

Keep Christ's Perspective

LHC: Message Thirty-Two (980726AM)

Week 32: Keep Christ's Perspective

(Revelation 12)

As the end of days approaches, you can find hope as you keep Christ's perspective!

SUNDAY: Space Invaders

*Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary **the devil walks about like a roaring lion**, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith.*
—1 Peter 5:8–9, emphasis added

Above the softness of our blue-green planet there are hostile forces poised! They range across space lurking and flying about at their master's bidding. They are former angels—Satan the dragon's army. They are deadly, vile, malignant, and very intelligent (in Greek, "demon" means "intelligence").

These aliens to our planet are highly skilled, incredibly powerful, and usually invisible warriors. Demons can hear us talk, pass through walls, fly through space, inhabit human and animal bodies, alter human behavior, and afflict humans with disease, anguish, and turmoil. These extra-terrestrial beings can take on various forms that look human, look powerful, and look fearsome. They are watching over the realm of the serpent and his seed. You see, we saints of God are at war.

There is an intense conflict going on that most of us have not fully comprehended. Swirling around us, the unseen beings of the spirit world are locked in mortal combat. Behind the scenes in every boardroom, political planning session, military strategy session, classroom, worship service, and everywhere else—these unseen spirits watch, listen, and whisper their lies. It is the battle for the planet Earth that rages! The god of this world has dispatched his demon warriors with one target: blind the minds of earth's inhabitants until they cannot see and thus will not follow *God!*

Revelation 12 is one of the more difficult chapters of the Bible because it is so full of pictures and symbols. In no other place in the Word of God is the conflict of the ages more clearly laid out than in Revelation 11:19–12:17 where He names the key players in the battle for planet Earth. And Revelation 12 is His battle plan!

Revelation 11:19–12:7 is divided into three powerful insights for our lives today:

1. **We have victory in Jesus because God is faithful** (11:19–12:6). That is why the passage starts with the temple and the ark of the covenant scene. Faithfulness is one of the attributes of God.
2. **We have victory in Jesus because Satan is vanquished** (12:7–9). God limits everything about Satan. Many of us tremble before Satan. But when Martin

Luther wrote his great hymn, “A Mighty Fortress is Our God,” he had the right perspective: “We tremble not for him for lo his doom is sure. One little word shall fell him.”

3. **We have victory in Jesus because saints suffer** (12:10–17). Victory comes through our suffering. Peter tells us in his first epistle that suffering refines us, so we are called to go through various trials. David tells us in the Old Testament that suffering is that which causes us to experience afresh the life-giving and renewing power of God through His Word.

Are you getting the picture that you have victory in Jesus—no matter what is going on in your life? I encourage you to grab hold of that truth and press on with enduring hope for the help that is yours through faith!

My Prayer for You This Week: *Oh Lord, thank You that we can come before Your Word knowing that we have the precious privilege of having the greatest Bible teacher of all time living within us—the Author. By Your grace and through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, we have the anointing of Your Holy Spirit. He who dwells within us teaches us Your Word. As we meet with You, we pray that Your precious Holy Spirit will illumine our hearts to Your Word. As we study and ponder and consider it, gently illumine and quiet our hearts to the truth of the response that You wish from us. In this conflict of the ages, in the swirling celestial battlefield that is amassed around Your children, we are the focal point of the dragon who seeks to disarm us from being able to walk in the power of Your Spirit through Your Word. I pray that we would say yes to You, oh God. May we resist the devil so he will flee from us, and may we see many turn from darkness to light around us. May our words of witness be effectual as Your Spirit wings into the heart of each one we speak to. I pray that we will learn about the victory of Jesus and be confident that we are more than conquerors through Christ. In His name we pray. Amen.*

MONDAY: Victory in Jesus

*Then the temple of God was opened in heaven, and **the ark of His covenant was seen in His temple**. And there were lightnings, noises, thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail.*

—Revelation 11:19, emphasis added

We have victory in Jesus because God is faithful. Think about this for a moment: *What makes the earth so important that God and Satan are both so interested in this planet?* The answer is simple: God has staked His very name on a person—Jesus Christ; on an event—the cross of Calvary; and on a people—the Jews. God has said that His name is incarnated in Jesus Christ; His power is revealed through the cross; and His plan is centered on the Jews. Those converge on this planet because the center of redemptive history surrounds the earth.

