

Revelation 12

The preceding verse [11: 19] presented the final destination – the ends of the two ways, the outcome of two human decisions. One is the arc of the covenant in Christ, and the other is judgment for abuse and rejection of God's grace. The beauty and glory of our Creator's grace and holiness is revealed to the believing and faithful. Lightnings, thunders, voices, earthquakes, and great hail indicate grave consequences of following Satan's lies. After unfolding so much of God's revelation, our Lord is presenting to us another enlightenment that we can see anew, with deeper insight and clearer understanding, salvation in Christ, God's Son, and, the devil's total failure.

1] A great wonder appeared in heaven: a woman adorned in sun. The moon was under her feet. A crown of twelve stars was on her head. This is a great wonder indeed! In this Revelation it is just one more wonder. Which vision in the 1st 11 chapters was not a wonder? In Galatians 4: 26-31 the Jerusalem above is our eternal Mother. All the redeemed in Christ, are the free children of the free Mother. In 2nd Corinthians 11: 2 the apostle refers to the fellowship of believers as to a chaste virgin espoused to Christ. In Isaiah 4: 1 we see all the apostate nominal religious groups seek the Name only of the true Husband, our Lord, just to hide their immorality and corruption. In Isaiah 50: 1 our Heavenly Father refers to the nation of Judah as to the people's mother and as His faithless, immoral wife. Our Lord speaks to His people as to His wife and her children in Hosea chapter 2. In Malachi 4: 2 & 3 is a promise that the Sun of righteousness with healing shall arise to the faithful and make them victorious. The writer to the Hebrew Christians in the chapter 11 listed many faithful believers beginning with Abel and did not end the long list. In the verse 40 all the faithful Christians are joined to the preceding witnesses as if perpetuating Ephesians 4: 4-13. This grace is given to us in Christ and on His merit: One Lord! One God and Father of all - is above all, through all, and in you all;

one body, Spirit, hope, faith, baptism. Is not this the teaching included in our Savior's words in Matthew 23: 34? Our Lord indicates one wicked generation since Cain and one righteous generation since Abel. In Christ we, believers, are all one. In John 4:22 our Savior says that salvation is of the Jews. In the physical, bodily sense, the greatest corruption and wickedness is also of the Jews [Jeremiah 3: 7&10]. In the light of the Gospel, our Lord Jesus talked to that Samaritan woman referring to Israel, the true people of God, redeemed in Christ since Abel's time to the end [Romans 2: 28&29]. The wonder woman vision signifies the Fellowship of the faithful, redeemed in Christ before and after death and resurrection of Christ in His flesh; in His human body. In life and death, in suffering or joy, all of them are in the sunshine of Christ's righteousness. He adorned His Bride in His glorious garment - His perfect righteousness. We see this Woman, the Wife of the Lamb [19: 7&8; 21: 9-27], above the moon and with a twelve star crown. Twelve tribes of Israel of all times, circumcised in the heart [Romans 2: 29&28], the redeemed of all ages, having their mind crowned by the Living Word [John 1] as witnessed in words and deeds by Christ's twelve apostles. In Numbers 10: 10 & 28: 11 is the law of special offerings to the Lord in the beginning of each [lunar] month. That day was named New Moon. In 2nd Kings 23: 5 and in Jeremiah 8: 2 are some records of the moon-worship the Hebrews copied from some gentile nations. In this vision Christ's righteousness keeps us above all idolatries. Our adversary has been defeated, but not eliminated all together. When we ponder on the marvelous salvation by grace and merit of God's Son, our faith and gratitude grows and our daily walk is enriched with the fruits of His Holy Spirit. A soul filled with the light of the Gospel Truth, provides no room for Satan's deceit and snares. We can see the evil influence of our enemy in the world, in the life of defeated believers, and in false religions. If we are peaceful and joyful, the devil tries to tell us that we – ourselves – are strong and any suffering believer has something wrong in his or her life. If Satan convinced us to trust in our own ability, soon we fall in his snare.

As we see ourselves in hardship and lack of success, the devil accuses God to us that God has forsaken us. Our Lord reveals to us that every blessing and good gift comes from our Heavenly Father. This is His grace to us – in our Savior. Outside God’s grace in Christ there is nothing good; no peace, no joy, no good progress; only misery. We cannot benefit by putting dark clouds of our disobedience between us and our Lord’s righteousness. Our victory and blessedness is not in sin, not in ourselves. Our wellbeing is in our Redeemer only; never without Him. In Christ, our Savior and Lord, we are strong in suffering, brave in battles, wise in our choices, and ever blessed.

2-4] The woman is travailing in childbirth and crying in pain. Another great sign appears in heaven: a great red dragon having seven crowned heads and ten horns. The dragon’s tail drew the third part of heavenly stars down. This dragon stands by the travailing woman intending to devour her child as soon as he was born: two big signs! Two great wonders are before us. The first one is greater than the second. Travail and pain in this vision includes the struggles of all godly women since our mother Eve. All godly mothers travailed to give birth, and also, in prayers for our God’s mercy that their children receive our Lord’s grace for salvation and be God’s light on earth. This travail includes prayers, offerings, and labor, witnessing to the Truth, resisting evil, suffering persecution and martyrdom. Here are the tears, sweat, and blood of all the faithful saved by our Savior’s mercy & grace since the announcement in Genesis 3: 14&15 – our Savior’s victory, until Jude 14&15 – our Lord’s final judgment. Yes, it is a great wonder: the Spirit of our God has been delivering sinners from sin and death to make them His bellowed heirs of the everlasting life and eternal kingdom. The battle often was with bloodshed. The path was very steep and thorny at times. God’s faithful witnesses are victorious because the Lamb’s Spirit is their Guard. Our adversary, the master of evil and deception rises against our Lord’s wonderful work of salvation. The devil threatens the child at His

