

The Book Of Revelation Study 60

Revelation 12:1-8 (NKJV)

¹ *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.*

² *Then being with child, she cried out in labor and in pain to give birth.*

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

⁴ *His tail drew a third of the stars 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.*

⁵ *She bore a male Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. And her Child was caught up to God and His throne.*

⁶ *Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days.*

⁷ *And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought,*

⁸ *but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer.*

As we have been studying this vision of John's we have come to see that this war is fought on two levels. **In heaven and on earth.**

Satan is making every effort to destroy those who serve God, and if he cannot destroy them he will make every effort to destroy their faith.

But remember however, what we know, and that is that Satan is a defeated foe. He was defeated at the cross. His sentence however is yet to be assigned.

So this epochal, long, supernatural war of Satan against God will find its climax in this profound passage.

John has introduced the combatants in *chapter 12:1-6*.

And as we go forward we find that the war in heaven, may be divided into three sections:

The Battle

The Victory

The Celebration

So let's look at the first section:

THE BATTLE

Revelation 12:1-8 (NKJV)

⁷ *And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought,*

⁸ *but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer.*

There has been **war in heaven** since the fall of Satan;

Isaiah 14:12-14 (NKJV)

¹² *"How you are fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How you are cut down to the ground, You who weakened the nations!*

¹³ *For you have said in your heart: 'I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God; I will also sit on the mount of the congregation On the farthest sides of the north;*

¹⁴ *I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High.'*

At the present however he still has access to God's presence in heaven, his domain is the earth and the air around the earth.

2 Corinthians 4:4 (NKJV)

⁴ *whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.*

Ephesians 2:2 (NKJV)

² *in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience,*

We also know that his demon hosts are the "spiritual forces of wickedness in heavenly places" (Eph 6:12)

Satan, along with his evil angels, has actively opposed both the Holy Angels and God's people since his fall.

In the Old Testament demons sought to hinder the ministry of the holy angels to Israel.

Daniel 10:12-13 (NKJV)

¹² *Then he said to me, "Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words.*

¹³ *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.*

In this present age;

1 Peter 5:8 (NKJV)

⁸ *Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour.*

Satan opposes the spread of the Gospel;

Matthew 13:19 (NKJV)

¹⁹ *When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside.*

Matthew 13:37-39 (NKJV)

³⁷ *He answered and said to them: "He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man.*

³⁸ *The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked one.*

³⁹ *The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels.*

Acts 13:10 (NKJV)

¹⁰ *and said, "O full of all deceit and all fraud, you son of the devil, you enemy of all righteousness, will you not cease perverting the straight ways of the Lord?"*

He oppresses individuals;

Luke 13:10-16 (NKJV)

¹⁰ Now He was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath.

¹¹ And behold, there was a woman who had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bent over and could in no way raise herself up.

¹² But when Jesus saw her, He called her to Him and said to her, "Woman, you are loosed from your infirmity."

¹³ And He laid His hands on her, and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God.

¹⁴ But the ruler of the synagogue answered with indignation, because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath; and he said to the crowd, "There are six days on which men ought to work; therefore come and be healed on them, and not on the Sabbath day."

¹⁵ The Lord then answered him and said, "Hypocrite! Does not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or donkey from the stall, and lead it away to water it?"

¹⁶ So ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan has bound--think of it--for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath?"

Acts 10:38 (NKJV)

³⁸ how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him.

He uses sin to disrupt and pollute the church;

Acts 5:1-11 (NKJV)

¹ But a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, sold a possession.

² And he kept back part of the proceeds, his wife also being aware of it, and brought a certain part and laid it at the apostles' feet.

³ But Peter said, "Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and keep back part of the price of the land for yourself?"

⁴ While it remained, was it not your own? And after it was sold, was it not in your own control? Why have you conceived this thing in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God."

⁵ Then Ananias, hearing these words, fell down and breathed his last. So great fear came upon all those who heard these things.

⁶ And the young men arose and wrapped him up, carried him out, and buried him.

⁷ Now it was about three hours later when his wife came in, not knowing what had happened.

⁸ And Peter answered her, "Tell me whether you sold the land for so much?" She said, "Yes, for so much."

⁹ Then Peter said to her, "How is it that you have agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord? Look, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out."

¹⁰ Then immediately she fell down at his feet and breathed her last. And the young men came in and found her dead, and carrying her out, buried her by her husband.

¹¹ So great fear came upon all the church and upon all who heard these things.

Believers are to beware of his schemes;

2 Corinthians 2:11 (NKJV)

¹¹ lest Satan should take advantage of us; for we are not ignorant of his devices.

We are to give him no opportunity;

Ephesians 4:27 (NKJV)

²⁷ *nor give place to the devil.*

And we are to resist him;

James 4:7 (NKJV)

⁷ *Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.*

The war raging in the heavens between supernatural beings will reach its peak during the Tribulation. That future conflict will find **Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon.**

The grammatical construction of that phrase in the Greek text indicates that Satan (**the dragon**) will start this battle.

It can be translated, "*Michael and his angels had to fight the dragon.*"

The Bible does not reveal how angels fight one another nor does our limited knowledge of the heavenly realm permit us to speculate.

Henry Morris writes;

With what weapons and by what tactics this heavenly warfare will be waged is beyond our understanding. Angels cannot be injured or slain with earthly weapons, and such physical forces as we know about are not able to move spiritual beings.

But these beings do operate in a physical universe, so there must exist powerful physico-spiritual energies of which we yet can have only vague intimations, energies which can propel angelic bodies in superluminary velocities through space and which can move mountains and change planetary orbits.

