

# The Christian Arsenal

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## REVELATION 12:1-13:18

Can you believe we've come to the half-way point in our study of the **Book of Revelation**? Are you enjoying it? Have you been studying it? Are things coming together for you?

Today, we're going to be attending a play...a drama...and it will have a cast of several characters.

In order of appearance, we'll see...

- 1) the **woman**
- 2) the **child**
- 3) the **great red dragon**
- 4) **Michael** and his **angels**
- 5) the **beast from the sea** and
- 6) the **beast from the earth**.

**Before we begin, let me just say this...**

In today's passage, John is going to take us to **several different periods of time**...one even before "time as we know it" began. Then, John is going to bring us **past where we are right now into the future!**

So, fasten your seatbelts as we start up our "time capsule" and do some traveling!!

Revelation 12:1-2...

We've said it before...but let me repeat...God's Word is **so** precious and God is **so** good to explain things to us in **a clear way!**

**Verse 1** tells us a great "sign" appeared and we're going to see another sign in **verse 3**. What does this tell us? This is a **symbol**. We're to find out what this symbol means and then we're to take that **symbol** or **sign** literally.

First we see the "woman"...

Now, there are some really strange opinions about who this woman is...and let me just mention a few...

- 1) Mary Baker Eddy said she's this woman.
- 2) Some say she's the Catholic church.
- 3) Some say she's Mary, the mother of Jesus...and yes, Mary did indeed give birth to Jesus, but we must look at the context of this entire chapter. When we see this woman again in this chapter, she is in the Tribulation and we know that Mary, the mother of Jesus, won't be in the Tribulation.
- 4) Some say she's the church, but the church didn't give birth to Jesus, **Jesus gave birth to the church...**

**If we look at this woman in the context of this passage...we'll have to agree that she is the nation Israel, and her child is the Lord Jesus Christ.**

**Verses 3-5...**

Now, let's see if we can see the sequence of events, and please remember that **chapter 12** jumps around...backward and forward in time!

**Verses 3 & 4** tell us of an event that happened **before time began...**

We have a granite garden plaque that says, **"Time began in a Garden"**. Well, time as **we** know it **did** begin in a garden...

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But before the Garden of Eden, before Adam and Eve, before **their** disobedience, there was **another** disobedience...**a rebellion by Satan.**

Satan was an angel named Lucifer and he was “the anointed cherub who covers.” He was perfect in beauty and wisdom, he was blameless in his ways, the Bible says, **“until unrighteousness was found in him.”**

There came a day...before our understanding of time began...when Lucifer’s heart was lifted up because of his beauty, and he said, **“I will ascend to heaven and I will raise my throne above the stars of God and I will sit on the mount of assembly and I will make myself like the Most High.”**

Satan wanted to be lifted up and was brought low. Jesus was willing to be brought low and is exalted!

**Lucifer wanted to be God! And if that wasn’t bad enough, he caused one-third of the other angels to rebel with him! When Lucifer did this, he fell and he took one-third of the angels with him. And though they were rebellious and they fell...they still had access to Heaven, and we’ll come back to that later.**

How many angels are there? How many demons are there?

I don’t know, but there are thousands upon thousands...myriads upon myriads!!

We don’t know how many angels there are, but we do know that we have twice as many angels **for** us as there are angels **against** us, don’t we? For every one angel who fell, two angels did not fall! And what should give us great comfort is that God sits on His throne.

**If God would open our eyes, I believe we would be amazed at the angelic activity that surrounds us each and every day!!**

**Verse 4... “the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she gave birth he might devour her child...”**

(the tense of this verb, **“stood”**, is continuous action and indicates that he **keeps on standing**)

**Now, who is this woman? Israel! Who is her child? Jesus!**

Satan has **always** tried to devour the woman’s child and he began before He was ever born!

**Why? In Genesis 3:15...God told the serpent that one day the seed of the woman would bruise Satan on his head...and ever since that day, Satan has sought to destroy the child.**

All through the Old Testament, Satan has sought to destroy the Jew so as to prevent the birth of Jesus...

He sought to destroy the godly lineage when Cain slew Abel.

He sought to destroy the godly lineage when Jacob had to flee from the wrath of Esau to save his own life.

He sought to destroy the godly lineage when Saul attempted to kill David.

He had Caesar call for a census, know that Mary was nine months’ pregnant, and had her ride a donkey hundreds of miles. But, we know that God used even this so that Scripture would be fulfilled. It was prophesied that Jesus would be born in Bethlehem.