birth. He did the same in Cain's heart and life. Abel entered into our Lord's glory, but Cain took upon his soul the shackles of self-condemnation. Satan used Pharaoh to murder the children in Egypt. The wicked one planned to keep the nation of Israel in slavery and poverty. Against his own will he raised God's deliverer because our Lord elected, preserved, trained, schooled and called Moses to lead the people out of slavery and torture. Moses was not independent leader; he just faithfully followed our Savior's perfect guidance. The slave-owners in Egypt were slaves of Satan and darkness. The slaves in Egypt were liberated to worship their true and ever living God. That wonder is also a part of this wonder in 12: 1-4. Satan is defeated and our Lord is victorious and glorified. In 2nd Kings 11, the devil destroyed the royal dynasty. They had no power for defense. God's Word was their defense before they rejected His Word. His grace and mercy was their deliverance, but they despised the Holy One and hurled themselves into the chasm of godlessness. But God rescued Joash, the youngest child in the royal family, and raised him under godly priesthood secluded away from idolatry in Judah. About seven years later the queen Athaliah, that slave and priestess of Satan, was destroyed, child Joash was crowned king in Judah, the family line of David remained unbroken and the purpose of Satan was defeated again. The labor of that woman adorned in sunshine of Christ's grace continues; and the monster is defeated. That Child is still on the highest throne and His Spirit works in the heart, mind and life of His redeemed people. The dragon has seven heads crowned with crowns; and he has ten horns. In 2nd Peter's 1: 5-7 is admonishment to us to be diligent in adding to our faith virtue, vigor and up-righteousness, and to grow in our understanding. In our knowledge and understanding we are to practice temperance – self-control. The fourth quality of growing in the faith and knowledge of God's Son is patience, endurance and steadfastness. The fifth dimension is godly reverence and piety with true devotions for our Father's good pleasure. Brotherly kindness and affection follow.

Charity, love of our Lord and Savior, is the 7th jewel from the treasures of our Lord's grace. In Proverbs 9: 1 Wisdom has built her house with seven pillars. In Isaiah 14: 12-19 our Lord speaks against the king of Babylon and compares him with Satan personally. Contrary to the Spirit of Christ, Lucifer is lusting for self-exaltation. Satan is opposing our Lord Jesus in every opportunity because the devil is in rebellion against our Heavenly Father and our Savior delights to please the Father. Ever since the evil one deceived first people, he is laboring in his wickedness. God said to Adam not to eat of the tree. Satan told Eve that fruit is very desirable; to get wise. Our Savior's words in 2nd Peter's 1: 5-7 are for our guidance. The first talent to be added to our faith is virtue. We can suppose that the first head of the dragon could be corruption to add to the rebellion. The second talent is knowledge, good understanding. The Enemy will offer ignorance and foolishness. Our Lord gives self-control. The devil tries to ignite wrath and fury. Our Master gives example of patience and endurance. Our adversary would make us feel that our burdens are unbearable and last too long a time. Our Father cultivates us to be godly. Satan is falsely presenting godlessness as our right and enjoyment. Our father delights in our kindness. Satan is accuser, creating grudge and discord. Charity and brotherly love is God's precious talent. Satan is full of greed, cruelty. We can visualize the rebellious monster with seven heads: corruption, foolish ignorance, furious wrath, aimless irresolution, Idolatry, blasphemy, murders. Obviously all the seven crowns are made of fake gold. In Genesis 19 our Lord's angels urge Lot to accept divine deliverance, and in the verse 17 they stress: Flee to the mountain lest you perish; but the devil replied: O, no, this small city is better; so, one way or another, the whole family was lost. Satan failed again: only those he managed to persuade perish and confirm his doom in the end. Abraham, the faithful, pleads with the Lord for the deliverance of his nephew and the family. Abraham appeals to God's justice and mercy for the others and our Lord preserves Abraham. Herod cruelly murdered all the small children in, and around, Bethlehem; all but ONE that he lusted to see dead. The devil is trying the same till now. As the

power of the Holy Spirit is manifested and the Gospel preaching spreads in the bloody Jerusalem, the local and provincial rulers attacked the new Church in her infancy. Again, the Enemy failed. The Lamb's power in suffering - in His Body, the Church - is stronger than the wrath of Christ's defeated Enemy. In Christ we are safe. As soon as a sinner sensed the Light of the Gospel Truth, as soon as some slight traces of a new life are noticed in his or her daily walk, Satan will stir up his hordes of evil spirits to destroy the unborn child of our Father. In some cases the Enemy just about disappears, leaving an illusion of easy conversion, to suddenly attack - as Cain. The birth of this Child, the coming of the Messiah, was in prayers of all godly generations since man started the life of struggles and grief on this earth. Salvation has been the most urgent need of every human soul. Christ has been before the world, foretold in Genesis 3 and, came as a newborn child in the beginning of the Gospel books.

3] This ugly bloody dragon has ten horns. My strong impression is that this dragon is the devil personally. It's not always easy to discern between Satan and his blind slaves in the chapters 13 & 17, since the evil one at times hides behind his victims in order to deceive the saved and the lost; and, some of his slaves imitate their master. In the chapter 13: 1 the beast rises from the sea. This beast also has seven heads with seven crowns and ten horns. Later in this chapter [13] we see that this beast and the dragon are closely related, but not the same being. In the chapter 17 we see this same beast again. In the verse number 12 the ten horns are ten kings. The ten horns on the dragon's heads are a mismatch with the seven crowned heads. If the horns are on the heads, we can imagine that three heads had a pair of horns each, and four heads had single horn each.