Two lines run through the history of mankind in every event, and they conclude in the culmination of history. To understand the conflict of the ages we need to look at the beginning of Genesis where we are introduced to the two combatants: the line of Christ and the line of Antichrist—the line of the woman’s Seed and that of the serpent.

In Genesis 3:15 God declared to Satan: *“I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your [the serpent’s] seed and her Seed [Jesus Christ]; he [Jesus] shall bruise [crush] your head, and you [Satan] shall bruise His [Jesus’] heel”* (Genesis 3:15).

Satan bruised Christ’s heel on the cross, but Jesus crushed the serpent’s head. The writer of Hebrews says: *Through death He . . . destroy[ed] him who had the power of death, that is, the devil* (Hebrews 2:14). Satan is destroyed—Jesus crushed the serpent!

The serpent’s seed has constantly been against the woman. What is meant by that? The whole Bible can be put into perspective with these two statements: (1) The line of Christ begins with Adam, passes via Golgotha, and leads to the heavenly Jerusalem; and (2) The line of Antichrist begins with Cain, passes via Babel, and leads to the lake of fire. There are only two families—God’s and Satan’s; two destinies—heaven and hell; and two choices—repent or reject. You either belong to one family or the other. You choose your own eternal destiny.

Two programs are at work in the world: God’s program of salvation and Satan’s program of sin, which is called *“the mystery of iniquity”* in the Bible. God has a timetable for His program, and nothing Satan does can change that timetable. Just as there was a *“fullness of the time”* for the coming of Christ (Galatians 4:4), so there is a *“fullness of the time”* for the appearance of the Antichrist. Nothing will be off schedule. Once the restraining ministry of the Spirit of God has ended, the next event can take place.

These chapters are easier to understand when you look at them up close and then step back in order to see the entire picture. We will start with Revelation 11:19 because the victory of Jesus is based on God’s faithfulness.

Although there is a temple in heaven, there won’t be one in eternity because God himself will be the temple (Revelation 21). There is a pattern that is a picture of earthly worship in heavenly places. Moses modeled the tabernacle and Solomon modeled the temple after it. The ark of the covenant will be seen in heaven because God wants us to realize how important it is. What is so important about the ark? And why is the temple opened so that through John we can see that it is there? The ark is a symbol of God’s abiding presence and promises. Do you remember its contents?

The Two Stone Tablets of the Law: On two stone tablets, with His own finger, God wrote the law that He wanted man to follow—the law declaring that our God is unceasingly holy in the demands of His character. Since the law is so important to God, it should also be important to us. Not that we fulfill it to become righteous, but that the law causes us to realize that God is holy. This is why the law is a schoolmaster that leads us to Christ. Through the law, we realize that we are unable to be as holy as God is, or wants us to be. When we are defeated by sin, we fall before Him and cry out: *“We can’t be holy!”* Then God responds: *“You can have the righteousness of My Son, Jesus Christ. You can receive the imputed, infused righteousness of Christ.”*

Aaron’s Rod That Budded: This rod reminds us that only God gives eternal life through His Son, for Jesus said, *“I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live”* (John 11:25). In contrast, Satan only gives death and destruction. Jesus said, *“The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to*

destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly” (John 10:10).

The Pot of Manna: This pot was kept as a picture of Jesus Christ who came as the Bread of Life. On earth, this manna turned to worms if it was kept more than a day, except on the Sabbath weekend. The lesson for us is that we need to gather the Bread of Life daily by reading the Bible. Christ is the only One who can satisfy the hunger of our souls. Just as the manna was good if it was ingested, so Christ is transforming to our lives if we personally receive Him. No one can eat or drink *for* us. Salvation is compared to the bread and water of life because we have to personally partake to have our hunger and thirst satisfied.

When God describes the heavenly pattern, it starts at the ark of His covenant and moves outward. Similarly, the Lord starts in the hearts of those who respond to Him and then He begins the miracle of changing them from the inside out. Salvation is truly of God, and not by self-effort: *“Salvation is of the LORD”* (Jonah 2:9).

The tragic error of modern ecumenical evangelism is its reluctance to define who God really is in an effort to not offend other religions and cults. It offends God, though, and ecumenicalism is Satan’s church: *“There is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved”* (Acts 4:12).

