

REVELATION SURVEY – Chapters 12-15

INTRODUCTION

Recall from **11:15** – “**And the seventh angel sounded**”

Chapters 12-15 cover a big long interlude between when that angel sounded in the text and before the bowls are poured out in chapter 16. John zooms out and has a panoramic view, then he zooms back in.

We must be careful. We want to be careful not to over dramatize the text but, at the same time, we want to pay attention to all the details that God gives us in the text.

→ Many godly men don't just throw out jot and tittle ... they throw out entire passages.

Proposition: War, Witnesses, Wrath, Woes

In **Chapter 12**, we encounter four entities: **Israel, Satan, Christ, Michael**

Israel – 12:1-2 “a woman”

12:1 – “a great sign appeared in heaven”

- this is the first of three signs: 12:1, 3; 15:1

12:2 – “she cried out, being in labor and in pain to give birth.”

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 Thee, O LORD.”

Isa 66:6-9 – similar picture

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.”

Satan – 12:3-4 “a great red dragon”

- see the word ‘dragon’ 13 times in Revelation referring to Satan

12:3 – “seven heads” – 13:1; 17:3, 17:7, 9ff

12:3 – “ten horns” – 13:1; 17:12, 17:16; Dan 7:7, 20, 24

12:4 – “his tail swept away a third of the stars of heaven, and threw them to the earth”

- When Satan fell, he took one third of the spirit beings with him. They became what we would now call demons. Those who didn’t fall, we refer to as angels.

12:4 – “And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she gave birth he might devour her child.”

- Satan has been trying from the beginning. He tried with Egypt. He tried with Assyria. He tried with Babylon. He tried with Rome. He tried with Herod the Great.
- As we will see this morning, he will try with Jesus’ hometown synagogue people in Nazareth.
- He tried with Hitler ... but ... God’s chosen nation of Israel is still standing.

Christ – 12:5-6 “a son, a male”

12:5 – “rod of iron” – 2:27; 11:15; 19:15; Psa 2:9

12:6 – “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.” – 12:14

Mark 13:14 – “when you see the abomination of desolation standing where it should not be (let the reader understand)”

“abomination of desolation”

- hated, detestable, disgusting, loathsome, repugnant
- used in the Bible about idolatry

“standing where it should not be”

Matt 24:15 – “standing in the holy place”

Temple – “which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet”

The midpoint of the Tribulation period when the antichrist sets himself up in the temple in Jerusalem and demands worship as god. – **Dan 7:7, 8, 20-21, 24-26; 9:27; 11:31**

Michael – 12:7

12:7 – “**there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. And the dragon and his angels waged war**”

Dan 10:12-21

→ 3 named: **Michael, Gabriel, Lucifer**. Michael is called “an archangel (Jude 9 – possibly Gabriel and Lucifer as well)

Isa 14

Ezek 28 – musical worship leader in heaven

Michael – Warrior, Gabriel – Messenger; Lucifer – Worshiper

12:9 – “**the great dragon was thrown down ... to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.**”

12:10 – “**And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, ‘... the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, who accuses them before our God day and night’**”

The voice of the church in heaven – angels don’t refer to Christians as “brethren.”

Contrary to popular belief, Satan is not in hell.

In fact, Satan has never been to hell. And when he does go there, he’s not going to rule anything.

Rather, he will be the one suffering the most severely in hell.

Hell is where he will be incarcerated and incinerated forever.

While Dante's *Inferno* may be right that Judas will have most severe punishment of all men ... Satan will not be the one tormenting Judas, chewing him in his mouth and scraping his back with his claws.

12:12 – “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.”

- war in Heaven becomes war on Earth

12:14 – “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.” – 12:6 - God's protection of Israel

The Beast from the Sea and the Beast from the Earth

The Beast from the Sea – 13:1-10 The Antichrist

13:1 – “he stood on the sand of the seashore” – the Colossus Angel stood with his foot on the land and the sea – **10:1-3**

13:1 – “a beast coming up out of the sea” – 17:15

Dan 7:3 – “four great beasts were coming up from the sea, different from one another.”

