

## REVELATION 12

Macabees is a book written in Hebrew by a Jewish author after the restoration of an independent Jewish kingdom, in about the latter part of the 2nd century BC. The book is held as canonical scripture by some Christian churches (including Catholic, Orthodox, and Coptic churches), but not by most Protestant groups who consider it to be an apocryphal (of doubtful authenticity) book. The book is often of great historical interest, but not "God inspired revelation." The setting of the book is about a century after the conquest of Judea by the Greeks under Alexander the Great, after Alexander's empire was divided so that Judea was part of the Greek Seleucid Empire. It tells how the Greek ruler Antiochus IV Epiphanes attempted to suppress the practice of basic Jewish religious law, resulting in a Jewish revolt against Seleucid rule. He set up the abomination of desolation in the temple that may serve as a type for what will happen 3 ½ years before the end of the age. Daniel 8:21-23 implies that the last world leader, the beast, descends from this line.

The vision recorded in Revelation chapter 12 spans the whole of history from the fall of Adam and Eve till the return of Christ and as such is a broad sweeping picture designed to reveal the spiritual, "behind the scenes" cause for history.

Ezekiel 28:11-19 – The cherub was a beautiful creation placed in Eden to cover it. His heart was lifted up because of his beauty, and he revolted against God by tempting Adam and Eve to sin.

Genesis 3:14 and 15

And the LORD God said to the serpent, "Because you have done this, Cursed are you more than all cattle, And more than every beast of the field; On your belly shall you go, And dust shall you eat All the days of your life;  
And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, And between your seed and her seed; He shall bruise you on the head, And you shall bruise him on the heel."

From this time on, he has been Yahweh's archenemy, who endeavors to control humanity for the purpose of worship and the cause of that which is evil and destructive.

Revelation 12:1 – The "twelve stars" represent the twelve tribes of Israel. The symbolism relates to Joseph's dream in Genesis 37:9. The "woman" undoubtedly is Israel who gives birth to the Messiah, but later in the chapter, she is the church persecuted for her faith.

Revelation 12:3 – The "dragon" is Satan who is said to come out of the sea where also will come the beast with a similar description of chapter 13. Pharaoh is also called a dragon (Ezekiel 29:3; 32:20).

“Egypt” stands for all that is evil, and specifically for the oppression and persecution of the people of God. Job 26:12 and 13; Psalm 74:13 and 14; and Isaiah 27:1; 51:9

Isaiah 27:1

In that day the LORD will punish Leviathan the fleeing serpent, With His fierce and great and mighty sword, Even Leviathan the twisted serpent; And He will kill the dragon who *lives* in the sea.

The horn is a symbol of strength, so that ten horns points to the mighty power of the dragon. The picture given has Satan as immensely powerful and as exercising authority. He is purposed in destroying the woman because she would bear the child that would destroy him.

Revelation 12:4 – He convinced 1/3 of the angels to follow him, which had to take place between his fall in Eden and the flood because demons influence the evil that caused the flood

Revelation 12:5 – Satan tried hard to destroy Christ but did not succeed. Christ came right through to the ascension. This is one of the reasons for the conflicts recorded in the O.T.

Revelation 12:6 – The vision hurries to the end of the age, the future when the women is protected for 3 ½ years. The wilderness spoke of divine provision and intimate fellowship. God’s provision is similar to the manna in the wilderness and the provision made for Elijah in 1 Kings 17.

Revelation 12:7 – In the future, a war in heaven will take place that Satan will lose (Daniel 10:13-21). We are caught up in a wider conflict than the one we see. Ephesians 6:12 reveals we wrestle not against humans but spiritual powers. Revelation 12 reveals the conflict is not simply one between demons and men here on earth, but angelic forces in the heavens are engaged also.

Revelation 12:8 – Again, we are looking at the future when the result of the battle is the defeat of the dragon, so that he and his angels lose their place in heaven. He had been the accuser of God’s people (Job 1:6-9; 2:1-6; and Zechariah 3:1). Today, he functions as the accuser. You can discern if something is evil by acknowledging a few simple devilish characteristics:

- He is the accuser, so if you find yourself wrongly accusing others or receiving unjust accusations (not godly confrontation), acknowledge evil is present.
- He is the great liar or deceiver. If you are tempted to lie or realize a fabrication or deception is presented to you, evil is at hand.
- He always endeavors to control others, so if you find yourself trying to control others even if they are loved ones or if you sense someone is trying to control you, evil is here.