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Satan uses two strong influences to enslave men: false promises and, horrifying threats. Usually both are crafty lies. If our Lord prevents not the devil, he attacks men with cruelty beyond imagination and he also lie to us

that there is no value or purpose in our labor and suffering; that God has no concern for us. Our Lord Jesus teaches us “I am with you always to the end of the world”; I believe this includes time and location. Our God forgets not. Experiences of His faithful disciples testify to this Gospel teaching: our Savior and Lord is with us always and He bears the burdens, He lifts us up when we stumble, He takes us in His arms when we feel exhausted. He supplies endurance and courage. In suffering Job and John received our God’s revelation [Chapter 1: 9-20 & Job 42: 5]. Through suffering James entered into glory and Peter was delivered to return to the young Church [Acts 12: 1-11]. Between the dragon’s seven heads there are clashes and rivalry as if the devil hates his own body [Mark 5]. His more powerful heads use both horns: false promises and scary threats; the weaker ones lie and crave power. Since Satan’s power is in falsehood and he has no physical might in himself, I see his appearance as a monster like a part of his strategy. It’s a mirage of promises, threats, or both. He entices fools to fight for satisfaction of their satanic lusts. If he can enslave them, he will use them for his purpose, but only within God’s marked limits. In the chapter 5: 6 we see the Lamb as the only ONE worthy to fulfill the entire desire of our Heavenly Father. The Lamb is visible with seven horns and seven eyes, signifying God’s seven Spirits active, powerful & successful in the whole world. He is the Almighty and the all seeing, all knowing God, the Son. Satan displays his ten horns. He is a murderer, a liar, and the father of lies. In him there is no righteousness and truth [John 8: 44]. He is a false god himself and he instigates false divinities for the sin-blinded humanity for thousands of years. His lust is distorted Gospel Truth to magnify vanity & falsehood, and stir up his slaves to persecute Christ’s Body on earth. The devil’s great aim is to separate us from our gracious Lord. He is the greatest failure in the universe and cannot do the least evil away from the sight and knowledge of our Father. Satan can do nothing without our Lord’s permission. Then, why our God allows this enemy to do such evil in the world and even to God’s children? I’ll share just one example, although the Scriptures and our short lifetime experiences are numberless. In Acts 6, 7

and 8 is the true story about Stephen, a greatly gifted brother in Christ, boldly witnessing to the opposition. Satan furiously attacked this voice of Truth and the slaves of sin and darkness had to hear more Gospel teaching. They murdered Stephen to silence the Gospel testimony in Jerusalem and Judea. The faithful martyr entered our Savior's glory, many disciples were scattered to the other regions preaching the Good News of salvation in Christ and our Lord plucked out of Satan's shackles a prominent murderer, Saul of Tarsus, to make him Christ's apostle. Satan failed again and the Good News exploded through the empire. Again, our Lord Emanuel is victorious and glorified among the gentiles in the hearts of His disciples. When we suffer with Christ, we partake of the Lamb's glory. In his greatest success the devil only captures his own, the victims that are foolish enough to believe him.

4] The dragon's tail dragged the third part of the heavenly stars down to the earth. Here we are not given some details: when and how he managed to do this great evil. This seems more like his basic description: great red seven-headed dragon with seven crowns and ten horns, and with the tail casting stars of heaven down to earth. He managed to "promote" the rebellious third of angels into evil spirits forever condemned, hateful & tormented. He is deceiving sinful humanity and continually he is defeated by our Savior's Spirit. He would like his beasts, his fiercest slaves, to live many centuries multiplying wickedness and persecuting Christ's faithful Gospel-witnesses. He is full of wrath because his time is short. His most efficient slaves are self-destructive, suicidal, and their time is very short. They cannot be active a moment longer than our Father's appointed time for them.

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In Isaiah 9: 15 the false prophet is the tail. Lucifer is the head-prophet of falsehood. All the false prophets are his victims. His tail is destructive in one more aspect. The dragon threatens the Child Jesus not yet born, but after

the birth of the Child, the Enemy has no power over the newborn. Satan threatens with his seven heads and ten horns, but it is his tail that cast one third of the stars down. Satan gains power when a sinner let him ignite sinful lust. Satan's seven mouths speak great promises and glitter with their seven crowns of fake gold. To all his deceived victims the devil's lies appear like pure logic because their mind is intoxicated with the wine of evil wrath and fornication [chapter 14: 8]. The testimony in James 1: 15 must be fulfilled. Only our Savior can defeat the devil. Without Christ, our Savior and Lord, we are helpless, hopeless, and lifeless. In suffering and persecution or in peaceful prosperity, in youthful vigor or on the death bed, in Christ we are blessed, we are victorious; we are on the way of life everlasting, the path to eternal glory of our crucified, resurrected and glorified Lord Jesus Christ.

5] She gave birth to a man child; He rules all nations with a rod of iron. The child was taken up to God's throne. This verse reveals to us the next step of the unfolding development: after the great wonder in the verses 1&2 and another wonder in the verses 3&4, we behold the wonder of wonders: the man Child was born - to rule. Great wonders, totally unlikely and invisible to carnal eyes, are revealed and clearly manifested in the site of our Father's children: the Revelation of Jesus Christ, His Father [and ours] gives to Him to unfold it to us. A woman in child-birth-pain could never resist the threat of that awful monster without our Mighty God's power-adornment. God alone, and, He personally, adorned His precious Flock with the sunshine of His righteousness and that ugly enemy cannot take it away [John 10: 29]. This great monster has been defeated by the suffering Lamb since the beginning [1st Peter's 1: 19&20]. Shamelessly he returns back again and again just to suffer another defeat of his. In the times of patriarchs, judges, prophets, and kings, whenever our God's people trusted, obeyed, and waited on, our Lord, the Enemy was defeated. When the promised child Jesus, our Lord, was born, all the dark, fallen spirits were moved with rage to extinguish the Light of Truth send from above; and the devil failed once

