

Marks of an Overcomer

Revelation 12:1–17 (NKJV) – Bible passage [my explanatory notes]

1. The **Symbolic Characters** (Rev. 12:1-5)

¹ Now a great sign appeared in heaven: **a woman** clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars. [The “woman” is Israel. See Joseph’s dream regarding his family (represented by the sun, moon and stars) bowing to him in Genesis 37:9-11. The “twelve stars” are the 12 tribes of Israel.]

² Then being with **child** [The “child” is Jesus.], she cried out in labor and in pain to give birth.

³ And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, **fiery red dragon** having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads. [The “dragon” is satan, who “was originally named Lucifer and was a beautiful guardian cherub ordained by God. You can read about his original state, rebellion, and fall in Isaiah 14:12-14 and Ezekiel 28:14-18. He was originally created sinless but with a free will. He chose to rebel against God and convinced one-third of the angels to join forces with him. God kicked Satan and the rebellious angels out of heaven.”¹]

⁴ His tail drew a third of the **stars** of heaven [The “stars” are 1/3rd of heaven’s angels, who followed satan when he sought to dethrone God and enthrone himself.] and threw them to the earth [See Luke 10:18]. And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born. [this speaks of the birth of Christ, where satan desired to kill Jesus through the efforts of King Herod – See Matthew 2:1-18.]

⁵ She bore a male Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron [See Psalm 2:9]. And her Child was caught up to God and His throne. [This is describing the resurrection and ascension of Christ.]

- “[T]here is a mysterious twofold understanding of these great signs—as individuals and corporate entities. The woman could possibly represent both Mary individually and Israel corporately. The male child could represent Jesus individually and the church (his body) corporately, with Satan attempting to kill Jesus at birth and to destroy the church as soon as it was born (through martyrdom and persecution). The church will reign with Christ in the millennial kingdom (Revelation 20:6). The dragon could represent Satan individually and his evil beast system corporately. Satan is not omnipresent like God. He can be in only one place at a time, but his minions of fallen angels and fallen humanity make up a vast network of evil that is in place now and will reach maximum impact during the tribulation period—particularly during the second half.”²

- **Satan's Four Falls:** **1) Cast out of heaven** (to the mid-air, his current domain - see Isaiah 14: 12-14; Luke 10:18, Ephesians 2:2 and 6:12); **2) Cast to earth** (during the Great Tribulation, described in Rev. 12:9, 12); **3) Confined to the bottomless pit** (at Christ’s return – see Rev. 20:1-3); and **4) Cast into the lake of fire** (final judgment – see Rev. 20:10).

2. The **Spiritual Conflict** (Rev. 12:6-10)

⁶ Then [This has been described as “The time of Jacob’s (or, Israel’s) trouble” (Jeremiah 30:7)] the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred

¹ Todd Hampson, *The Non-Prophet's Guide to™ the Book of Revelation: Bible Prophecy for Everyone* (Eugene, Oregon), 122.

² Hampson, 122.

and sixty days. [3 and ½ years – in the Tribulation.] [Many scholars point to a place in modern-day Jordan called Petra, where it would provide a safe place for the Jewish people, hiding from Satan and his evil minions.]

⁷ And war broke out in heaven: **Michael** ["Michael the Archangel" - See Daniel 10:13, 21; 12:1; and Jude 9] and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought,

⁸ but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer.

⁹ So the great dragon was cast out Satan and his demons were cast out of heaven as their home at the time of their original rebellion. [Dr. Danny Akin states, "The Bible seems to indicate that they still had some degree of access to heaven for a time (see Job 1:6; 2:1), but now having been beat down in this great battle, they are cast out permanently and denied any access to heaven at all."³], that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

¹⁰ Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down.

- "Revelation 12:9 contains a mini seminar in Satanology by means of four instructive titles of our archenemy: (1) **'The great dragon'** emphasizes his ferocity and terror. (2) That **'ancient serpent'** identifies him with the beguiling snake of Genesis 3 who seduced Adam and Eve into committing sin. (3) **'The Devil,'** literally *diabolos*, means 'the accuser' or 'the slanderer.' And (4) **'Satan'** is a proper name that means 'the adversary' or 'the enemy.' He is the 'one who deceives the whole world,' the one Jesus says is 'a murderer from the beginning and has not stood in the truth, because there is no truth in him.... he is a liar and the father of liars' (John 8:44)."⁴

3. The Saint's Conquest (Rev. 12:11-12)

¹¹ And they overcame him by the **blood of the Lamb** and by **the word of their testimony**, and they **did not love their lives to the death.**

¹² Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time."

What are the Marks of an Overcomer? (from Revelation 12:11)

- 1) **Our Victory** in Christ (the blood of the Lamb) See Colossians 2:15.
- 2) **Our Voice** (the word of their testimony) See Psalm 107:2.
- 3) **Our Valor** (loving not their lives unto death) See Acts 20:24; Matthew 10:39 and Philippians 1:21.

4. The Serpent's Counterattack (Rev. 12:13-17)

¹³ Now when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male Child.

- "Here she is not only that remnant but the eschatological remnant, the church, the true vine of Jew and Gentile as Paul makes clear in Romans 11. Mounce is helpful when he writes, 'It is out of faithful Israel that the Messiah will come [ultimately embodied in a particular woman named Mary]. It should cause no trouble that within the same chapter the woman comes to signify the church (v. 17). The people of God are one throughout redemptive history. The early church did not view itself as discontinuous with faithful Israel. (Revelation, 232)'"⁵

¹⁴ But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle [see Exodus 19:4], that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time [3 ½ years], from the presence of the serpent.

¹⁵ So the serpent spewed water out of his mouth like a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood. ["flood" is a reference to armies – see Daniel 11:40-41]

¹⁶ But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth. [Nature itself will help protect God's people – Numbers 16:31-34]

¹⁷ And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

³ Daniel Akin, *Exalting Jesus in Revelation, Christ-Centered Exposition Commentary* (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2016), 213.

⁴ Akin, 213-214.

⁵ Akin, 215-216.