

The Revelation to John
Chapter Twelve
An Overview of Prior Events
The First Two Signs
The Woman and Satan's Defeat in Heaven

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Chapters 12-14 are a digression as John is given a different perspective of the preceding pouring forth of the wrath of God. These three chapters may be describing the tribulations from Satan's perspective. John will present us with some troubles of the church and some aspects of Satan's fall from heaven. This chapter gives us the important understanding of why there are no events of demon possession in the OT time period and why such were commonplace during the time of Jesus and His apostles working on earth. We will not see the final seven plagues until chapters 15-16. There are three main figures in this chapter: the woman, the child, and the dragon. We also read of three scenes involving these figures: the birth of the child (1-6), the expulsion of the dragon (7-12), and the dragon's attack on the woman (13-17).

Sign One

**Rev12:1 "And a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars;
Rev12:2 and she was with child; and she cried out, being in labor and in pain to give birth."**

Signs in the New Testament usually pointed toward something, as a sign saying "10 miles to Denver" would be in our vernacular. This sign is a woman and is reminiscent of some reference to Israel with the twelve stars being the twelve patriarchs that came from her. Being "with child" reminds us of

Isa 26:17-18 "As the pregnant woman approaches the time to give birth, She writhes and cries out in her labor pains, Thus were we before Thee, O Lord. ¹⁷We were pregnant, we writhed in labor, We gave birth, as it were, only to wind. We could not accomplish deliverance for the earth Nor were inhabitants of the world born."

Of course old Israel could not bring forth salvation for only the Son of God could do that. Undoubtedly the woman here is Israel about to give birth to Jesus but later in the chapter she is representative of the church under persecution. John calls This vision a "great sign" (*mega semeion*) to signify that this is not a literal woman but a vision symbolizing something. In classic Greek the words refer especially to the constellations as signs or omens. John usually uses the words to refer to some deeper spiritual significance connected with the event such as in:

- John 2:11 "*This beginning of His signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and manifested His glory, and His disciples believed in Him.*"

- John 2:18 *"The Jews then said to Him, "What sign do You show us as your authority for doing these things?"*

There were two well-known pagan myths of similar content. One involved the birth of the god Apollo and his mother Leto. She was pursued by the dragon Python and four days after his birth Apollo found and killed Python. In Egypt Set is the red dragon who pursues Isis the pregnant mother of Horus. Later Horus also killed Set. The differences between these pagan stories and this chapter make it clear that John is not just elaborating on the pagan stories. In the first eight centuries there was not even one credible author suggesting that John made such an elaboration. It is also unlikely that John made a parallel between his vision and the dream of Joseph in Gen 37:9-11. Some authors see a parallel with this event and the activities of the emperor Domitian in about 83 A.D. A coin was minted showing a mother with the child sitting on the globe of heaven playing with seven stars representing the seven known planets. The coin glorifies the son of Domitia as the lord of heaven and savior of the world. John's vision demythologizes the Domitian myth by presenting Christ as the true and ascended Lord of heaven.

It is not impossible that the woman is actually Mary but the evidence clearly shows that she, like the woman of chapter 17, has symbolic significance. The center of this chapter is the dragon's persecution of the woman. The dragon is definitely identified as Satan (v. 9) but the reference to the persecution of the "rest of her offspring" renders it certain that the woman is not a single individual. Some have identified the woman as the nation Israel with the twelve stars referring to the twelve tribes (Gen 37:9-11). However the purpose of this chapter is to show the persecution of the believing members of the nation Israel and not all of Israel. Her identity must then be the covenant-messianic community initially designated by John the Baptist and later being called the church or the new Israel composed of both Jews and Gentiles. Being clothed with the sun indicates her glory and brilliance of her Lord (Rev 1:16). The moon under her feet signifies her permanence and the crown of twelve stars indicates her divine election originally from the twelve tribes of Israel.

