can no longer make accusations against God's people (Rev. 12:10).

Result #2 - Satan and his forces will be confined to this earth. **12:9**

This is a major demotion for Satan and his demons and it will mean major problems for people on this earth.

His goal to destroy and deceive the world will take on new dimensions at this point in the Great Tribulation.

Result #3 - Satan's loss to Michael will cause great praise in heaven. **12:10-12a**

For believers in heaven, this will be a glorious moment. There will be a praise service that will worship and praise God for six different themes:

(Theme #1) - God will be praised for His salvation. **12:10a**

The people in heaven are already saved, however, they are not yet enjoying the bliss and joy of reigning with Jesus Christ, which is part of the salvation package and they are praising God here that this moment is soon to come.

(Theme #2) - God will be praised for His power. **12:10b**

Don't miss this. The one with the power is God, not Satan. God has all power to do what He wants to do.

(Theme #3) - God will be praised for His Kingdom. **12:10c**

God is about to establish His kingdom on earth. The prayer of "thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven" is about to be answered. Carefully observe that the kingdom has not been established to this point. Clearly this refutes any idea that God has already established His kingdom on earth.

(Theme #4) - God will be praised for His authority of His Christ. **12:10d**

The One who has all authority and power and might is God, not Satan. God is the One to be praised. God is the one to be worshipped and God is the one to be revered and feared.

At this point, God's anointed One, Jesus Christ, is about to take over the world and He is praised for that here. God the Father will turn all His authority over to God the Son.

(Theme #5) - God will be praised for no more accusations. **12:10e-12a**

Satan is the accuser of the brethren. Even the Apostle Paul, in his gospel in Romans, brought this point out (Rom. 8:33-34; 38-39). Satan loves to bring accusations before God against His people and we as His people have given him good ammunition to be able to do this.

We are able to overcome Satan not by argumentation, because every one of us has not hit the mark of perfect righteousness. We overcome him by the "blood of the Lamb." The testimony that believers give is a testimony that stresses Jesus Christ. Our power is in the blood of the Lamb.

(Theme #6) - God will be praised for being in heaven and not on earth. **12:12b**

In heaven, the people will be rejoicing because of what is about to happen, but "woe" to those on the earth and on the sea.

That "woe" not only refers to those who are literally geographically on the earth and sea, but also a woe to the sea people, the Gentiles, and the earth or land people, the Jews.

We learn from **verse 12** that Satan realizes he only has a short time left and now that he is confined to this earth he will unleash great wrath, which is exactly what God is authorizing in the Great Tribulation.

Result #4 - Satan's loss to Michael and expulsion from heaven means he will attempt to totally destroy and annihilate Israel. **12:13-17**

We will examine this Lord willing next time. This will be the worst form of Anti-Semitism that will ever hit this world.

This is the specific time predicted by Jesus Christ, when He said concerning Israel that if those days were not shortened, no flesh would be saved (Matt. 24:22).