Remembering what God revealed about himself by what He called His ark will help us to understand Revelation 12:

- **Ark of the Covenant** (Numbers 10:33): This name spoke of God’s **faithfulness**. He makes covenants and does not break them.
- **Ark of the Testimony** (Exodus 25:22): This name spoke of God’s **holiness**. Because we are lost, God sent His Son to show us *“the Way”* of safety. In the Old Testament, the pictures of the sacrifices testified of Jesus; in the New Testament *“the Way”* was shown through the receiving of the finished work of Christ.
- **Ark of God** (1 Samuel 3:3): This name spoke of God’s **uniqueness**; there is no other God, nor any other way to Him but His way.

The ark also spoke of God’s mightiness because it was the ark of God’s strength, which associated it with God’s power and miracles (Psalm 132:8). In addition, the ark spoke of God’s approachableness: it was the holy ark where God’s throne was set, placed in the center of the camp (except for the period of Israel’s sinfulness), with lights never to go out—it was God offering His salvation to all (2 Chronicles 35:3).

Every time we are transported into the throne room, there is a powerful display of God’s majesty and omnipotence, and Revelation 11:19 with its *“lightnings, noises, thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail”* is no exception. We also see similar displays of His awesomeness in Revelation 4:5, 8:5, and 16:18. These demonstrations of God’s might are to remind us of what an incredible God we serve! Are you worshipping and adoring the Lord God Almighty as He deserves?

TUESDAY: God's Amazing Plan

*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**. Then being with child, she cried out in labor and in pain to give birth.*

—Revelation 12:1–2, emphasis added

God shares His plan by opening all the end-time events to us through His servants like the Apostle John. Consider these seven openings in heaven:

1. **God opens a door to worship:** *I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice . . . was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, “Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this” (Revelation 4:1).*
2. **God opens the seals of His wrath:** *When the Lamb opened one of the seals . . . I heard one of the four living creatures saying with a voice like thunder, “Come and see” (Revelation 6:1).*
3. **God opens the pit of doom:** *And he opened the bottomless pit, and smoke arose . . . like the smoke of a great furnace. So the sun and the air were darkened because of the smoke (Revelation 9:2).*
4. **God opens His temple in heaven:** *Then the temple of God was opened in heaven, and the ark of His covenant was seen in His temple. And there were lightnings, noises, thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail (Revelation 11:19).*
5. **God opens the tabernacle of His testimony:** *After these things I looked, and behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened (Revelation 15:5).*
6. **God opens the gates of heaven:** *Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war (Revelation 19:11).*
7. **God opens the books of judgment:** *And I saw the dead . . . standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works . . . which were written in the books (Revelation 20:12).*

Revelation 12 also contains two signs—the sign of the woman and the dragon. In this highly symbolic section, God continues to show the unfolding of His plan as the world surrounds His nation, Israel.

The First Sign—“a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet.” In addition to Revelation 12:1, four other times Revelation mentions women who represent special things. In Revelation 2:20, Jezebel is a picture of Paganism in the church. In Revelation 12:6 the woman is Israel. The scarlet woman described in Revelation 17:1–6 is the apostate church. And in Revelation 19:7, the Lamb's wife is the true church. Now let's look at some ways Bible teachers have identified this woman in Revelation 12:1–2.

The woman's clothing corresponds to Joseph's dream. Genesis 37:9–11 reports that Joseph told his brothers and father about a dream in which “*the sun, the moon, and the eleven stars bowed down to [him].*” His father “*rebuked him*” and his brothers “*envied him, but his father kept the matter in mind.*” Joseph is describing Israel—the twelve tribes—the twelve sons in the family of Jacob, or Israel. The clear correspondence here to that truth made Joseph's brothers angry.

The woman cries in labor. This speaks of the nation of Israel as they groan. Ever since they were in Egypt, they have complained: *Why is everyone against us?* When God sent forth His Son to be born in Israel, it was a time of oppression at the hand of Rome. All of Creation groans awaiting redemption, and all women groan in childbirth.

The woman's exalted child can only be Jesus. He is the promised Seed of the woman (Genesis 3:15); He is of the tribe of Judah (Genesis 49:10); He is the Star of Jacob (Numbers 24:17–19); He is God with us (Isaiah 7:14); and He is the Son of Abraham and David (Matthew 1:1).