The woman is in the painful stages of childbirth signifying the suffering of the messianic community in a prelude to the coming of the Messiah. This does not refer only to the birth of Jesus but to the entire travail of the Jewish community from which the Messiah comes:

- Isa 26:17 *"As the pregnant woman approaches the time to give birth, She writhes and cries out in her labor pains, Thus were we before You, O LORD."*
- Isa 66:7-8 *"Before she travailed, she brought forth; Before her pain came, she gave birth to a boy. (8) "Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? Can a land be born in one day? Can a nation be brought forth all at once? As soon as Zion travailed, she also brought forth her sons."*
- Mic 4:10 *"Writhe and labor to give birth, Daughter of Zion, Like a woman in childbirth; For now you will go out of the city, Dwell in the field, And go to Babylon. There you will be rescued; There the LORD will redeem you From the hand of your enemies."*

- Mic 5:3 *Therefore He will give them up until the time When she who is in labor has borne a child. Then the remainder of His brethren Will return to the sons of Israel.*

Sign Two

Rev12:3 “And another sign appeared in heaven: and behold, a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads were seven diadems.

Rev12:4 And his tail swept away a third of the stars of heaven, and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she gave birth he might devour her child.”

John now saw a second sign in the skies. There is little doubt that this great red dragon is Satan (see verse 9) although we do not know why he is given the color red. The vision is similar to that of Daniel:

Dan 7:7 “After this I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, a fourth beast, dreadful and terrifying and extremely strong; and it had large iron teeth. It devoured and crushed, and trampled down the remainder with its feet; and it was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns.”

The end times’ authors make a lot out of Daniel’s vision to declare that this is a kingdom but certainly here the vision is just that of Satan. The end times’ authors say that the ten horns signify the ten nations that will arise from Europe over which Satan will have power. The ten horns signify great strength and the seven heads probably means that he is very difficult to destroy, but not omnipotent. The crowns translate the Greek word “diademata” and are crowns of royalty signifying that he is claiming sovereignty but it seems a stretch to say that these are the ten nations of a future Europe. It is likely that John is just giving an overall impression of the strength and horror of the dragon and not trying to give any individual meaning regarding the seven heads and ten horns.

Many people have said that the sweeping away of one-third of the stars of heaven is his taking one-third of the angels with him to earth. However this event is clearly described in verse nine below. Stars usually indicate angels so this sweeping away of angels may be indicative of the war going on in heaven that will be further described later. The reference may also refer to the saints of God who were trampled by Satan and not to fallen angels. Daniel also describes actions of Satan in destroying the people of God:

- Dan 8:10 *“It grew up to the host of heaven and caused some of the host and some of the stars to fall to the earth, and it trampled them down.”*
- Dan 8:24 *“His power will be mighty, but not by his own power, And he will destroy to an extraordinary degree And prosper and perform his will; He will destroy mighty men and the holy people.”*

Remember that, at this point in the vision, Satan is still in heaven. Certainly he will be intent on doing great damage to earth but his primary goal as envisioned here is to destroy the child. We might wonder why he does not just devour the woman but when we

remember that she represents Israel we understand the difficulty he would have in destroying the nation. As we saw in the description of Herod's killing of children (Matt 2:13-18) Satan did try to kill Jesus after His birth. However he is not omniscient so he does not know the identity of the woman giving birth.

Rev12:5 “And she gave birth to a son, a male child, who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne.

Rev12:6 And the woman fled into the wilderness where she had a place prepared by God, so that there she might be nourished for one thousand two hundred and sixty days.”

John omits everything in the life of Jesus except His resurrection and ascension into heaven. In some cases the visions are painting with broad strokes and in other cases with many details. The point of the vision is that Israel successfully brought forth Jesus, He would strongly rule all nations, and He was not harmed by Satan. The ruling of Jesus as a rod of iron is prophesied in *'You shall break them with a rod of iron, You shall shatter them like earthenware.'*” (Psa 2:9) John may mean to signify a collective ruling by Jesus and His believers as the vision by Daniel seems to indicate:

- Dan 7:13-14 *“I kept looking in the night visions, And behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming, And He came up to the Ancient of Days And was presented before Him. (14) “And to Him was given dominion, Glory and a kingdom, That all the peoples, nations and men of every language Might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion Which will not pass away; And His kingdom is one Which will not be destroyed.*
- Dan 7:27 *“Then the sovereignty, the dominion and the greatness of all the kingdoms under the whole heaven will be given to the people of the saints of the Highest One; His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all the dominions will serve and obey Him.”*

Many early interpreters (from 390 to 453 A.D.) interpreted the child to be both Christ and members of Christ meaning both Christ and His church. However it is difficult to understand how the woman and the child can both serve symbolically as a group of believers. Some early interpreters (312 to 735 A.D.) read John to mean the child as a reference only to the church. However one interprets the child, John sees God's purpose fulfilled in the resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ so the dragon's attempt to destroy the purposes of God were seen to be completely defeated.

The vision then states that Israel is also protected from Satan by being taken away from the worldly activity into a place that God had prepared for her as part of Plan A. I would not normally think of a wilderness as a good place, but it is a place away from the cities of the world and a place of safety. Israel was then nourished for the same period of time as the prophesying of the church. It would seem then that God is protecting both the church and Israel during the same time period. As we can now look back on history we see how Israel was protected and brought forth again into a nation during which time the church was also protected and developed during the Reformation. Now we see the church being weakened by the influx of worldly values and Israel being strengthened by its interaction with our country. Notice the “broad strokes” with which these events are told

as many details are omitted that the church would already know. We cannot say with certainty that the activity of verse six is just after that of verse five. Verse six could portray a time at the end of the tribulation. The visions do tend to jerk us around in time!

Some believe the escape to represent the fleeing of the Jerusalem Christians to Pella in A.D. 66 to escape the Roman destruction of Jerusalem. Pella remained an important Christian center even after many returned to Jerusalem in 135. "End-timers" refer to this as a future event when the Jewish people will be preserved through the Tribulation as they await the return of Christ. Others refer to the wilderness as a place of safety for the church as it is persecuted by the world. Most commentators refer to the wilderness as a place of safety and testing for the church as it is being purified and is preferable because of the symbolic nature of the entire chapter, the symbolic use of "desert" in 17:3, and the parallelism to the Exodus as the children of Israel fled from Pharaoh. All agree that the reference is to the flight of the woman in anticipation of verse 13. We read in verses 7-12 why the dragon persecutes the woman.

**Rev12:7 "And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. And the dragon and his angels waged war,
Rev12:8 and they were not strong enough, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven.
Rev12:9 And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him."**

Verses 7-12 describe the battle in heaven between Michael and the dragon. Verses 7-9 describe the battle and verses 10-12 are the heavenly hymn of victory. Early Jewish writings portrayed that Michael would cast Satan from heaven as the first of some last-time struggles to establish the KOG. But John sees that the event took place during the first appearance and work of Jesus Christ. The only remaining and final permanent blow of Satan's ejection from earth remains: "*And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.*" (Rev 20:10)

By showing this vision, God reveals to John that the battle with evil is cosmic in dimension and that events on earth are first decided in heaven. What the early church could take away from this vision is the comforting thought that whatever persecution they endure on earth is with a defeated enemy despite how events are perceived from their earthly perspective. So the scene then shifts to heaven where a mighty war was being fought between God's faithful angels and the angels of Satan. Michael is an archangel and is given charge of the faithful angels of God: "*Michael the archangel, when he disputed with the devil and argued about the body of Moses, did not dare pronounce against him a railing judgment, but said, 'The Lord rebuke you.'*" (Jude 1:9)

But unlike the situation between Satan and Michael regarding the body of Moses, Michael is now allowed to directly rebuke Satan with the authority of God. The result of this war is predictable! Satan and his angels lost the war. We do not know how long the

war lasted for it could have been over quickly or God may have allowed it to last for some unknown time period. We also struggle against the forces of Satan daily: *“For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.”* (Eph 6:12)