Revelation 12:11 – They “overcame” seems like we are leaving the spiritual realm and including the faithful believers. A connection between heaven and earth is undeniable.

Revelation 12:12 – The short time that he has is 3 ½ years. He seems to be directly involved in the last three woes (8:13) that the eagle speaks of, and now the same eagle provides protection for the children of the woman.

Revelation 12:14 – The eagle is spoken of only three times in Revelation – 4:7; 8:13; and here. The wilderness is the opposite of the great city which is Sodom and Egypt in 11:8 and which always opposes God and God’s people. In the days of old, God’s people escaped from Egypt into the wilderness, and symbolism from Egypt is in mind throughout this chapter.

Revelation 12:17 – The reason the woman is now referring to the Christians – those who hold to the testimony of Jesus.

### **REVELATION 13**

Daniel 9:24-27 – After Daniel read Jeremiah, he realized that the ending of the 70 years of captivity was near, so he started to pray. Repeatedly, he mentions the reinstatement of Jerusalem. Gabriel brings the answer that included much more than just the immediate matters of concern. Gabriel revealed that God would continue to chasten Israel for at least seventy more sevens of years beyond the end of the Babylonian captivity.

Gabriel said that seventy weeks (heptads - a group of sevens as is translated in LXX) had been decreed by God for the restoration of Israel and Jerusalem. Seventy sevens are the same as seventy times seven or 490. God had decreed 490 units of time. How do we know if He is referring to days, weeks, months, or years? Messiah the prince would be present in Israel in 483 time units, after which he would be cut off. The historic fact is Jesus did not appear in Israel 483 days, weeks, or months after this revelation. However, he did appear 483 years later. If the first 483 refers to years, so must the last seven.

Seventy sevens of years would have been very meaningful to the Jews. God divided their calendar into seven-year periods, with every seventh year being a sabbatical year (Leviticus 25:3-9). Their Babylonian captivity was to last seventy years because they had violated seventy sabbatical years (according to 2 Chronicles 36:21). Each sabbatical year represented seven years, so we can again multiply 7 times 70 and arrive at 490. Their years in captivity served as a type for the revelation Daniel was receiving. Daniel himself had been thinking in terms of years in the context of this prophecy (9:1 and 2).

The first coming of the Messiah, his cutting off (the sacrificial death), and his return all are necessary to accomplish the following six things, hence 490 years.

1. To finish the transgression
2. To make an end of sin
3. To make atonement for iniquity
4. To bring everlasting righteousness
5. To seal up vision and prophecy
6. To anoint the most holy place

Revelation 13 is not in chronological order; rather, it took place before the 7 trumpets and the two witnesses in chapter 11. The chapters are presented by topic and not order. In chapter 11, the beast is already in power and revered by the whole world which is why they rejoice at the death of the two witnesses. The 3 ½ years of chapter 13 is the beginning of the last seven years, while the 3 ½ years in chapter 11 are the latter of the seven years.

Revelation 13:1 – The dragon (according to 12:9) is the serpent of old that is called the devil and Satan. The ancient world often associated evil with the sea. “Who could tell what existed in its mysterious depths? With its constant change and movement, it well symbolized the seething cauldron of national and social life, out of which the great historical movements of the world arise.” In Daniel 7:2b and 3, “four winds of heaven were stirring up the great sea, and four great beasts were coming up from the sea, different from one another.”

The beast is a man empowered by Satan who serves as his representative to the world and incites humanity to worship the devil through him. As Jesus is the personification of Yahweh, the beast will be of the devil.

Ten horns and seven heads (Daniel 7:7, 19-28; Revelation 12:3; 17:1-16) – In the last days, ten kings will unite, but their kingdom will not be strong like the past great empires such as Babylon, Persia, or the Grecian. Another who seems to be small rises up, defeats three of the kings, and ascends to be in control of all. Empowered by Satan, his empire grows to be the largest in history with world dominance. This last world empire grows out of the Mesopotamian division of the Grecian empire centered in Babylonia.