more. In Matthew 4: 1-11, in Mark 1: 13, and in Luke 4: 1-13, Satan is experiencing a complete fiasco. For the sinless Son of our God every testing is a manifestation of the constant victory of Light against darkness [John 1: 5]. This child is up on His Father's throne high above sin and evil desires [John 3: 13, Philippians 3: 20, & Ephesians 2]. In Matthew 26: 47 – 27: 54, in Mark 14: 43 – 15: 39, in Luke 22: 47 – 23: 47, and in John 18: 3 – 19: 30 we can perceive a small part of the great battle. Even as our blessed Redeemer's body in suffering beyond description is bleeding to death and our God's just judgment for our sin is crushing His pure soul, Satan's fortress is crumbling. All of the wicked devices the devil has been building since the beginning, the towers of pride, the craftiest lies, his strongest shackles, and his heaviest yokes, all that he trusted in, is crumbling when this Ruler's scepter of iron just touches them on behalf of genuinely repenting sinners. His scepter judges all sins of the humanity. His offering redeems all the obedient. To them His rod of iron secures the evergreen pastures and the Fountain of Living Water. Their old man of sin is crushed by this Ruler's rod of iron and a new child of our Heavenly Father has been born and given to the tender loving care of this Shepherd of shepherds. How He loves His little lambs. Christ's scepter never compromises the perfect divine justice. He received our judgment and death compressed in His suffering on the pillar of suffering and shame, but the judgment of impenitent sinners is spread for them in eternity [2: 11, 20: 6, 14&15 and 21: 8]. Here I'd suggest listening to my corresponding Gospel presentations.

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6] The woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared of God that they should feed her there twelve hundred and sixty days. Before the birth of her child she suffered in child-birth pain. Now she fled into the wilderness. The Fellowship of the redeemed souls on earth often suffered, always labored, and - prevailed. This is a part of the beautiful sunshine: our Lord's adornment of God's Flock in the wilderness. In the wilderness our Master defeated the tempter. In the wilderness the rebellious Hebrews

perished, but a mighty host of godly Israelites was born. In the wilderness Elijah received God's glorious revelation. In the wilderness John preached. In the wilderness our Lord Jesus fed multitudes with a few loaves and fish and commanded His disciples to gather up the fragments that remained that nothing be lost [John 6: 5-13]. Lot preferred a city rather than wilderness and his family perished. In the wilderness God named Abram 'God's friend - faithful Abraham'. In Genesis 24: 63 Isaac went out to meditate in the field and met his bride – Rebecca. In Hebrews 13: 10-15 are these words: "We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle. The bodies of those beasts, whose blood is brought into the sanctuary by the high priest for sin, are burned without the camp. Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate. Let us go forth therefore unto Him without the camp, bearing His reproach. For here we have no continuing city, but we seek one to come. By Him therefore let us be offering our praise to God continually". For a lusting blind sinner, sinful cities are like centers of satisfaction and abundant life, but wilderness is to him a threat of losing sinful opportunities. For the souls redeemed – in Christ, the greater the distance between us and the influence of worldly wickedness, the less distraction we suffer in our adoration, charity and godly testimony. This wilderness is not aimless wondering, but total dependence on our Father's loving care and safekeeping. Our God has prepared safety and security for us in our full rejection of vanity, pride, lust of the flesh, and lust of eyes. [Acts 14: 15; Romans 1: 21 & 13: 14; Mark 7: 21-23; Galatians 5: 16 & 17; Ephesians 2: 3; I Timothy 2: 9] The Fellowship of Christ's redeemed on earth is abundantly fed in the wilderness apart from the world in sin and darkness. The entire Holy Word of God is our Bread of Heaven. The heavenly host is united with our Master's ministers in perpetuating our Savior's feeding multitude with bread and fish. [Hebrews 1: 7; I Peter's 1: 12] No poison of worldliness should ever be accepted as substitute for the pure water of Life, purity, modesty and godly simplicity that flows from the lips of our Lord Jesus. This feasting on the Manna from above is our

need and our duty twelve hundred and sixty days: every day – as long as the Gospel testimony is proclaimed on earth.

7&8] There was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon. The dragon and his angels fought but prevailed not; their place was not found any more in heaven. I need to use some help from the book of Daniel; chapter 10. I wish you would study the entire book of Daniel, or, at least this chapter 10 - with insight. In Daniel 10: 12 our Lord reveals to our brother Daniel, the prophet, some of the mysterious battle in the sphere of spirits. Because of the limited time and space, not desiring to make this presentation way too long, I am focused on some particular verses. 12] On the day Daniel began to fast and pray, his words were known to God. God's answer was ready, but Daniel did not hear the answer before the three weeks of fasting and praying past. 13] The prince of Persia prevents God's message and action for three weeks. God's prince, Michael, helps our Lord. The message reaches Daniel's awareness and understanding. Our Lord still works on the Persian kings. Our Almighty Creator created the universe not depending on the prince Michael or any other being He, our God, created subsequently [Genesis 1]. Isaiah 45: 23 & Romans 14: 11 indicate that there is no power above our God.

Who is this Persian prince able to withstand God and prevent Daniel from getting God's message for 21 days?

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Matthew 26: 54 indicates our Lord Jesus strictly performing His Word. Some of His reasons might not be clear to us for a time or, perhaps forever. This is our opportunity to trust Him and fully rely on Him to do our Father's perfect pleasure in all things. He cares for our souls with patient tender love leading forward [John 16: 12 & 13]. Our Savior tells us that He has prepared His guidance according to our ability of bearing, benefitting, ministering. My perception is helped by Daniel 10: 1. God used the king Cyrus for God's purpose [Ezra 1], but Daniel must not allow the Persian