However our struggles do not compare with the war that was fought in heaven. We are greatly encouraged to know that Satan and his minions are no match for God’s forces. Satan and his angels were then thrown down to earth and he no longer had direct access to God in heaven. Satan is a powerful being but he is not omnipresent nor is he omnipotent or omniscient. He apparently has been on earth with his angels since the time of the birth of Jesus since we have accounts of his interactions with Jesus on earth and other Scriptural discussions of his activities on earth such as the following:

- Eph 6:12 *For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.*
- Luke 10:18 *“And He said to them, ‘I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning.’”*
- Luke 22:31 *“Simon, Simon, behold, Satan has demanded permission to sift you like wheat;”*

Of course Satan’s total defeat was suffered at the cross so that Jesus could say: *“Now judgment is upon this world; now the ruler of this world shall be cast out.”* (John 12:31)

We could infer then that John is being given a vision of what happened in heaven sometime before or shortly after the birth of Jesus, but his total defeat and binding away from doing any harm would come later. There was a great victory by Jesus on the cross and with His resurrection.

Rev12:10 “And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, “Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, who accuses them before our God day and night.

Rev12:11 “And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even to death.”

Verses 10-12 are the heavenly hymn of victory! This is an interpretative hymn that is needed to understand properly verses 7-9. The hymn consists of three stanzas. The first concerns the victorious beginning of God’s kingdom and the authority of Jesus Christ. The second stanza (verse 11) confirms the earthly victory of the saints because of their identification with Christ. The third stanza (verse 12) announces the martyr’s victory and the final woe to the earth due to the ejection of the devil and his impending demise. This hymn informs us that it was the blood of Jesus that dealt the actual death blow to the dragon enabling the saints to triumph. Christ appeared so that He might destroy the works of the devil:

- Matt 12:28-29 *"But if I cast out demons by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God has come upon you. (29) "Or how can anyone enter the strong man's house and carry off his property, unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will plunder his house.*
- Acts 10:38 *"You know of Jesus of Nazareth, how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power, and how He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.*
- 2Tim 1:10 *but now has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel,*
- 1John 3:8 *the one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil.*

We are not told the owner of the voice but it could be the angels as they declare the ultimate victory. After the work of Jesus on the earth, his ascension to heaven and the defeat of Satan and his angels in heaven we see the coming of: 1.) the salvation of God, 2.) the power (authority) of God, 3.) the kingdom of God, and 4.) the authority of Jesus. I cannot say that God was relieved that the constant accusing of Satan of God's people was now over, but I would certainly have been relieved at the end of his constant noise!

At the time of the life, death, and resurrection of Christ the authority of Satan was challenged and led to the crisis of history. At the time of His death on earth Satan was being defeated in heaven by Michael. So prior to this event Satan's chief mission was the accusation of God's people for their disobedience to God:

- Job 1:9-11 *"Then Satan answered the LORD, "Does Job fear God for nothing? (10) "Have You not made a hedge about him and his house and all that he has, on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. (11) "But put forth Your hand now and touch all that he has; he will surely curse You to Your face."*
- Zech 3:1 *"Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him*

Of course God recognized the justice of Satan's accusations and his presence in heaven was tolerated. But the actualization of the mission of Jesus Christ meant that such was no longer true for God's people and thus his accusations were no longer valid and he was cast out of heaven:

- 1John 2:1-2 *"My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; (2) and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world.*
- 1John 4:10 *"In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.*

Propitiation is a wonderful word when applied to the interaction between God and man. The work of Jesus Christ led to the taking away of all interference between God and man so that God could now accept those whose sins had been expiated by the propitiation of Jesus Christ. Expiation means to take away whereas propitiation means to remove wrath

caused by sin. Thus the work of Jesus resulted in God's wrath at our sins being placed upon Him rather than upon us and the work of Jesus also took away our sins so that when God looks at those who no longer deserve the wrath of God He also sees no sins but only the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ. The process of propitiation and expiation is called double imputation as the sins and deserving wrath of God toward a person who is a disciple of Jesus Christ are placed on Jesus and the righteousness of Jesus is placed into the account of the Christian before God.