13:1 – “and on his heads *were* blasphemous names”

Blasphemy is not incidental to his operation, it is essential

- **13:1, 5-6; 16:9, 11, 21; 17:3**

13:2 – “leopard ... bear ... lion”

- we know from Daniel that this represents Greece, Medo-Persia and Babylon – **Dan 7:4-6**

The clear picture is that Satan is controlling the earth and giving this power and authority to his emissary, the antichrist.

13:3 – “*I saw one of his heads as if it had been slain, and his fatal wound was healed*” – 13:12, 14; 17:8; 2 Thess 2:9

13:3 – “*And the whole earth was amazed and followed after the beast;*” – 17:8

13:5 – “*speaking arrogant words and blasphemies; and authority to act for forty-two months was given to him.*” – **Dan 7:8, 11** – “another horn, a little one, came up among them, and three of the first horns were pulled out by the roots before it; and behold, this horn possessed eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth uttering great *boasts* ...¹¹Then I kept looking because of the sound of the boastful words which the horn was speaking”

13:7 – “*it was given to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them; and authority over every tribe and people and tongue and nation was given to him.*” – kill

13:8 – “*written from the foundation of the world in the book of life*” – 3:5 –

13:9 – “*If anyone has an ear, let him hear*” – Christ said that actually multiple times through the gospels

13:10 – “*perseverance and the faith of the saints*” – the “P” of TULIP

Patient endurance and faithfulness are the marks of victory over the two beasts.

The Beast from the Earth – 13:11-18 The False Prophet

World religion – 12:9; 13:11-15; 17

13:11 – “*another beast*” – 16:13; 19:20; 20:10; Dan 8:3

13:13 – “*he performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down out of heaven to the earth in the presence of men.*” – **Mark 13:22** – “false Christs and false prophets will

arise, and will show signs and wonders, in order, if possible, to lead the elect astray.”

13:14 – “telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who had the wound of the sword and has come to life” – **1:18** – “and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore”

13:16-17 – The mark of the Beast

13:18 – “the number of the beast, for the number is that of a man; and his number is six hundred and sixty-six”

- 666 is a trinity of imperfection
- we don’t need to speculate what this means other than that this is the number of the beast

Now we come to witnesses....

The 144,000, the Angel in Midheaven, the Ripe Harvest

14:1 – “the Lamb was standing on Mount Zion” – **5:6** – “a Lamb standing (Exod 12; Isa 53:7; John 1:29), as if slain, having seven horns (complete power/authority) and seven eyes (complete wisdom), which are the seven Spirits of God (Holy Spirit)”

14:1 – “and with Him one hundred and forty-four thousand” – **7:4-8** – 12,000 from each tribe → must take literal language

14:2 – “I heard a voice from heaven, like the sound of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder, and the voice which I heard *was like the sound* of harpists playing on their harps.”

- the predominant instruments we see are the harps and the trumpets
- harps are for men, not angels; the believing people

5:8 – “the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, having each one a harp”

15:2 – “those who had come off victorious from the beast and from his image and from the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, holding harps of God.”

→ Another reason the elders are the church, not angels

Ezek 43:2 – “behold, the glory of the God of Israel was coming from the way of the east. And His voice was like the sound of many waters; and the earth shone with His glory.

14:3 – “they sang a new song before the throne”

14:4 – “These are the ones who have not been defiled with women” – Does this mean they are virgins? No!

→ **Heb 13:4** – “Let marriage *be held* in honor among all, and let the *marriage bed be* undefiled;”

This does mean they are either virgins or are “one woman” men! → **14:5** – “they are blameless”; beyond reproach

“another angel” – we will see 6 times in the rest of Chapter 14
→ **14:6, 8, 9, 15, 17, 18**

14:6 – “I saw another angel flying in midheaven, having an eternal gospel to preach to those who live on the earth, and to every nation and tribe and tongue and people;” – **5:9**

There are three special witness categories:

Along with the 144,000 and the two witnesses (**11:1-13**), and now there is the first of the six – “another angel”

14:7 – “Fear God, and give Him glory, because the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made the heaven and the earth and sea and springs of waters.”

14:8 – “another angel, a second one, followed, saying, ‘Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, she who has made all the nations drink of the wine of the passion of her immorality.’”