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Throughout the centuries he has used nations and kingdoms and empires and Pharaohs...Remember Haman in the **Book of Esther?**

When all these things didn't work, he plotted through Herod to kill all the baby boys, and when that didn't work, he tried to get Jesus to throw Himself off the pinnacle of the Temple, but he has never succeeded, has he?

He continued because he knew that Jesus would take away the sin of those who would believe and he knew that Jesus would establish righteousness one day. What kept him from doing what he set out to do?

God had made a covenant!! He made a promise to Abraham. God promised Abraham that in his seed all the families of the earth would be blessed! Who is the **Seed of Abraham? JESUS, of course!! Galatians 3:16...**

God keeps His promises, don't ever forget that! God's promises, the Bible tells us, are **"Yea and amen..."** They are **"Yes in Christ Jesus..."**

All through the Old Testament, God had promised a Redeemer, a Messiah, a Savior would come and Satan did all he could to stop it!

So, in these verses, not only do we see the birth of Jesus...His **incarnation...**but we also see His **ascension (verse 5)** and we also see His **return...** "He will rule with a rod of iron." And Satan knows that each of these is just one more nail in his coffin.

Let me just say this before we go on...You might wonder why Jesus will rule "with a rod of iron." Well, let me ask you...if Jesus were to come back today and stand before say, our own Congress...our own government officials and say, "I've come to rule America..." just what do you believe would be the response? Beloved, America hasn't allowed Jesus to rule and reign so far! I mean, America is drifting farther and farther away from the Word of God! I don't believe for a minute that the Lord Jesus Christ would be well received today in Washington, D.C.!!

So, when Jesus comes to earth to rule and reign, He will do so with a rod of iron!!

**Verse 6...**Between **verses 5 and 6** is a great lapse of time...already it's been 2000 years. This lapse spans the time between the birth of the Lord Jesus and the last half of the Great Tribulation.

## **Verses 7-9...**

When you think of war, heaven is the last place you think of, isn't it?

(No wonder God will ultimately make a new heaven and a new earth...heaven **has already been** tainted by sin and rebellion, and heaven **will be** tainted by war!)

Contrary to what most folks think, Satan does not live in hell. Satan's domain is this earth and the air surrounding it **and Satan also has access to heaven!!**

Remember Job? Look at **Job 1** when you go home this afternoon. Satan came before God and talked with God about Job! Remember Peter? Jesus told Peter that "Satan has demanded permission to sift you like wheat..." How did Satan demand permission to do that? Did he send God a letter? Did he send God a telegram? Did he send God an email? NO!! Satan more than likely stood before God and wanted a shot at Peter just as he did when he asked to have a shot at Job!!

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Even now we know that Satan has access to heaven and we know that at some point, whether it's at the beginning of the Tribulation or in the middle, Satan is thrown out of heaven, he **and** his angels...by Michael and **his** angels!

How do we know that Satan still has access to heaven? (Well, I'm so glad you asked!!) ☺ ☺

**Verses 10-12...**

**Satan accuses us before God day and night!!**

He goes before God and he says something like this...

"Look at that God. Hey, he's teaching a Sunday school class. He doesn't have any business doing that!

God, don't You know how he fails you! Why, just this morning he was irritable with his wife! He is a sinner, God! He's done some horrible things!"

And I believe God says something like this...

"Oh yes, Satan, I see him. He surely does fail me...but all his sins and all his failures are under the blood of My dear Son!

Oh yes, Satan, he surely is a sinner...but he's a saved sinner. and even though he's done some horrible things...he still belongs to me!!"

And the sad part of this is that Satan doesn't have to go into God's presence with a pack of lies about me. Don't look so spiritual, ... he doesn't have to lie about you either...but, when God the Father looks at us, He sees the blood of His dear Son covering all our sins...HALLELUJAH!!

Let me just say this about this accuser of the brethren!! He not only accuses us before **God**, but he accuses us before **us**!!

Many times we don't know the difference between

**condemnation from the enemy and conviction from the Holy Spirit!**

Let me give you a couple of ways that we can know the difference...

1) The enemy condemns or accuses **in general...**

He just comes against us and he tells us  
how **inadequate** we are...  
how **rotten** we are...  
how **weak** we are...  
how **sinful** we are...  
how **prideful** we are...

**and he doesn't give any specifics.**

The Holy Spirit, on the other hand, convicts you of a specific sin. He says, "**My child, you lusted today,**" or "**You lied today,**" or "**You spoke against a brother or sister today,**" or "**You had a critical spirit today.**" He is very, very specific!!

Another thing...