On his head, “blasphemous names” are the converse or contraposition to God’s people (3:12 and 14:1).

Revelation 13:2 – He is compared to three ferocious beasts – the leopard, bear, and lion.

Daniel 7:1-7 – He is worse than all that came before him with a combination of all their vicious qualities.

Daniel 7:7 – The beast was extremely dreadful, terrible, and strong – exceedingly more than any before him. The dragon, the devil, empowers him and gives him a throne with great authority.

Revelation 13:3 – His fatal wound is healed which gains the attention of the whole world, and people start to follow him.

Revelation 13:4 – The dragon remains very much in the background. He does his work not openly, but through people. What is done is more than human evil, but it is an evil that reveals itself in human deeds. Satan gets what he has always lusted after – the worship of the entire world – save those who remain faithful to Yahweh. People worship the devil and the beast and acknowledge that he is the most powerful leader in the world, that no one can defeat him (implying submission and compliance).

Revelation 13:5 – Speaks arrogant words and blasphemies Daniel 7:11, 25; 11:36

42 months, 3 ½ years, are the first of the last 7 years.

Revelation 13:6 – MGI – And he opened his mouth to blaspheme in the presence of God, to blaspheme the name and the dwelling of those who dwell in heaven.

NET – So the beast opened his mouth to blaspheme against God – to blaspheme both his name and his dwelling place, that is, those who dwell in heaven.

Revelation 13:7 – Many MSS omit the phrase "It was given to make war with the saints and to overcome them." He will make war against Israel according to 11:7; Daniel 7:21-25; Matthew 24:15-28.

He will have world dominance. Matthew 4:8 and 9 – “the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory; and he said to him, ‘All these things I will give you, if you fall down and worship me.’”

Revelation 13:8 – And all who dwell on the earth will worship him, *everyone* whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life.

Revelation 13:10 – It is not fatalism but the conviction that God is sovereign and works out His good and perfect will. In the days of persecution, this is a strong consolation. Jeremiah 15:2

### **THE BEAST FROM THE SEA, THE LAST UNGODLY WORLD LEADER**

#### **2 Thessalonians 2:1-17**

- 3 – The man of sin (KJ) or man of lawlessness (NAS) is he who completely belongs to sin, in whom sin is predominate, his principal matter. Sin is personified in him. He will be the last Cain, the first rebel.
- 4 – Who opposes and exalts himself above every so-called god or object of worship. He takes his seat in the Temple of God in Jerusalem.
- 6 and 7 – He is restrained until the proper time that is obviously determined by God, not himself or the devil. Remember the four angels in the Euphrates (Revelation 9:14 and 15 where it says the hour, day, month, and year are predetermined by God).
- 8 – Jesus will destroy him by the appearance of his glory.
- 9-12 – He will be inspired and empowered by the devil and will perform miracles. Just as the magicians in Egypt duplicated the miracles Moses performed, so too will the man of sin. Miracles are never evidence by themselves that the person performing them is from God. Matthew 7:21-23

#### **Daniel 7**

- 7:7 – He will be dreadful, terrifying, and extremely strong with large iron teeth. It will devour, crush, and trample down all the other kingdoms. He has ten horns.
- 19-21 – Waging war with the saints and overpowering them
- 23 – He will devour the whole earth and tread it down and crush it.
- 24 – Ten horns represent ten kings, three of which will be defeated by him, and he controls all thereafter.
- 25 – He will speak against the Most High, wear down the saints, intend to make alteration in times and law; his influence will last 3 ½ years.
- 27 – His reign is terminated with the coming of the Ancient of Days and the handing over of the Kingdom to the saints.

#### **Daniel 8**

- 11 – Magnified himself to be equal with the Commander of the host (Yahweh)
- Removes the regular sacrifice from God; the place of His sanctuary is thrown down
- 12 – Flings truth to the ground; he will perform and prosper

- 20-23 – The geographical origin of the little horn is the territory of the Greek empire and in particular the Syrian and Mesopotamian division centered in Babylonia after the death of Alexander (V9).
- Insolent and skilled in intrigue
- 24 – He will have mighty power but not his own – the devil's. He will destroy to an extraordinary degree, prosper, perform his own will, and destroy many while at ease.
- He will oppose Jesus who will break him.