14:9 – “another angel, a third one, followed them, saying with a loud voice, ...” → **READ 14:9-11**

14:10 – “tormented with fire and brimstone”

Psa 11:6 – “Upon the wicked He will rain snares; Fire and brimstone and burning wind will be the portion of their cup.”

Ezek 38:22 – “with pestilence and with blood I shall enter into judgment with him; and I shall rain on him, and on his troops, and on the many peoples who are with him, a torrential rain, with hailstones, fire, and brimstone.”

Luke 17:29 – “on the day that Lot went out from Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all.”

Rev 20:10 – “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 21:8 – “for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part *will be* in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”

14:11 – “the smoke of their torment goes up forever”

→ **Matt 25:46** – “these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

14:12 – “the perseverance of the saints” – speaks of the cause ... which we know from Scripture comes from the Perseverance of God

14:14-20 – **Joel 3:9-17** → **Joel 3:14** – “the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision.”

14:14 – “one like a son of man” – **1:13** – the humanness of the exalted Savior,

The dust of the earth is on the throne of the majesty of high.

Why “like a son of man” instead of “the son of man”?

→ because this time, He is so much more. He is conquering, majestic, deified, glorious, ...

Also, this is the last time He is referred to as “**son of man.**”
The first time He is referred to as “son of man” in New Testament?

→ **Matt 8:20** – “The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head.”

The first time, He had nothing.

→ This last time, He has everything ☺

14:15 – “And another angel came out of the temple, crying out with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, ‘Put in your sickle and reap, because the hour to reap has come, because the harvest of the earth is ripe.’” → overripe, rotten – grain harvest – **Matt 13:24-30, 36-43**

14:17 – “And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, and he also had a sharp sickle.” – that’s the seventh Temple

→ 1. Solomon’s, 2. Zerubbabel’s, 3. Herod’s, 4. God’s (the church), 5. Tribulation, 6. Millennial, 7. Heavenly

14:18 – “And another angel, he one who has power over fire, came out from the altar; and he called with a loud voice to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, ‘Put in your sharp sickle, and gather the clusters from the vine of the earth, because her grapes are ripe.’” – grape harvest

John 15:1 – “I am the true vine” → 2 Vines

14:15 – “Put in your sickle and reap, because the hour to reap has come, because the harvest of the earth is ripe.”

14:18 – “Put in your sharp sickle, and gather the clusters from the vine of the earth, because her grapes are ripe.”

→ truly ripe, bursting with juice

14:19 – “**the great wine press of the wrath of God.**”

Joel 3:13 – “Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Come, tread, for the wine press is full; the vats overflow, for their wickedness is great.”

The first time He came, He came as the Sower.

The second time, He comes as the Reaper.

The first time He came, the fields were white for harvest.

The second time He comes, the grapes are red for harvest.

The day of salvation, the day of vengeance.

14:20 – “**up to the horses’ bridles, for a distance of two hundred miles.**”

19:13 – “*He is* clothed with a robe dipped in blood; and His name is called The Word of God.”

It will be a choice then as it is now – either believe and bow or blaspheme and burn → **16:21**

Last Song of Praise and Seven Bowls of Judgment

15:1 – “**And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels who had seven plagues, which are the last, because in them the wrath of God is finished.”**

15:2 – “**And I saw, as it were, a sea of glass mixed with fire, and those who had come off victorious from the beast and from his image and from the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, holding harps of God.”**

- all the redeemed gathered in heaven standing on the sea of fiery glass singing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb

15:3 – “**they sang the song of Moses the bond-servant of God and the song of the Lamb”**

First Song – Exod 15:1-18 Last Song – Rev 15:3-4

15:4 – “Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify Your name? For You alone are holy; for all the nations will come and worship before You, for Your righteous acts have been revealed.”

Psa 86:9 – “All nations whom You have made will come and worship before You, O Lord; and they will glorify Your name.”

Isa 66:23 – “‘it shall be from new moon to new moon and from sabbath to sabbath, all mankind will come to bow down before Me,’ says the LORD.”

Seven Bowls of Judgment – 15:5-8

CONCLUSION