The "they" of verse 11 must be the martyrs for he says that they did not love their life even unto death. But we also see that the martyrs did not overcome Satan in their own strength but in their total reliance upon the blood of Jesus and their witness of His works. Most of us will probably not be called upon to die for Christ but we are to show forth the same total devotion to Him:

- Luke 14:26-27 *"If anyone comes to Me, and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be My disciple. ²⁷Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple."*
- John 12:25 *"He who loves his life loses it; and he who hates his life in this world shall keep it to life eternal."*

The statement is praise for the martyrs and an appeal to those not yet martyred to continue in their obedience to Jesus.

Rev12:12 "For this reason, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them. Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he has only a short time."

The Greek word for heaven is used 52 times in Revelation but this is the only time it is used in the plural. To the people at this time there were three heavens: 1.) the place where God dwelled, 2.) the space where we see the stars and 3.) the air in which the birds fly. I think we can understand the use of the plural in this case for all the occupants of the third heaven and God's people living on earth and breathing air can also rejoice knowing that we are not citizens of earth and that our home (heaven) has been purged of Satan and his followers. We all live here in victory!

All heavens can certainly rejoice with the casting out of Satan and his followers but the earth and sea are now home to these terribly evil beings. Satan is now especially violent in his workings on earth since he now knows that his time is limited. This understanding of when Satan and his followers were cast to earth helps us understand his work in the world. We may have wondered why the word antichrist and its plural only appear in the NT (the books of first and second John) and that the word devil only appears in the NT. The word demon appears 28 times but only in the NT. The word demons appears 42 times in the Bible but only three times in the OT:

- Lev 17:7 *"They shall no longer sacrifice their sacrifices to the goat demons with which they play the harlot. This shall be a permanent statute to them throughout their generations."*

- Deut 32:17 *"They sacrificed to demons who were not God, To gods whom they have not known, New gods who came lately, Whom your fathers did not dread.*
- Psalm 106:37 *They even sacrificed their sons and their daughters to the demons,*

The above OT uses of the word demon are not referring to the same entities as the word is used in the NT but rather means some evil idol to which the people sacrificed. Only in the NT are demons referred to as some beings who can dwell within someone. Since the angels of Satan were not present until after the ascension of Jesus Christ we can now understand their absence in the OT writings.

The word Satan appears only 14 times in the OT with 10 of those occasions being in the book of Job. We only see him interacting with mankind on earth in Genesis, although not by that name, and when he moved David to number Israel (1 Chron 21:1). The word then appears in Zec 3:1 when he was accusing Joshua the high priest and in Zec 3:2 when the Lord rebuked him in heaven.

Until the war with Michael and his angels, Satan was primarily in heaven except for a few visits to earth but he and his demons were not primarily on earth to torment mankind. But for the past 2000 years he and his angels have been on earth tormenting mankind but with the permission of God.

Since he has never been omniscient, he surely must have thought that he could ultimately win in his battle against the Trinity and become God himself. But with this knowledge comes the painful knowing of ultimate defeat. He will now try to do as much damage to the earth, the sea, and even God's people as he is allowed to do. We do always have the comfort in knowing that God is sovereign.

Rev12:13 "And when the dragon saw that he was thrown down to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male child.

Rev12:14 And the two wings of the great eagle were given to the woman, in order that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she was nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent."

Satan immediately began to persecute Israel and in the last two thousand years we have witnessed horrible persecution of Israel. However God gave Israel the ability to flee into a place where she could be nourished for a set period of time. The wilderness is a place outside of the Egypt of the world. To the dispensationalist this time period is the second half of the tribulation during which the antichrist will rule. In my understanding the raging of Satan has been transpiring since the resurrection of Jesus Christ. It may be that there will be a literal 3.5 years or some small time period toward the end of the great tribulation for the nourishment of Israel. The reference to the wings of an eagle is imagery borrowed from the Exodus account: *"You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings, and brought you to Myself."* (Exodus 19:4) Although the Jews have endured much tribulation and persecution in the last 2000 years, there will be a time when they will be preserved miraculously from destruction:

- Deut 32:10-12 *“He found him in a desert land, And in the howling waste of a wilderness; He encircled him, He cared for him, He guarded him as the pupil of His eye. (11) “Like an eagle that stirs up its nest, That hovers over its young, He spread His wings and caught them, He carried them on His pinions. (12) “The LORD alone guided him, And there was no foreign god with him.*
- Isa 40:31 *“Yet those who wait for the LORD Will gain new strength; They will mount up with wings like eagles, They will run and not get tired, They will walk and not become weary.*

Rev12:15 “And the serpent poured water like a river out of his mouth after the woman, so that he might cause her to be swept away with the flood.