It is with such energies and powers that this heavenly battle will be waged and the spectators in heaven (including John) will watch in awe. When Michael finally prevails, and Satan is forced forever out of the heavens, a tremendous cry of thanksgiving will resound through the heavens. (The Revelation Record [Wheaton, Ill: Tyndale, 1983], 224)

The key interpretive question is not how the battle will be fought, but what will cause it.

While it is impossible to be dogmatic, this ultimate battle may be triggered by the taking of the Church from the earth. It is described by Paul;

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 (NKJV)

¹⁶ *For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.*

¹⁷ *Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.*

It is possible, as you think about it when the church is taken and believers pass through their realm, the prince of the power of the air and his demon hosts will try to hinder their passage. That may trigger the battle with Michael and the Holy Angels.

Michael and the dragon (Satan) have known each other since they were created, and the battle during the Tribulation will not be the first time they have opposed each other.

We are to give him no opportunity;

Ephesians 4:27 (NKJV)

²⁷ *nor give place to the devil.*

And we are to resist him;

James 4:7 (NKJV)

⁷ *Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.*

The war raging in the heavens between supernatural beings will reach its peak during the Tribulation. That future conflict will find **Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon.**

The grammatical construction of that phrase in the Greek text indicates that Satan (**the dragon**) will start this battle.

It can be translated, "*Michael and his angels had to fight the dragon.*"

The Bible does not reveal how angels fight one another nor does our limited knowledge of the heavenly realm permit us to speculate.

Henry Morris writes;

With what weapons and by what tactics this heavenly warfare will be waged is beyond our understanding. Angels cannot be injured or slain with earthly weapons, and such physical forces as we know about are not able to move spiritual beings.

But these beings do operate in a physical universe, so there must exist powerful physico-spiritual energies of which we yet can have only vague intimations, energies which can propel angelic bodies in superluminary velocities through space and which can move mountains and change planetary orbits.

It is with such energies and powers that this heavenly battle will be waged and the spectators in heaven (including John) will watch in awe. When Michael finally prevails, and Satan is forced forever out of the heavens, a tremendous cry of thanksgiving will resound through the heavens. (The Revelation Record [Wheaton, Ill: Tyndale, 1983], 224)

The key interpretive question is not how the battle will be fought, but what will cause it.

While it is impossible to be dogmatic, this ultimate battle may be triggered by the taking of the Church from the earth. It is described by Paul;

1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 (NKJV)

¹⁶ *For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.*

¹⁷ *Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.*

It is possible, as you think about it when the church is taken and believers pass through their realm, the prince of the power of the air and his demon hosts will try to hinder their passage. That may trigger the battle with Michael and the Holy Angels.

Michael and the dragon (Satan) have known each other since they were created, and the battle during the Tribulation will not be the first time they have opposed each other.

Michael is always seen in Scripture as the defender of God's people against satanic destruction.

Daniel 10:12-13 (NKJV)

¹² Then he said to me, "Do not fear, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart to understand, and to humble yourself before your God, your words were heard; and I have come because of your words.

¹³ 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 10:20 (NKJV)

²⁰ Then he said, "Do you know why I have come to you? And now I must return to fight with the prince of Persia; and when I have gone forth, indeed the prince of Greece will come.

Daniel also speaks of Michael as the defender of Israel

Daniel 12:1 (NKJV)

¹ "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, Even to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered, Every one who is found written in the book.

The New Testament also reveals Michael to be the defender of God's people.

Jude 1:9 (NKJV)

⁹ Yet Michael the archangel, in contending with the devil, when he disputed about the body of Moses, dared not bring against him a reviling accusation, but said, "The Lord rebuke you!"

After Moses' death, Michael contested Satan for possession of Moses' body, which Satan wanted to use for some pernicious purpose.

But in the Lord's power, Michael won the battle and subsequently we read:

Deuteronomy 34:5-6 (NKJV)

⁵ So Moses the servant of the Lord died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord.

⁶ And He buried him in a valley in the land of Moab, opposite Beth Peor; but no one knows his grave to this day.

In our original scripture here to **the dragon and his angels** reinforces the truth that the demon hosts are under Satan's command, a principle stated by Jesus in Matthew:

Matthew 25:41 (NKJV)

⁴¹ Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels:

The repetition of the phrase **waging war, waged war** emphasizes the force and fury of the battle;

This will be no minor skirmish, but an all out battle.

Satan will fight desperately to prevent Christ from establishing His millennial kingdom. Thus the supernatural war will reach a crescendo as the time for Christ to establish His earthly and eternal kingdom draws near.

All of Satan's attempts to oppose God throughout history have failed and he will lose this final angelic battle as well.

The devil and his angels are **not strong enough** to defeat God, Michael, and the holy angels. Satan will suffer such a complete defeat that **there will no longer be a place found for him and his demon hosts in heaven.**

Every inch of heaven will be scoured and all the rebellious fallen angels permanently cast out . they will no longer have access to God's presence, and Satan will never again accuse believers before the throne of God. This defeat will also mark the end of Satan's reign as, *"the prince of the power of the air"* (Eph 2:2).

But heavens cleansing is earths pollution, as Satan's full fury explodes on humanity when he is cast to the earth;

Revelation 12:12 (NKJV)

¹² 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."

Now as to what time and what exact point in the Tribulation Satan and the demons will be evicted from heaven is not revealed, nor is the duration of their battle with Michael and the Holy angels.

All that can be said with certainty is that Satan and the demons will be cast out of heaven, possibly at the taking home of the Church, but no later than the midpoint of the Tribulation.

Verse 12, says that Satan and his forces have only a short time after they leave heaven, supporting the view that they will have only the last three and a half years of the Tribulation to operate, rather than the full seven years.

They will not arrive on earth later than that, since they clearly are present during the terrible events of the last three and a half years, the Great Tribulation (**9:1**).

During that last period, Satan's full power will be directed at anyone belonging to God, especially Israel.