2) The enemy's condemnation sends us into despondency and depression and more often than not, drives us away from our Heavenly Father. Has this ever happened to you? Am I the only one? Satan will come at me with "You're so weak and inadequate and wishy washy...nothing you do will ever be worth anything to the kingdom of God!" or he says, "If

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God really loved you, you wouldn't have this heartache, or this burden, or this illness or this injury..."

**And if I don't recognize this for what it is, I'll believe it and I will get so down that I won't want to pray, or read or study or anything!**

But, conviction from the Holy Spirit drives us to God! He is the only One who can forgive us and put us back on the right road. He will not despise a broken and a contrite heart! And if we come to him with a heart that's broken over our sin...He is faithful and just to forgive us and cleanse us and restore us!!

One other thing...

If all else fails, the enemy will accuse and condemn us of sins committed many years ago...sins that have already been repented of...

**That's not God, folks!!**

The Holy Spirit will never convict us of sin that has been confessed and repented of. Those sins are already under the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ!

So, Beloved, when you wake up in the middle of the night and you're bothered and you don't know if it's condemnation from Satan or conviction from the Holy Spirit...check it out...and if it's conviction, **make it right...repent...make amends...make restitution...whatever He leads you to do!**

But, if it's from the enemy...**roll over and go back to sleep.** God wants His children to be overcomers and He tells us how in **verse 11.**

Verse 11 tells us a three-fold way to be an overcomer...

1) the blood of the Lamb...**cleansing**

2) the word of our testimony...**confession**

Confess and affirm to yourself that you're God's child and tell Satan, "I've been washed in the blood of Jesus. You can't touch me, and you can't play with my mind!!"

3) **"they did not love their life even unto death"...commitment**

How I pray that if we're ever faced with choosing this life over dying for the cause of Christ, we will choose to die, knowing that to die is gain!!

**We can never rebuke Satan, but Jesus does and we fight our battles through the power of Jesus Christ.**

**Verses 13-15...**

Well, when the devil gets cast out of heaven, he's madder than ever! He really begins to persecute the woman! Remember...who is this woman? Israel!

By the way, this is the second in a series of falls that mark Satan's career...

- 1) he fell from his exalted position before time began
- 2) he is cast out of heaven
- 3) he will be cast into the bottomless pit
- 4) he will be cast into the lake of fire

and we'll see these last two "falls" in the next several weeks.

**Verse 14...**

We've seen eagle wings before in **Exodus 19:4...**"You yourselves have seen what I did in Egypt and how I carried you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself."

And here we see that God is doing to Satan as He did to Egypt and carrying Israel to safety.

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## **Verse 15...**

God has used water before to save Israel. He opened the Red Sea for them to cross. He closed it to kill their enemies. God held back the Jordan for Israel to cross into the Promised Land.

Remember when we said last week that the Antichrist will allow the Jews freedom to worship in their Temple? Somehow, in a way that we don't know right now, the Dome of the Rock that stands on Mt. Moriah will come down and the Temple will be rebuilt. The Antichrist will provide for them and protect them for the first half of the Tribulation Period, but in the middle of the Tribulation, he will reveal himself for what he really is...and he will turn on Israel and Israel will be forced to flee for her life!

All the other persecution that has come upon the Jews down through history will look like a "dress rehearsal" compared to this persecution!

Let's see what the Lord Jesus said about it in **Matthew 24:15-22...**

## **Verses 16-17...**

We could spend a whole lesson on what these verses **might** mean!!

Let's just say that somehow Israel will flee and she will hide and she will be protected! It's been suggested that she will flee to the ancient city of Petra, which is in Jordan. I don't know...but we do know this...

**God has not lost control and in all of this, He is simply allowing His perfect plan and purpose to be accomplished...**

By the way, Satan's real battle is not primarily with Israel or even with you or me...Satan's primary battle is with God and he hurts those whom God loves in order to "get to" God!

In the time we have left, let's look at the two "beasts" of **chapter 13** very quickly. These two beasts are the last characters in our play today. These are two beasts, they are two different men, but they are men who are very alike.

As we look at the first one, let me just say that we're not going to dwell on these two men at length, **1) because of time and 2) because we're going to see them again in the weeks ahead...**

## **Revelation 13:1-10...**

This is not an animal...this is a man who is beastly in his **character**, in his **conduct** and in his **conscience**.

This is not a sea of water...this is a sea of people...or of nations. This man is thought to be a Gentile...**Rev. 17:15**

The seven heads are symbolic of perfection...seven heads has the idea of perfect in wisdom. The ten horns and ten crowns are symbolic, as well. They are symbolic of ten kingdoms or ten groups of people...possibly the Confederated States of Europe.

Beloved, we don't like to think this way...especially having just celebrated the Fourth of July...but America isn't the power she once was. I believe with all my heart that America is still the greatest country in the world. But, let's be honest...America is on a downward spiral morally and spiritually and just about every other way.