The woman is cared for by God in the Tribulation hours. Only Israel is promised such care. It can't be the virgin Mary because she is gone. It is not the church because she is never supposed to hide for three and one-half years in the wilderness. It can't be Eve in the Garden of Eden because Eve is gone too. There is only one group of people who are going to be on earth with Satan chasing them during the Tribulation—a people clothed with the sun, moon, and stars—and that is Israel. What is amazing is that they are the only group of people for whom God has prepared a place in the wilderness to hide!

The Second Sign—“a great, fiery red dragon.” Revelation 12:3 reveals that *another sign appeared in heaven: . . . a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads.* This is an easy sign because Satan has been well identified throughout the Scriptures as the serpent, that old dragon, the devil. Satan is the author of the Fall (Genesis 3:14a), the prince of this world (John 12:31; see also 14:30 and 16:11), a murderer and a liar (John 8:44), and an adversary (1 Peter 5:8).

Now that we have identified the “*fiery red dragon*” as Satan, we must address the “*seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads.*” The seven heads are later stated to be seven past kingdoms (Revelation 17:10) and the ten horns to be ten kings of the end times (17:12). This beast is quite similar to the one Daniel saw with one head and ten horns (Daniel 7:7, 20, 24).

As we close today's devotional, I exhort you to remain alert to Satan's mission: he aims “*to steal, and to kill, and to destroy*” you, so stay vigilant! Remember: that old serpent is a defeated foe, and if you resist him through the power of God's Word and His might, Satan will flee from you!

WEDNESDAY: Satan's Origin and Activity

His tail drew a third of the stars [angels] of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born.

—Revelation 12:4, emphasis added

Where did the devil come from? He was formerly the highest-ranking angel in heaven—Lucifer. Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28 tell us that Satan was perfect in his original creation, and that he was the “*covering cherub*” over the throne of God, reflecting His glory. He walked in the garden of God and then fell into sin. Isaiah describes his fall from heaven through his five “I wills” that culminated in the heart of his iniquity: “*I will be like the Most High*” (Isaiah 14:12–14). Jesus himself acknowledged this fall when He said: “*I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven*” (Luke 10:18). Satan was thrown out of heaven because of pride. Because pride competes with God for control and glory, it is therefore the root of all sin.

When Satan fell from heaven, it appears that he took one-third of the angels to earth with him (Revelation 12:4). What is Satan doing now? His present activity is detailed in 2 Corinthians 4:3: *But even if our gospel is veiled [by Satan], it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded* (2 Corinthians 4:3, emphasis added). When you share the gospel, and a person looks right at you and says, “I don’t get it, and I don’t want it,” you are seeing the blinding power of Satan in this world.

Many books are being written about “out of body” experiences of people who have died. They commonly report going to a great lighted place where a white-haired man talks to them. This is exactly what Satan is and does today. He does not wear red tights and have a pitchfork tail—he is an angel of light and a deceiver: ***Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light.*** *Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness* (2 Corinthians 11:14–15, emphasis added).

What can Satan do? Satan is powerful, but he can do only what God allows (Job 1:12, 2:4–7). However, that is substantial. He tempted Eve and thereby brought sin into the world (Genesis 3); he tempted Christ (Matthew 4); he perverted God’s Word (Matthew 4); he hindered God’s servant (1 Thessalonians 2); he fought with Michael (Jude 9); he hinders the gospel (2 Corinthians 4); he snares the wicked (1 Timothy 3); he accuses the brethren (Revelation 12:10); he desires the nations (Revelation 16); and he has the world under his controlling influence (1 John 5).

Now look at Revelation 12:5: *She bore a male Child [Christ] who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. And her Child was caught up to God and to His throne* (v. 5). In this verse, there are three elements unique to Jesus in the entire universe: (1) His incarnation (“*bore a male Child*”); (2) His ascension (“*caught up to God*”); and (3) His Second Coming (“*His throne*”).

This “*male Child*” is to rule all nations with a rod of iron: “*Ask of Me, and I will give You the nations for Your inheritance, and the ends of the earth for Your possession. You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them to pieces like a potter’s vessel*” (Psalm 2:8).

Biblical scholars differ as to who this “*male Child*” is, and here are a few of their conclusions: Scott, Newell, Gaebelein, and Alford believe that the “*male Child*” refers to Christ; Ironside thinks he is Christ and the true church—His body; and Seiss considers

him to be the invisible church. Personally, after much study, I am convinced that verse 5 is talking about the incarnated, ascended, and glorified Jesus Christ.