spirit to reduce Daniel's clear understanding of the visions and revelations our Lord gives him. We may not rely on the friendly people in the world around us, but on our Lord alone. We may not fear any threat of our 'circumstances'. We reverence our Lord; trust and obey Him. We need to honor all authorities for our Master's sake. Considering Mark 9: 28-29; Acts 10: 30, 13: 3 & 14: 23, our entire battle is in our Lord's care. As soon as Daniel's heart was ready to hear our Lord's message, the vision was clear; until that moment, prayer is in place. No power of darkness can withstand the smallest ray of Christ's Gospel light. In John 8: 12 He is our Light. In Daniel 10 the war [between the angelic forces and the dragon] was in Daniel's faith and understanding. Here, in the Revelation 12: 7, we see a war in heaven. Was this war too close to the throne of God? Was God's safety and comfort in any danger? Observe our Lord and Savior in His flesh in Gethsemane: the horde of Satan's slaves stumbles backwards. In Philippians 3: 20 our conversation, citizenship, living day by day, is in heaven. In 1st Corinthians 8: 4 we see that only One God is the true God, but in the next verse we read that there is a whole heaven of false gods. This heaven is the imaginary – pagan – heaven. In this Revelation 12: 7 we see still the same war as in Daniel 10. It's the battle between the Heavenly Truth and the carnal, worldly lie and idolatry. The name Michael is translated "who is like God". Michael and his angels are all the godly messengers – from Heaven, and, on the way to Heaven. The dragon and his messengers are Satan and all the evil spirits together with the slaves of sin and darkness. The war is still going on although the enemy has been defeated many times. This long war records our great Captain's multitude of victories. The war is in Heaven and not a single victory is ever in question. God's Lamb is always victorious. The war is about our Lord's Kingdom and our King of kings is constantly teaching and training us to be His loyal soldiers: in Matthew 13: 24-30 & 47-50; 22: 1-14 & 25: 1-13. The dragon and his angels prevailed not. Michael and his angels are not declared the victors in this battle; why? All Christians are soldiers of the Great King and all together, just as each individually, are victorious only in

Christ our Lamb of God. The idols are nothing. [I Corinthians 10: 19-20] Satan is the real god of idolatry and falsehood. Where are the gods of Egypt, Persia, Babylon, Rome, Aztecs, Incas, and Mayas? Where are the idols of many isms, past & present: racism, capitalism, communism, atheism, fascism, and nationalism? Did any of them ever create the paradise all of them promised? They are all defeated, cast to their own dust; their hopes forever lost. Yet the poor shackled sinners lost in darkness and deception still worship the lifeless dust of Satan's rebellion. The devil and his angels are fallen from Heaven; all the idols are fallen from the gentile heaven; only the humble Lamb of Calvary is forever victorious in Heaven and in the hearts of His redeemed pilgrims and soldiers on earth.

9] The great dragon, the old serpent from Genesis 3, called the Devil and Satan, which deceives the whole world, and his angels were cast out into the earth. The eternal reign of our King of kings and Lord of lords has never ceased. The blessings our God gave to Abel the correction offered to Cain in Genesis 4 witness to God's grace. All men that fervently seek God's grace and salvation find the Father in the Son. All men that stubbornly reject God's grace and salvation call, are on the path of self condemnation and, ultimately, self destruction. The saved often were persecuted but in Christ they are always victorious. In his rage or craftiness – Satan fails in the end.

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The saving grace of God in Christ has been revealed in the life and testimony of all the faithful. In our Lord's proclamation of the Gospel the Light of the Truth and salvation spreads over the entire humanity. In this revelation our Father sheds abundant light and glory upon our minds that we would see His Son as He truly is. Once again we are given more enlightenment to see our Savior's Spirit manifested in His Gospel messengers. Again we see the Enemy defeated and fallen. Again we behold our Lord Jesus victorious; again we are giving glory to our Father in Christ. As we behold God's majesty, we are filled with His power to be victorious in

Him. When we are aware of our adversary's downfall, when we know that his success is only a mirage, when our Lord's Gospel is our reliance, our soul is not overwhelmed with the tumult of the world in sin and darkness; we hear the Heaven and the Kingdom on the earth rejoicing with us in our Lord's victory and everlasting salvation.

10] The heavenly echo fills our mind and heart: salvation, power, & the royal authority of our God are confirmed in His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. All the accusations of the devil are overturned for us in Christ, when we are in Him - He is in our heart and in our daily walk. Satan's accusations are relentless: he is persistent – day and night. It is the intention of the Wicked One to persuade us to trust in our God's grace in sin; to believe in tolerance, indifference, aimlessness and idleness. Our God's grace is in Christ; and in Christ God's grace is unlimited. His grace is against sin, unto holiness, and fervent stewardship. He makes us brave and humble, wise and modest. Satan's gospel is his deception of self-worthiness, self-exaltation and salvation earned by human goodness. If he sees us relying on mercy and grace in Christ, the devil will try to tell us that our sin is greater than the redeeming power of Christ's offering. Let us always trust and obey our Savior and Master and continue under His Lordship.

11] Michael and his angels overcame the Enemy by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony. They loved not their lives unto the death. The heavenly minded messengers in Heaven and in Christ's Kingdom on this earth have God's Kingdom in their hearts. The blood of the Lamb is our continuous cleansing from sin. When we live in godliness, in Christ, we will suffer persecution. Thus we receive the honor and the privilege of having fellowship in our Lord's suffering. Some of us may be elevated to the true martyrdom. All of us are led to die daily and live in Christ, never to trust in our righteousness, but to grow in faith and knowledge of God's Son. [Romans 6: 11-13 & 8: 10; I Corinthians 15: 31; Ephesians 4: 13 and I Peter's 2: 24] In true Christian living our body and soul are sanctified by the loving Lordship of Christ's Spirit. In joy or sadness, suffering or rejoicing, in health

or physical sickness, in wealth or material poverty, there is purpose, comfort, & progress in Christ's Spirit. If we face violent death, we are fully aware of our Savior's suffering for us, and, through us. We are members of His body and when we leave our remains on earth, we are members of His - more than ever before [Philippians 1: 20-23]. We cannot love "our" lives, but His. We are Christ's property. He is our Eternal Reward. [Genesis 15: 1]

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 knows that he has but a short time. In Luke 10: 20 and in Matthew 5: 12 this heavenly joy is our Father's blessing in His children's heart here, on the earth. All the heavenly minded are included in this heavenly rejoicing [Ephesians 4: 23; Philippians 1: 27; 2: 5; 3: 15; 4: 7]. Our confidence is in our Lord Jesus. We are aware of our Enemy as fallen, defeated. This Truth is our joy and the devil's reason for his great wrath. In Christ is our perfect example not to give place to Satan [John 14: 30]. Charity and fellowship among the redeemed souls is a way of living - more blessed and more delightful than anything the world can offer; let alone fulfill its deceitful enticements.