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Having said that, I believe the Bible teaches us that Europe will get stronger and stronger. Most theologians believe that one day a man will arise and take over the world and he will arise from the European culture and the European continent, but he will be controlled by Satan himself. This man will be winsome and charismatic. He will have the ability to bring people together. Folks will love him and follow him.

This man will seem to be assassinated... **“as if...” Verse 3.** When this happens, all the world will mourn. All over the world, people are going to go into shock. “Oh, they’ve killed such a wonderful man. This man always talked about peace. This man always talked about unity. This man always talked about getting along. Our economy was going so well...and now, they’ve killed our hero!!”

They’re going to prepare for his funeral. ABC, CBS, NBC, BBC CNN and all the other media of the world will be setting up for worldwide coverage of this man’s funeral. Leaders from all over the world will have gathered to pay their respects...

and while all the cameras of the world are focused there,  
and all the TV sets all over the world are tuned in...

While everybody is watching this man lying in his casket, having been “fatally wounded” in his head, this man is going to sit up, and he’s going to begin to speak and he’s going to say, “Oh, friends I am the one that was dead and am alive again.”

(Tom Sawyer faked his death to get sympathy, but ended up being punished. This man will suffer eternal punishment.)

**See, Satan is in the counterfeiting business. He’s going to have 1) a counterfeit death, 2) a counterfeit resurrection and we’ll see in a moment that he will have 3) a counterfeit trinity.**

What else does he do when he gets up? He begins to speak arrogance and blasphemies...against God! Against God’s name! Against God’s tabernacle! Against those who dwell in heaven!

Does it strike you as sad that folks who have rejected the Lord Jesus Christ and refused to worship Him and be committed to Him and give Him all their allegiance...and yet, when this man comes along, they will worship and adore him? I mean, these same folks who have sat around in their little seminars and they have explained away and “intellectualized” the deity and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, these same folks who have insulted the integrity of the Holy Spirit, these same folks will worship the Antichrist and they will worship him with all their hearts!!

**2 Thessalonians 2:9-12...**

Well, let’s quickly see the fifth character in our play today...

**Verses 11-18...**

This beast comes up out of the earth. Most scholars believe this man to be Jewish.

The first beast is the antichrist. The second beast is the false prophet.

**Verse 12... “he makes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast...”**

How? Through the world church left on earth after the true church has been taken away...

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Now, listen to me...we're almost through...

We worship a triune God: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit! Jesus told us that no one comes to the Father except through the Son. Jesus also told us that the Holy Spirit is the One who convicts us so that we can come to the Father through the Son.

Do you see what Satan is doing? He has always wanted to be God. That's why he fell in the first place. Down through the ages, he has accomplished his work with his fallen angels...his demons that he dragged down with him...but during the Tribulation, he will go a step further...

He will imitate the triune God...

Satan, himself, will be the imitation of God the Father.  
The antichrist will be the imitation of God the Son.  
The false prophet will be the imitation of God the Holy Spirit.  
They will be THE UNHOLY TRINITY!!

**Verse 14...** "image" TV? Robot? Computer?

He will also make it impossible for the folks on earth to do business without the "mark of the beast"...**666 What does this mean? Well, most theologians say that 6 is the number of man...I don't know for**

**Verse 15...**At DisneyWorld, you can see Abraham Lincoln, sitting in a chair and he rises and speaks about his life and if you didn't know better, you would think you were really seeing Abraham Lincoln in the flesh!!

**Please, please remember that we won't be here. We'll be in heaven!!**

**Please, please remember that God is still in control...the phrase "it was given" is used several times in these last verses.**

**Please, please remember that God is simply answering our prayer of the ages...His will is being done on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Well, let's wrap this up...**

My prayer is that each of you knows in your heart that indeed you will be in heaven when all this is going on. Do you know beyond a doubt that you're saved? Was there ever a time in your own life when you knew you were a sinner and you knew you needed a Savior and you called on the Lord Jesus Christ to save you from your sins?

Let me say one more thing...

Do you **really believe** what we're studying?

Do you want to know how you can **prove** you believe it? The proof of your belief in this book is really **not if you understand all the seals and trumpets and bowls and the way they fall in order...**even though I believe it pleases God if we do...after all, He has promised us a blessing if we read and hear and heed the words of this book...

**But the real proof is that you leave here with a burning urgency to share your faith with someone else.**

**Ask the Lord to put someone in your path this week with**

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whom you can share that there's a heaven to gain and  
a hell to escape and there's an abundant life to live in  
the meantime!