The Greek word for Jesus being “*caught up*” is *harpadzo*, and is the same word used for both the Rapture of the church (1 Thessalonians 4:17) and Paul being “*caught up to the third heaven*” (2 Corinthians 12:2).

In Revelation 12:6, we now see a reference to the second half of the Tribulation: *Then the woman fled into the wilderness [to] a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days.* Seven years divided in half is three and one-half years, forty-two months, or 1,260 days—all of which are metaphors for the second half of the Tribulation. That is the time the Antichrist goes into the temple of God in Jerusalem, sets up an image for himself, and starts persecuting the Jews. However, God will protect them again.

Aren't you grateful that as all this is unfolding, you will be safe in your eternal refuge—Jesus Christ? As a child of God, never forget that you are a member of the winning team!

THURSDAY: Satan's Defeat

*And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; [but] the dragon and his angels . . . did not prevail, . . . So **the great dragon was cast out . . . to the earth, and his angels . . . with him.***

—Revelation 12:7–9, emphasis added

In Revelation 11:19–12:6, we have seen our victory in Jesus because God is faithful. Next we need to consider our victory in Jesus because Satan is vanquished. It is critical that we understand what is going on in the heavenly places around us.

In the whole universe, there is only God and His Creation. The Bible clearly tells us that the entire universe is involved with what is happening on earth because, after God is finished with the Tribulation and the Millennium, He is going to destroy the whole universe and make it brand new. Everything that is happening is happening right here on earth. There are no civilizations on other planets in need of Jesus as Lord and Savior. There are only the humans on earth and the humans under the earth—in Hades; and there are only the angels sealed by God and the fallen angels who joined Satan's army.

If that is all there is—God, humans, and angels—what about UFOs (Unidentified Flying Objects) and science fiction? Why is the world being conditioned for powerful beings that come to earth from somewhere else? The answer is simple: earth dwellers are being prepared for “*the beast*”—the ultimate extra-terrestrial being who will be released from the pit. It is possible that he could arrive in a space ship, because the world is getting ready for that. But regardless of *how* he comes, he will do so with great powers to control the minds of men.

Can you imagine the effect he will have on this planet? We have terrorists, rogue nations with ballistic missiles and atomic bombs, and biological agents for use in warfare. The world is highly unstable. With all that is going on, it is easy to imagine that someone transported to earth who can perform miracles and control minds will be able

to control the world. This is the Antichrist—the one in the place of Christ. So the earth dwellers will conclude: *Who needs Jesus—the lowly One from Bethlehem?*

The advent of “*the beast*” will be an actual historical event, and Revelation shows us the whole panorama in advance. Up until chapter 12 of Revelation, although God had cast Satan out of his place in heaven, He did not restrict his coming into heaven to accuse believers. Presently, when an individual Christian has sinned and Satan becomes aware of it, it is an opportunity to go before God and accuse that person. Always remember that even though we bear God’s image and have His name, we can still “act like the devil” at times. When that happens, Jesus steps forward to remind Satan that He has paid for our sins and we belong to Him now! Charles Wesley’s hymn, “Arise My Soul Arise,” says: *Five bleeding wounds He bears, Received on Calvary; They pour effectual prayers, They strongly plead for me; “Forgive him, O forgive,” they cry, “Nor let that ransomed sinner die!”*

Satan is being allowed to interrupt the worship of heaven for a limited time only before God will cast him down forever, bar his access, and restrict him to troubling the earth only.

You might still be wondering: *What is this celestial warfare all about?* Michael the archangel, a warrior, stands in as commander-in-chief for the King of Kings. He first appeared at the burial of Moses. Because of disobedience (Numbers 20:7–11), Moses forfeited his entrance to the Promised Land, but God let him see it from afar before he died (Deuteronomy 34:5–6). Satan wanted to take Moses’ body to use as a snare for God’s people—like when the brazen serpent used by Moses was transformed into an idol (2 Kings 18:4). The lifeless body of Moses would have been used to start an idolatrous false worship of a messenger in place of the Master. (Miracles associated with dead bones are some of Satan’s biggest lies that enslave and destroy multitudes even today.)

Michael also shows up in Daniel 10 in his work of fighting the principalities (leaders of fallen angels): *“But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me twenty-one days; and behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left alone there with the kings of Persia”* (Daniel 10:13).