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God's children are spared so much harm and suffering by resisting deception and corruption. Our Blessed Lord is our great reward now and in eternity. Satan would attack us furiously, but in Christ we are protected. When we suffer persecution and hatred, we know our Reward is great. Our Enemy has no mercy for his slaves. Their hopes of earthly gain & enjoyment often turn to despair, grief, and bitter disappointments. The world frequently suffers destruction & cruel bloodshed. If they could live in pleasures of their choice until their death, their life in sin would still be a great tragedy [Luke 16: 19 & on]. In the # 9 Satan and his angels were cast down to the earth. In the # 12 the earthlings are told that the devil is come down to them. Since the wicked & fallen were cast out and down, how did

they land so softly? Could this be a part of the “Woe”? The redeemed and enlightened see every rebellion against the authority of our Lord as a great fall – as it is indeed. The lost, blind, and dead sinners see rebellion against our Almighty God as a natural state of mind and heart. Satan’s work appears to them as natural; even preferred method of deceit. In Isaiah 5 are three “woes”: 20] Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! 21] Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight! 22] Woe unto them that are mighty to drink wine; to mingle hot drink. 23] They justify the wicked for reward, and take away the righteousness of the righteous from him! These Woes are the path of the great Woe in this chapter 12, verse 12. Our Lord is pure and holy; He never tolerates sin. He Himself paid dearly for our redemption. We owe Him our soul & body, mind & heart; He keeps us in His care. Satan is furious. He craves to torture God’s Son, but he hates to see Christ victorious. The devil lusts to murder Stephan, but he is bitter about seeing this martyr entering glory - forever lost for him, wicked, self-condemned Lucifer. His time is short. He would like to torture Job until the righteous man gets entangled in devil’s rebellion. God led Job to victory and revelation. The enemy would like to see Lazarus, the beggar defeated and rebellious; but God sent the angels. The devil needs Herod to live long and multiply evil deeds; but God fed the worms. Yes, Satan’s time is short. Our King’s victory & triumph is forever in adoration of His saved Flock & His heavenly hosts.

13 & 14] When the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman who brought forth the man (child). To the woman were given two wings of a great eagle that she might fly away from the serpent into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time. [Compare # 6] The dragon realized his downfall, but not before it happened. In his God-given abundant life he had measureless opportunity to explore and enjoy the entire Kingdom of God’s

grace and majesty. When Lucifer desired to try some activity outside God's grace, across the boundary of self exaltation, he knew it was not pleasing our Lord. Apparently, he knew not how bad his own wickedness was going to be for him. After his deliberate fall, Satan is constantly looking for other victims. He has no ability of doing any good, God pleasing deed [John 8: 44]. This wicked enemy is constantly tempting men with his promises of great pleasures in some unknown experience. The devil promises to sinners that the happiness they fail to find in sin is just ahead of them – in the next violation of our Creator's precepts. When life in sin becomes a strong habit, the enemy tells to the victims that it is God who created them so and it's only natural for them to lust; they need not feel guilty or responsible for sin. If shackled men were able and willing to think clearly and to apply logical reasons, they could perceive Satan's deception and additional reinforcement of his old snare; in which trap they have been already. God created man responsible for his own decisions and actions – deeds. If I deny my responsibility and liability, I am in that trap.

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If I violate my Creator's precepts and declare myself guiltless, I am falling deeper in degradation of my own mind and heart; I am strengthening the chains of my slavery to the wicked Enemy. Closing my eyes to the Light and turning my head away from the Truth, I cannot abolish the fact: I am guilty and under God's just condemnation. One of Satan's great lusts is doing every evil did possible to afflict godly men; those delivered from sin. Living in Christ we are safe. If we doubt the Truth and question our God's authority, wisdom, grace and love, we are already falling into the enemy's snare as did our ancestors, Adam and Eve. Faith in Christ resists this adversary. [James 4: 7 & 1st Peter's 5: 8-9] This man-child includes the beginning of believing in Christ in the hearts of new converts. Every faithful disciple, every fellowship of true believers reaching out to sinners with the

Gospel call and godly testimony in words and deeds, is persecuted to the limits our Lord has outlined to restrict the Enemy. The dragon can do nothing against our Lord and Savior, but will try all evil possible to oppress a convert with human fear, lust of the flesh, discouragement by the family members, business friends, and neighbors. Some worldly friends might honestly feel sad that a new believer would refrain from “so many goods of their world”. In the midst of oppression and persecution to the woman are given two wings of a great eagle. The believers filled with the Spirit of our Lord Jesus receive a great power that lifts them up above the worries and fears for temporal accommodations, earthly future and material possessions. In suffering our Lord’s presence is brighter. Instead of desiring vanities and comfort of worldly living, we are encouraged and strengthened to fly away from worldliness and closer to the Source of our soul nourishment. In the # 6 the woman fled into the wilderness. Between these two verses [6 & 14] many wonderful things happened. God’s people are nourished abundantly. The hosts with the Gospel Message are advancing. The powers of darkness are defeated and purged out of our Fellowship in Christ. Satan and his angels are indicted and proven wicked. Among the heavenly and heavenly-minded is great celebration of Christ’s power and God’s majesty; the blood of the Lamb is cleansing His people. Did the old serpent change his method of persecution? Did the woman step out of her sunshine adornment? Did we discount some of our Father’s blessings in Christ, or His grace became a little common in our opinion? Was our testimony relaxed, or, even neglected? Are we appreciating material comfort more than our Savior’s grace? How many of the seven churches in the chapters two and three were admonished to reconsider their way of living before our Lord? Some faithful disciples endured persecution and hardships, but when the time of ease and material prosperity came upon them, they changed their work of watchmen on the wall - to worldly labor. Our Enemy is furious; but also, very crafty. He can come with his mask of a friendly smile. let us not be deceived in the days of ease, progress in economy, and apparent friendship of the world around us; our adversary

