

Zoom in to Discover How Our Story Ends

The book of Revelation in the Bible tells the story of salvation and the history of God's people from multiple, different perspectives. It's very similar to using the "zoom" feature on a camera. You "zoom in" to see things close up, and you "zoom out" to see the bigger picture. Revelation zooms in and zooms out several times as it focuses on various parts of the salvation narrative. At the very beginning of the book, Revelation zooms out to survey the history of the church. Then in Revelation 12, it zooms all the way out enabling readers to see the full celestial picture of the history of God's people and the plan of salvation.

Often when people refer to Revelation 12, they assert that it's the chapter which highlights the continued struggle between Christ and Satan. Because this conflict spans many ages and veritably all of the history of our world, it's called the "Great Controversy" as it's displayed in countless small spiritual battles and encapsulates every manifestation of spiritual warfare. Ultimately, Satan desires to have dominion over our souls and the entire universe, and he will stop at nothing to realize this nefarious ambition. Through the Great Controversy, we have insight into his attempt at a celestial coup d'état.

The Woman

This cosmic clash begins with a vision of a woman, "clothed with the sun...and a crown of twelve stars on her head."¹ She is pregnant and cries out in pain as she is about to give birth.² Then enters the villain, an "enormous red dragon with seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns on its heads."³ But it's the next line that is very significant. It says, "His tail swept a third of the stars out of the sky and flung them to the earth."⁴

It's important to know that scholars believe that the woman represents God's people who are often referred to in the Bible as a beautiful bride.⁵

Additionally, we know that the child symbolizes Jesus Christ because verse five says that the child "will rule all the nations with an iron scepter."⁶

Pause, Rewind

We need to pause here to point out that the story utilizes an ancient Hebrew storytelling device that scholars like to call recapitulation. You've probably heard a friend unwittingly doing the same thing. Your friend told you what happened, but then said, "Let me backup a little bit." Your friend then regressed in order to give you important details for understanding how things turned out. Well, that's exactly what's happening in Revelation 12. At the beginning of chapter twelve, the woman is standing there in her most vulnerable moment and that's when the dragon appears. The Bible then says in verse four that the dragon has come to devour the woman's newborn baby.⁷ God, however, whisks the woman away in a sort of spiritual witness protection program and the child is spared. Yet, the dragon never gives up, and at the end of the chapter, he "goes to make war with the rest of her children, who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus." This is a major moment because this means that this Great Controversy is about to meet its apex.

Rescue of God's People

Revelation 13 begins with the culmination of Satan's attempts to destroy God's people and usurp God's throne. Nevertheless, shortly thereafter in subsequent chapters of Revelation, we see the judgments of God poured out,

followed by the implementation of the ultimate final judgment and eternal peace that ensues with the execution of the evil one.

The Scriptures state, "And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, 'Look! God's dwelling place is now among the people, and He will dwell with them. They will be His people, and God Himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.'"⁸

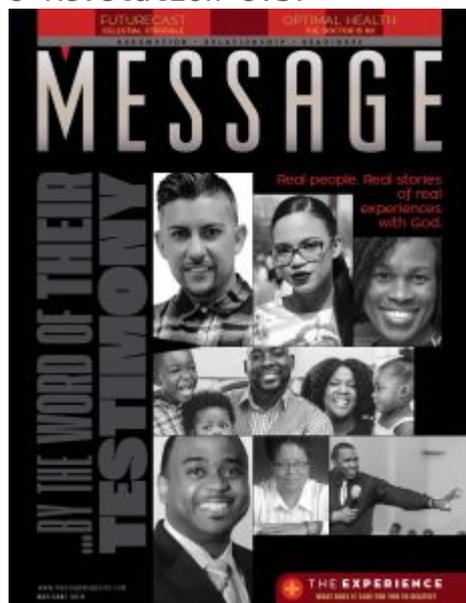
Victorious Family

It's this message that should give us all courage and hope! At the end of this celestial power struggle, God wins! And not only does God win, but He establishes victory for all those who put their trust in Him! Praise God! God has adopted us into His family and has called us by His own name! "We are more than conquerors through Him who loved us."⁹

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All scriptural texts are taken from the New International Version unless otherwise indicated.

- 1 Revelation 12:1
- 2 Revelation 12:2
- 3 Revelation 12:3
- 4 Revelation 12:4
- 5 Revelation 19:7, 21:2
- 6 Revelation 12:5
- 7 Revelation 12:4
- 8 Revelation 21:3-4
- 9 Revelation 8:37



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