In Ephesians 6:12, Paul warns us: *We do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, . . . powers, . . . rulers of the darkness of this age, . . . spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.* Paul uses the Greek word *arche*, normally translated “*principalities*,” seven other times (Romans 8:38; 1 Corinthians 15:24; Ephesians 1:21, 3:10; Colossians 1:16, 2:15; Titus 3:1). Each time the context is similar to that of Ephesians 6:12, so we can assume that these listings in verse 12 are classes of fallen angels who oversee the hindering of God’s work in various nations.

Michael will also figure in the final conflict: *“At that time Michael shall stand up, the great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, . . . and at that time your people shall be delivered, every One who is found written in the book”* (Daniel 12:1). These words are happening as we open to Revelation 12.

In Revelation 12:7–9, Michael leads God’s angels to victory. This becomes significant when we note that Michael is identified with the nation Israel (Daniel 10:10–21; 12:1; see also Jude 9). Another key is that the name Michael may mean “Who is like

God?” This could point to Satan when he rebelled against the Lord and said, “I will be like the Most High” (Isaiah 14:14). Michael’s very presence fighting Satan is part of the ancient conflict between God and Satan. Satan wanted to be like God, but Michael’s name implies that “no one can be like God”—because there is only *one* God. This battle may occur because the devil’s unbridled hatred of Israel spurs him to make one final assault against the throne of God. However, as recorded, Michael and the angels of God will defeat him. Amazingly, Revelation 12:9 is the middle verse of the Book of Revelation—and the turning point in eternity!

If you have not yet bowed your knee to Jesus, and embraced Him as your Savior, today can be your “turning point” for eternity. Don’t delay! Time is short!

FRIDAY: Saints That Overcome

*“Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren . . . has been cast down. 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. 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.”*

—Revelation 12:10–12, emphasis added

We have seen our victory in Jesus because God is faithful (11:19–12:6) and Satan is vanquished (12:7–9). Yet, as verses 10–12 above explain, the saints on earth will suffer. In that passage, many avenues of our powerful victories over Satan are stated. The saints will overcome as more than conquerors through the blessedness of four powerful weapons:

1. **The Word of Testimony:** They will overcome Satan by the reality of their testimony because they have embraced Christ’s salvation by faith, and He lives within them. People are saved not by what they say, but by the Word of God which is *living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart* (Hebrews 4:12).
2. **The Name of Jesus:** *God . . . has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name* (Philippians 2:9).
3. **The Blood of the Lamb:** *“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”* (Revelation 12:11).
4. **The Cross of Calvary:** *And you, being dead in your trespasses . . . , He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses* (Colossians 2:13).

Last of all, our attention is drawn to the triumph factor. John says, *“And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which kept the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ”* (Revelation 12:17 KJV). Satan cannot win.

Just as the blood of the martyrs has proved to be the seed of the church, so during the Tribulation, persecution will but drive many Jewish people into the arms of the Lord Jesus. Satan, in his rage, displays a notable lack of imagination and originality. He has tried persecution many times before, and it has always failed to deter faith and conversion. That he tries it again is a mute confession of failure, the last resort of a desperate and darkened mind. The godly Jews will not recant. They will only scatter far and wide, bearing as they go the gospel of the Kingdom and their triumph will be complete.¹

What can Satan do with the likes of these godly Jews? Lock them up in prison, and they will convert their jailers; torture them, and they will become partakers of Christ's sufferings and heirs to a great reward; martyr them, and they will go straight to be with Christ; turn them loose, and they will evangelize the world! The more the saints suffer, the more they will draw on Christ; the more they serve Christ, the more they will defeat the devil and have victory in Christ!

Learn from these faithful saints; do not shrink back from the persecution and affliction that is likely to come at work, in your family, and in society. Through the Word of God, the name of Jesus, the blood of the Lamb, and the cross of Calvary—be a saint who overcomes through Christ—like the faithful suffering saints in Revelation 12!

SATURDAY: The Conflict of the Ages

*The earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood, which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth. And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and **he went to make war** with the rest of her offspring, who . . . have the testimony of Jesus Christ.*

—Revelation 12:16–17, emphasis added

God has a place prepared for Israel; it could even be in Petra or Jordan. It does not matter where it is, but God will send the Jews there. When Satan sees them flee, he will cause the beast to send a mighty army that is like a “flood,” but it will be “swallowed up” (Revelation 12:16).