still has his main goal: to trap our souls in his wickedness. Modesty is a mighty shield against vanity [1st Timothy 2: 9] [Ephesians 6: 13 & on]. What happened to the woman, what did she do? She fled into the wilderness in the verse # 6. She needs to return back into the wilderness in the verse # 14; only this time she needs to fly on the great eagle's wings. If she did nothing, it might be the answer: a short time we relax – and we are in a grave danger. When we in our distress look up to our Lord, He gives us the wings of the great eagle [4: 7]. This pair of eagle's wings is very strong and efficient; it helps in one direction only: back to the Source of our faith and salvation, and up ahead wholeheartedly to do His good pleasure; in His Spirit we receive new joy of salvation, to soar up. Our place, our spiritual proper position is in Christ our Savior where we are nourished. We cannot receive healthy nourishment in worldliness, vanity, pride, idleness, aimlessness and human accomplishments. This manna from above, this Bread of Heaven, we need for a time, times and half a time.

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Is this same as in the # 6? We see the recipient is the same – the woman. The location is the same – the wilderness. The supply is the same – the Gospel nourishment. Even the isolation and the distance appear to be the same – away from the reach of the Dragon. Twelve hundred and sixty days in the # 6 are as the three times and a half in this verse number 14. The safety, security, comfort, all the privileges, and the full satisfaction of all our needs is in Christ our Lord and Savior as long as we are on this earth, in our flesh, on the way to eternal glory. The glory and majesty of our King of kings and Lord of lords has filled the universe; by trusting and obeying our Owner - we fill our souls - also.

15] The serpent cast out of his mouth a flood after the woman. The devil intends to overwhelm us with his apparent magnitude. He boasts with having the whole world on his side. He strives to appeal to our flesh and our temporal needs. He threatens with danger. He tries to multiply worries

and fears of very dark days to come... We must remember: Satan is a deceiver. His power is a mirage. In Christ we are safe and abundantly blessed. Our Lord has told us ahead of the time that we will have battles and suffering; but we are never alone; our good Shepherd cares for us. Our mighty Conqueror leads us through many victories to His eternal triumph in glory.

16] The earth helps the woman and swallows up the flood. The might, majesty, power and wisdom of our Creator are manifested in the entire universe. No power of darkness can ever escape our Father's control and cross His marked limits of time, space and intensity. God's help may come through unexpected circumstances. In the verse 12 the dwellers of Heaven are the Heavenly minded men – the believers in Christ. The inhabitants of the earth are the earthly minded – carnal, voluntary slaves of sin and Satan. In the verse number 16 the world in darkness, and nature itself, perhaps unaware, unintentionally, help the believers and the Gospel proclamation. We are created in our Creator's image: to love and adore Him; to desire His love and blessings. After the fall we still have some residue of the original desires however distorted and disoriented by sin and fleshly lust. In Luke 6: 32 sinners have some form and level of love; they desire kindness and friendship within their style & customs. In the times of persecution, some unbelievers were secretly helping Christians; occasionally endangering their own comfort. I think that some awareness of human guilt and God's judgment always remains in human soul. Roman Catholicism was cruel persecutor of Christians in some historic periods. In Communism they helped us. Some of Communist leaders were also secretly helping persecuted believers. Some believers hiding in remote parts of "wilderness", away from, so called, civilization, discovered that the organic nature offers help for some basic needs in our physical life. Over all these evidences is our Almighty Father's wisdom and loving care for us.

A brother told me a part of his testimony. Before his conversion he was taken into the military. In the heat of a battle he was overwhelmed with

fear of death and God's judgment. In his heart he cried to our Lord: "O, God, if you save me from death now, I will never return to sin again, I will follow the Lord Jesus and be obedient..." A shower of bullets was hitting the ground and some objects around this man. Some bullets ripped his uniform, but he was not wounded. He was delivered from death, but continued in sin for a long time. His health suffered from drugs and immorality. He decided to get married and he had an unhappy life. He narrowly escaped death! In a traffic accident he remained uninjured, but the sense of God's judgment gripped his heart and, he finally cried to our Lord again. He continued in prayer and obedience to His Savior. Just a few years of zealous ministry marked the final part of his journey. His testimony remained an encouragement I've shared with some believers.

- 13 -

At the times when the sinful masses blindly follow their leaders, the governments are so busy and have no time to persecute Christians. Sometimes, their leaders were struggling within the ruling circle. They had no time to fear Christian influence. When our faith is in our Redeemer, no flood can move us off our Base [Luke 6: 47,].

17] The dragon is madly opposing the woman. He wars against the remnant of her seed – the keepers of God's commandments & of the testimony of Jesus Christ. The woman is now in Heaven, in the Book - for us, & in the Fellowship of the Remnant that blends not with the lifeless, false religion claiming but disobeying our Lord Jesus. In the 1st Kings 19 we see Elijah, our Lord's great and faithful prophet, in the time of awful apostasy, lawlessness, and bloody persecution. In the verse # 4 Elijah desires to die: there is no visible indication of Israel's return to God. Our Lord sent him some sleep, and, a Heavenly messenger with a fresh meal and water - in the wilderness. After that good meal, Elijah rested more. The angel returned with another meal and an instruction: the journey is too great for a man. Christ's manna from above supplies endurance to progress

