

Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near.  
Rev. 1:3

# Verse by Verse Through the Book of Revelation

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## REVELATION CHAPTER 12

The Bible says there is only one body, or church, into which Jesus is calling His end-time people. To some, this seems unnerving. There are well over 1,000 different churches and religious organizations in today's world. And, virtually every one claims to be God's church, yet they differ widely in belief and practice. It is utterly impossible to examine the beliefs of so many churches. What a wrenching dilemma for a sincere truth-seeker!



Satan's object of  
attack is God's church.

We can be thankful that Jesus has solved this dilemma by describing His end-time church in such detail that one can very easily identify it. That vivid description is found in Revelation chapters 12 and 14. God's church is spoken of as a pure woman and an apostate church as a harlot.

**Jeremiah 6:2** "I have likened the daughter of Zion to a comely and delicate woman."

**2 Cor. 11:2** "For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ."

**Rev. 19:7,8** "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints."

**Chapter 12 begins a new line of prophecy, which continues to the end of the book. This section of prophecy sets forth the church of God in conflict with the powers of evil, and the church's ultimate triumph over them.**

- I. **And there appeared a great wonder** Greek "semeion" meaning "to give a sign"

**in heaven;** meaning the sky — not the heaven where God dwells

**a woman** Throughout the Bible symbolizes the church of Christ

**clothed with the sun,** representing the glory of God

**and the moon under her feet,** This symbol is understood by most commentators as representing the system of types and shadows of Old Testament times which were eclipsed by the greater revelation that came through Jesus. **The ceremonial law, being fulfilled in the life and death of Christ, could well be represented by the moon, which shines with light borrowed from the sun.**

**and upon her head a crown** From the Greek work "stephanos" the victor's crown (This passage did not use the Greek "diadema" meaning the kingly crown.)

**of twelve stars** Since emphasis of Chapter 12 is on the New Testament church, doubtless the 12 stars refers to the 12 apostles of Christ.

The sun represents Jesus, His gospel and His righteousness. (Ps. 84:11). Without Jesus there is no salvation (Acts 4:12). The moon under her feet represents the sacrificial system of the Old Testament. As the moon reflects the light of the sun, so the sacrificial system was helpful spiritually only as it reflected light from the Messiah to come (Hebrews 10:1) The crown of twelve stars represents the work of the 12 disciples which crowned the early years of the New Testament church.

2. **And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.** This represents the church at the time the Messiah was to be born. Isa 7:14; Isa 26:17

3. **And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns upon his heads.** In verse 9 this power is called "that old serpent, the Devil, and Satan."

Here the symbol represents Satan as working through pagan Rome, the power ruling the world when Jesus was born. The dragon is described as "red," probably

because of the fact that in all his connection with the church of God he has appeared in the role of persecutor and destroyer. (7 heads also appears on the beast John saw rising from the sea (Rev. 13:1), the beast of ch. 13 and 17 also had ten horns each, and crowns in this passage is from the Greek “diademata” meaning crown of royalty.

It has been Satan’s studied purpose to destroy the children of the Most High.

4. **And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth:** Most commentators have translated this as representing Satan and 1/3 of the angels who joined Lucifer in his rebellion and were expelled from heaven.

**and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.** This represents the efforts of Satan to destroy the infant Jesus. The ruler who tried to kill Jesus at birth was Herod, a king under pagan Rome. He killed all the male babies of Bethlehem, hoping that one of them would be Jesus Matt. 2:16.

5. **And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron:** an allusion to Ps. 2:8,9, and clearly applicable to the Messiah.

**and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.** A reference to the ascension of Jesus Christ (Heb. 1:3; 10:12)

6. **And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days.** What did the woman (church) do to protect herself and what is the wilderness? The wilderness is an uninhabited place—represents a place of obscurity. The 1,260-year period represents the period of papal prominence and persecution of A.D. 538 to 1798 when the pope was captured and carried off to France.