We see this same type of judgment in Numbers 16:1–40. Because of the rebellion of Korah, the earth opened up and swallowed those who rebelled against Moses and God—and they went alive into the pit. (This is another indication that Hades is most likely in the center of the earth.)

- Satan has always tried to destroy his mortal enemy—the Seed of the woman. All of history has been a record of this conflict between the seed of the serpent and the Seed of the woman. Satan has tried to stop God's plan all along the way.
- Satan attempted to destroy God's plan when Cain murdered Abel (Genesis 4).
- Satan attempted to destroy God's plan by demonic intrusion into the human line before the Flood (Genesis 6).
- Satan attempted to destroy God's plan through Goliath, as the serpent's seed sought to destroy the line of the woman's Seed as young David stood before him (1 Samuel 17).

- Satan attempted to destroy God’s plan through Haman, a descendent of Agag the Amalekite. At Satan’s prompting, Haman nearly succeeded at wiping out the Jews (the book of Esther).
- Satan attempted to destroy God’s plan by the decree of Herod to kill all the male infants (Matthew 2:13).
- Satan attempted to destroy God’s plan by tempting Jesus to take the easy road (Matthew 4).
- Satan attempted to destroy God’s plan as he entered the infuriated mob that sought to cast Jesus over a cliff (Luke 4:28–29).

Satan hates the Lamb of God and all His followers—whether Jew or Gentile. Therefore, he actively wages war against those who seek to obey God’s Word above all else!

Make a choice to live in hope: From Eden onward, there have been two groups on earth: two churches, two congregations, and two directions.

| Satan and the Rebels | God and the Saints |
|----------------------|--------------------|
| Drunken harlot | Chaste bride |
| Followers of lies | Seekers of Truth |
| Earth dwellers | Pilgrims |
| Walkers by sight | Walkers by faith |
| Hellish | Heavenly |

But a collision lies ahead: Satan’s kingdom is nearing its final hours on earth—a time when the powers of darkness, demons, and all will rule. The earth will follow the false god, the Antichrist!

There are two competitions—two destinies:

- **Choose Christ:** Follow Adam; pass Golgotha and the substitutionary sacrifice of Christ; trust in Christ and go to heaven.
- **Choose the Antichrist:** Follow Cain; pass Babel and the confusion of religion, and go to the lake of fire.

In this battle for the planet Earth, the victory is in Christ! God’s faithfulness to His Word means that Satan is vanquished. If you already know the Lord Jesus, I pray that you will choose to be an overcomer by living in hope through God’s Word, the blood of the Lamb, the cross of Calvary, and the name of Jesus that is above all names!

In closing, this old song by Francis Havergal captures what your spirit ought to be like during this conflict of the ages. As you meditate upon its words, ask yourself: *Am I really on the Lord’s side?* I encourage you to then personalize the words of this wonderful song to make it the prayer of your heart.

Who Is on the Lord’s Side?

*Who is on the Lord's side? Who will serve the King?
Who will be His helpers, Other lives to bring?
Who will leave the world's side? Who will face the foe?
Who is on the Lord's side? Who for Him will go?
By Thy call of mercy, By Thy grace divine,
We are on the Lord's side—Savior, we are Thine!*

*Not for weight of glory, Nor for crown and palm,
Enter we the army, Raise the warrior psalm;
But for Love that claimeth Lives for whom He died:
He whom Jesus nameth Must be on His side.
By Thy love constraining, By Thy grace divine,
We are on the Lord's side—Savior, we are Thine!*

*Jesus, Thou hast bought us, Not with gold or gem,
But with Thine own life-blood, For Thy diadem;
With Thy blessing filling Each who comes to Thee,
Thou hast made us willing, Thou hast made us free.
By Thy grand redemption, By Thy grace divine,
We are on the Lord's side—Savior, we are Thine!*

*Fierce may be the conflict, Strong may be the foe,
But the King's own army None can overthrow;
'Round His standard ranging, Victory is secure,
For His truth unchanging Makes the triumph sure.
Joyfully enlisting, By Thy grace divine,
We are on the Lord's side—Savior, we are Thine!*

—Francis R. Havergal (1836–1879)

¹ Drawn from John Phillips, *Exploring Revelation* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1974), in loc.