in the right direction. At the end of # 8 and in the # 9 Elijah is far away from any fellow believer; perhaps more isolated than ever before. In that remote place he has the greatest Fellowship a righteous man can desire. The Lord God of hosts unfolds a revelation uplifting the faithful through many centuries. After the vision, comes a new instruction. In the # 18 our Lord reveals to Elijah that there is a remnant of the faithful. He is not alone; his work is God's worthy design. Isaiah 53 starts with questions: Who has believed our report? And to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? In the 2nd verse the most wonderful man that ever lived on earth [according to the Psalm 45: 2] in the sight of blind and deaf sinners has no beauty; is not desirable. Since Christ is sinless, the lustful sinners despise him [in the #3]. The question "What are you doing here?" has been recorded for us in the 1st Kings 19: 9&13 and Isaiah's question "Who has believed" our testimony, remain. We need to have a ready answer from the Word of our Lord. Trusting and obeying our Savior & Lord, we cannot miss the best reward in our pilgrimage and, in eternity. In Romans 9: 27 we have the words of the prophet Isaiah 10 concerning the Remnant. In Isaiah 10: 5 & on is an amazing revelation: great world-powers are instruments for our Creator's accomplishments. Our God has His purpose in all that He allowed to happen. As Israel developed in Egypt, so a saved Remnant returns from Assyria. In this chapter 12 # 5, a Man [child] is born and caught up to God's throne. This is one of the great abbreviations in this book. When, how, and why, this Child is caught, elevated, to the highest position, power, and glory? This entire Book tells about that... So Isaiah 10: 22 is a long story – compressed; & so is the verse # 17 in this chapter. In the # 14 the woman has been given all she needed to be safe and secured. As long as the visible Body of Christ is faithful to the Head, the gates of hell cannot prevail against the genuine members. In the # 15 the Enemy is doing all that is in his power to harm this Body. As long as the Body is under the Head, the adversary is defeated. What is the Woman, and, what is the Remnant? For the dragon, the two seem to be identical; or, perhaps one. I do believe that, according to the entire Holy Bible, in the end

the whole Body of all the redeemed souls shall be together glorifying our Father and our Savior. In the mean time the Remnant of the truly faithful is on the earth. The serpent is angry with the woman and wars against her seed. Now he might attack individuals, or small congregations – small groups of Christians. Perhaps our Lord, in His mysterious ways of ruling the universe and overruling the intentions of the enemy, does not allow a severe general persecution, but our battle continues. Satan is not very forceful against nominal believers. Why should he be? They are often his best helpers. His war is against the keepers of God's commandments, those that have the testimony of Jesus Christ. What is the good method of our defense?

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First and foremost: obey our Lord from the heart. Second: always resist the devil. This is our prayer, our strife, our goal; this must be our accomplishment in the power of our Lord's Spirit: always trust and obey our Lord and Savior; always resist the devil. This is our victory in Christ and His Lordship in our life. We are not instructed in the Scriptures to look for needless suffering. We labor for the harvest in our fields. We also accept the possibility of having some weeds. When our life path is following our Savior's example, we have a lot of reasons to be grateful. Our Lord entered into His glory through much suffering [Luke 24: 26 & Acts 3: 18]. We are admonished to follow His example [Romans 8: 18; 2nd Corinthians 1: 5; 1st Peters 4: 13 and 14]. We remember the story about Lazarus in Luke 16: 20-22 and the vision of Stephen in Acts 7. These beautiful true testimonies offer to us perception of our Lord's majestic welcome as He greets each redeemed soul entering His glory. In rapturous adoration each newcomer salutes Him amidst His Heavenly host – all - rejoicing in His victory. Every time we experience new victory in our spiritual journey, it is our victory in Christ and His victory in us. As long as we are in our mortal body, whenever we fail to obey our Master, we have strong reason to regret our inconsistency and to repent sincerely. That way – by His grace alone - our

failure is turned into His victory. The remnant is at war. The Adversary attacked the seed of the woman. At times Satan attacks with violence and cruel persecution. At other times he offers all the kingdoms of the world or just the satisfaction of some basic need like hunger [Luke 4: 3&5]. Our God sent Jonah to Nineveh; Satan urged: "To Tarshish"; just not God's Will. God's commandment to Jonah was one particular order; not given to all prophets. God called Moses to lead Israel out of slavery [Exodus 3: 10]. No other man was given that particular ministry. Our Lord commanded Peter in Acts 10: 12&13 a ministry to many men – Hebrew and gentile. This commandment is given to many disciples. In John 1 the call "Follow Me" was told to a number of disciples. In Matthew 25: 31-46 the commandments kept, or, violated, were: feed the hungry, give water to the thirsty, offer hospitality to the travelers, visit the sick and the prisoners, and give clothing to the 'naked'; in short, charity to as many as possible, as much as we are able. In Luke 14: 33 is a very general commandment: forsake all you have. All the commandments of our Lord demand our understanding – in the light of our Lord's teaching. Every time we desire to obey our Lord, our adversary attacks. His relentless attack is cruel and furious at times; crafty, manipulative, or falsely friendly, at other times. It is of great importance for us to understand our Lord's bidding and to follow His guidance wholeheartedly. Our Enemy is striving for anything other than our loyalty to our Savior. Satan's intension is our slackness, disloyalty, disobedience and open rebellion against our Heavenly Father; this is the path of loss, destruction and death. Following our Redeemer and Lord we receive understanding and power to walk in the light of the Gospel Truth. Satan will try to deceive us to believe in our holiness, the good results of our efforts and righteousness. The devil is the liar. If our pride could be justified, this would be our own testimony, not the testimony of Christ, our Lord. When we are faithful, when we love our Heavenly Father, when we hate sin and desire salvation of sinners, we know it is not our own quality. We know the grace of our Savior and the power of His Spirit work in our hearts and in our daily walk to bring forth the fruits of righteousness and

charity. We can do nothing in our own power. Humble confession of our deficiency in everything and fervent glorifying of our Heavenly Father revealed in His beloved Son, continual growing in faith and knowledge of God's Son, is our testimony of Jesus Christ. When we have Him, our enemy is defeated, we are delivered, the Gospel is proclaimed, and our King Jesus Christ is always glorified.