### **Daniel 9**

- 26 – Prince who is to come is the little horn. He makes a covenant for seven years, but halfway through, he brings an end to the sacrifice and grain offering in the Temple. This strongly suggests that the nature of the covenant which he makes with the many covers the temple worship and perhaps reinstates for Israel the continuance of the sacrificial system.
- 27 – Abomination suggests something disgusting and which has reference to idolatry.

### **Daniel 11**

- 31 – He will desecrate the sanctuary, do away with regular sacrifice, and set up the abomination of desolation.
- 32 – By smooth words he will turn to godlessness those who act wickedly toward the covenant.
- 33 – Persecute the believers
- 34 – Many join with him against the Jews
- 36 – He will do as he pleases; he will exalt and magnify himself above every god and will speak monstrous things against the God of gods. He will prosper until the indignation is finished, for that which is decreed will be done.
- 37 – He will show no regard for gods or women; he will magnify himself.
- 38 – He will honor with gold, silver, costly stones, and treasures.
- 39 – He will give great honor to those who acknowledge him, will cause them to rule over many, and parcel out land for a price.

### **Isaiah**

- According to Daniel, the man of sin is connected with the Mesopotamia division of the Greek Empire in the last days, the Seleucid Empire. This area comprises the ancient kingdoms of Assyria and Babylon.
- 14:12-15 – He exalts himself to heaven to be like the Most High and sits on the mount of the congregation. He will be thrust down to Sheol to the recesses of the pit.

### ASCEND FROM KING TO WORLDWIDE MONARCH TO GOD

- Power and authority provided by Satan - Revelation 13:1 and 2; 2 Thessalonians 2:9
- He becomes the primary leader of the last world empire by defeating 3 of the 10 kings. Daniel 7:7,8, 20-24
- His deadly wound is healed which all the world learns of and reveres him. Revelation 13:3
- False prophet verifies him and encourages the world to worship him. Revelation 13:11-15; Matthew 24:11 and 24; 2 Thessalonians 2:9-12
- His eloquent speech exalts himself and diminishes and disgraces Yahweh. Daniel 7:8, 25; 11:21, 32, 36; and Revelation 13:5 and 6
- He promises and for short while brings prosperity and peace worldwide. Revelation 13:16-18; Daniel 11:21-23; 1 Thessalonians 5:3
- Strong military - Revelation 13:4, 7, 10; Daniel 11:25, 33, 36-39
- Exalts himself above God - Daniel 8:9-14; 2 Thessalonians 2:4
- He will devour the whole earth and tread it down and crush it. Daniel 7:7 and 23

Revelation 13:12 – The false prophet, empowered by Satan, confirms for the world that the beast is the one to worship and follow.

Matthew 24:11, 24

And many false prophets will arise, and will mislead many.

For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect.

Revelation 13:13 – The miracles are not aimless wonders; rather, they will have deep significance and are part of Satan's plan.

Mark 13:22

For false Christs and false prophets will arise, and will show signs and wonders, in order, if possible, to lead the elect astray.

2 Thessalonians 2:9

The one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders,

Revelation 13:14 – The second beast instructs his followers to set up an image to the first and is characterized yet once more by his recovery from his deadly wound.



Revelation 13:15 – The second beast gives breath to the image of the first, so that it spoke.

Revelation 13:16 – Right hand or forehead presumably for conspicuousness sake

#### **REVELATION 11:13-19**

Take heart – Jesus is coming back. All that we read about the last 3 ½ years will pass in 3 ½ years, then we see Jesus face to face and begin our eternal life together.

Romans 8:35-39 – We can overcome because we have Christ in us and our Father is Almighty God.

## **PRINCIPLES FOR INTERPRETING ESCHATOLOGICAL PROPHECY**

1. Seek understanding from within the Scriptures; avoid unbiblical opinions.
2. Strive to understand the literal truths metaphoric language represents.
3. Events foretold may be realized in the immediate future and completely fulfilled during the end times.
4. Prophecy may apply to more than one future implementation or even repeated occurrences throughout history.
5. Be aware that apocalyptic prophecy often jumps from a beginning point all the way to the end and skips many things in between.
6. Do not force or grope for meaning; rather, accept that some things may have limited understanding now.
7. Avoid the temptation to interpret based upon your previously held theological view.