During this period the Waldenses, Huguenots and many others hid in the mountains. God’s church would have been obliterated if they had not fled and hid in the wilderness during this devastating persecution by the papacy. At least 50 million people died for their faith during this 1260-year time period.

Note: We have now discovered our first two identification points for the remnant church:

- 1) It would not exist officially as an organization between A.D 538 and 1798.
- 2) It would arise and do its end-time work after 1798.

This means that the most popular Protestant churches cannot be God's end-time church because they existed officially before 1798.

7. **And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels,** John is presenting briefly the history of the great controversy between Christ and Satan in heaven. Michael is Jesus Christ. (Dan. 10:13; Jude 9.)
8. **And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven.** Satan and his angels were cast out of heaven.
9. **And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.** Not until the second coming of Christ will Satan be completely confined to this earth. (Rev. 20:3)
10. **And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.** Those in heaven rejoiced that the devil was gone from among them.
11. **And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto death** John here is referring to all those dear saints of God who gave their lives for Christ.
12. **Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! For the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time. WE SHOULD ALL MEMORIZE THIS TEXT!** Two thousand years since the cross might not seem "short" to us, but to the people of the universe where time is eternal, it is very short.
13. **And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child.** Again, we know that 1,260-period of horrible persecution extended from A.D. 538 to 1798. Satan worked through the papacy to destroy God's Word from the face of this earth.

14. **And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.** Some see the “wings of an eagle” as the haste with which the church was obliged to find safety. *If you recall, during that period there were no Bible translations.*
15. **And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood.** Satan tried to destroy the Christian church by the inundation of false doctrines as well as by persecution. Rev. 17:15
16. **And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.** Most commentators believe that “earth” represents areas where there was a scarcity of peoples, in contrast with “waters” which sometimes represents many “peoples.” This would make sense because at the time of the Reformation the North American continent was very sparsely populated and those persecuted in Europe fled to America breaking the spell of the apostate church over them. They fled persecution and they were “swallowed up” in a new land where the papal authority couldn’t reach them.
17. **And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.** Satan was—and continues to be—enraged over God’s people. His supreme effort to rid the earth of God’s people is still in the future. *Especially Satan is enraged at those who “keep the commandments of God.”*

Many think that the 10 Commandments of God aren’t important today!—Isn’t it odd that Satan thinks they are important! Satan has blinded people’s eyes to the truth because he wants them to be lost!

The “testimony of Jesus” or ‘witness of Jesus’ that originates with Jesus and is revealed to His church through the prophets. In Ch 19:10 the ‘testimony of Jesus’ is defined as ‘the spirit of prophecy.’

Seventh-day Adventists believe that the “remnant” will be distinguished by the manifestation of the gift of prophecy in their midst. The “testimony of Jesus Christ,” is the witness of Jesus in their midst through the medium of the prophetic gift.

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Seventh-day Adventists repudiate emphatically and unequivocally any thought that they alone are children of God and have a claim upon heaven. They believe that all who worship God in full sincerity, that is, in terms of all the revealed will of God that they understand, are presently potential members of that final “remnant” company mentioned in Chapter 12:17.

Adventists believe that it is their solemn task and joyous privilege to make God’s last testing truths so clear and so persuasive as to draw all of God’s children into that prophetically foretold company that is making ready for the day of God.

A recently baptized member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church said to me, “I’ve joined God’s remnant church and have never been so happy in all my life. But I have never been harassed so much by the devil, either. Why is this?”

Here is my answer to her: “Because the devil is angry with God’s remnant people and spends his time trying to hurt and discourage them. (Rev. 12:17).

Jesus did not promise that His people would not suffer trials, woes, onslaughts from the devil, tough times, and even serious injury from Satan. In fact, He promised that such things would, indeed, come to His people (2 Tim. 3:12).

He did gloriously promise to give His people victory (1 Cor. 15:57) and to be with His people always in everything they do (Matt. 28:20) and to give them peace (John 16:33) and to never forsake them (Heb. 13:5).

Finally, Jesus and His Father promised to hold onto us so tightly that no one could take us out of Their hands. (John 10:28, 29)

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