Rev12:16 And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and drank up the river which the dragon poured out of his mouth.”

Satan is not quick to give up in his persecution of Israel. It is not clear if this event occurs sequentially or if it is an example of Satan’s persecution. It is also not clear what is meant by the river from his mouth or the earth swallowing this river. Of course God’s people get their help from God and not directly from the earth. Satan can perform some limited miracles and maybe this vision is of a real river of water being poured out in an attempt to bring God’s people to the surface so that Satan could harm them. There are many underground rivers and perhaps God foresaw what Satan would try and arranged for a real underground river to take away his attempt. However floods are used symbolically in the Bible to mean an invading army such as described by Jeremiah:

Jer 46:8-9 “Egypt rises like the Nile, Even like the rivers whose waters surge about; And He has said, “I will rise and cover that land; I will surely destroy the city and its inhabitants.”⁹ Go up, you horses, and drive madly, you chariots, That the mighty men may march forward: Ethiopia and Put, that handle the shield, And the Lydians, that handle and bend the bow.”

Moses also gave a description of the land swallowing the enemy: *“Thou didst stretch out Thy right hand, The earth swallowed them.”* (Exodus 15:12)

So the symbolism of a river could mean that Satan sent a huge army against Israel but God protected her by means of an earthquake.

Rev12:17 “And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and went off to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus.”

Whatever the symbolism represents, Satan is defeated by God as He continues to protect Israel. Satan then goes off to attack the remainder of God’s children. The reference to the recipients of Satan’s wrath means all of the true followers of Jesus Christ. Thus I again give the following verse: *“For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.”* (Eph 6:12) Many interpreters view the

phrase “rest of her offspring” to mean the Gentile Christians as distinguished from the Jewish Christians. Understanding the seed of the woman as first of all Jesus and then also those who became His brethren through faith agrees with many NT teachings such as:

- Matt 25:40 *"The King will answer and say to them, 'Truly I say to you, to the extent that you did it to one of these brothers of Mine, even the least of them, you did it to Me.'*
- Heb 2:11-12 *"For both He who sanctifies and those who are sanctified are all from one Father; for which reason He is not ashamed to call them brethren, (12) saying, "I WILL PROCLAIM YOUR NAME TO MY BRETHREN, IN THE MIDST OF THE CONGREGATION I WILL SING YOUR PRAISE."*
- Gal 3:7-9 *"Therefore, be sure that it is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham. (8) The Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, "ALL THE NATIONS WILL BE BLESSED IN YOU." (9) So then those who are of faith are blessed with Abraham, the believer.*
- Gal 3:13-14 *"Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us--for it is written, "CURSED IS EVERYONE WHO HANGS ON A TREE"-- (14) in order that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we would receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.*

All true followers of Jesus Christ will remain true to His teachings regardless of what Satan and his angels throw against us:

- John 14:21 *"He who has My commandments and keeps them, he it is who loves Me; and he who loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I will love him, and will disclose Myself to him."*
- John 14:23 *"Jesus answered and said to him, "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him, and make Our abode with him."*
- 1John 2:3 *"And by this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments."*

Those who do not love Jesus will not hold to His testimony in hard times: *"He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine, but the Father's who sent Me."* (John 14:24)

Many will fall away during periods of severe tribulation and we will know that they are not really of us for they will leave us to avoid the tribulations: *"They went out from us, but they were not really of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us; but they went out, in order that it might be shown that they all are not of us."* (1 John 2:19)