

SATAN'S PLAN FOR YOUR FUTURE REVELATION 12

In recent weeks we've been considering what the Bible says about tomorrow's news.
We began by looking at key passages dealing with future of specific nations involved in world events.
We spent several weeks considering revelation of God's plan, as revealed in Daniel's visions.

In N.T. same program is presented in Revelation.

This morning I want to introduce study of Revelation

We all have our "pet peeves." One of mine is way people refer to this book.

Key question: "How many revelations are there?"

Answered when you realize what is revealed!

You'll never understand Revelation until you understand what's revealed in it!

1:1 answers that question. "The Revelation of Jesus Christ."

He's the One revealed in it! It's all about Him!

Reason why He's revealed becomes apparent as we consider background of book.

To understand John's message, we have to understand what's already happened.

Popular television series often begin with a segment presenting previous episodes.

We need to remind ourselves of "previous episodes" in God's program:

What's already happened . . .

Captivity

Restoration of remnant

Messiah expected--Restoration--Messiah--Blessing

Messiah arrived

Messiah rejected

Jerusalem destroyed--A.D. 70

What would happen now?

Formation of new people (Luke)

Future restoration of Israel promised (Rom. 11:26)

All God's people--Israel and church--suffering persecution under Romans

Church suffered under Israel also.

God's people were suffering for His sake.

PURPOSE AND THEME

Written to God's people in midst of suffering to encourage them by
helping them understand God's perspective on what's happening.

Although immediate audience was *the church*, it's directed toward God's people in general, *whenever they suffer for His sake*.

It's especially appropriate for His people in the Great Tribulation.

3 REASONS for writing:

–to encourage God's people when we suffer on account of our faith in Him.

–to inform us of the outcome of the conflict

–to motivate us to remain faithful

To accomplish purposes, John presents **God's perspective on events affecting them.**

Key to Revelation: VISION OF THE JUDGE 1:9-20

Initial vision serves as basis for the rest.

Christ, the Judge over the universe, is seated on His throne and ruling over His creation. God is in control of all human history.

Although His people may suffer for His sake, God is even in control of people in rebellion.

He'll be victorious.

The faithful *will* participate in His victory.

John expects this message to produce results in the lives of his readers.

He hopes revelation of the Judge produces confidence in Him.

Awareness of God's program should cause us to recognize our place in His plan.

This knowledge should produce obedience, faithfulness, and joy in the midst of suffering.

ORGANIZATION

Major structural divisions revealed in **1:19**.

John is commanded to write:

what he has seen, what is now and what will take place later.

THE THINGS YOU HAVE SEEN:

CHRIST THE JUDGE RULES OVER HIS CREATION 1

Unusual book causes John to introduce it with various explanations.

Title 1:1a Subject stated as title: **"Revelation of Jesus Christ"**

Careful study of book reveals Him

Source 1:1b **God Himself.**

Purpose 1:1c

God has given book to Christ for a purpose:

-to reveal to Jesus' servants what's going to take place soon.

God doesn't want us ignorant concerning His program, nor our role in that program.

Messenger 1:1d-2

God sent angel

John just reported what he saw.

He deserves no credit for content of the revelation.

He's only a witness, describing things God Himself revealed!

Blessing 1:3

Blessing promised to reader and listeners alike.

Those who listen, and put its teachings into practice, will be satisfied.

Blessing is not salvation, nor a special spiritual status based on merit.

God is about to fulfill the prophecy given in the book.

Those who listen and respond will understand God's program and be content, even in persecution.

They will discern how their experience fits in His plan.

Those who don't understand what God is doing will be confused

Book explains what's taking place and how the conflict will end.

Therefore, the listener who responds properly will be satisfied.

Dedicatory 1:5b-6

Jesus is not only the subject of the book; it's also dedicated to Him.

Final purpose of whole book: **that He might be glorified through it.**

Promise 1:7-8

Promise is basis for security of God's people in persecution:

Christ, Who is the Beginning and the End, is going to come again!

Those who suffer for His sake triumph with Him, and rejoice!

Vision of the Judge 1:9-20

You see Him in all His glory—He's in charge!

However dismal circumstances seem, we need to see HIM glorified.

The command 1:19

Write what he's already seen, what he was seeing taking place then, and what was about to take place.

The interpretation 1:20

He reveals interpretation of vision John had seen.

Christ is standing in midst of 7 churches and has their messengers in His hand.

He governs events which occur in the churches.—He's overseeing them—He's in charge

As King of the universe, and Head of the church, He's about to judge them.

Christ is in midst of His church and is in charge of all that happens to it.

He hasn't gone fishing! He hasn't forgotten about them!

THE THINGS WHICH ARE NOW:

CHRIST THE JUDGE RULES OVER HIS CHURCH 2-3

He's aware of what they're going through.

He's watching over their development.

He rewards the faithful.

THE THINGS WHICH SHALL BE LATER:

CHRIST THE JUDGE RULES OVER THE NATIONS 4-22:5

Among pagan nations of the world also, He's in charge.

He's in control of everything that happens.

John is summoned into heaven where he's given God's perspective on the events which follow the church age.

Although no clear reference is given, John's call into heaven corresponds to time of rapture as presented in other passages, following church age and preceding time of God's wrath on earth (4:1).

"Church" not mentioned again until after time of judgment depicted.

Seems natural to conclude that his call symbolically represents the rapture!

Predominant theme: **JUDGMENT**

God is in control.

Though the nations rage, their struggle is futile (cp. Ps. 2)

He will judge them. He will win the conflict.

Those who are faithful will see day of vengeance.

Wave after wave of JUDGMENT!

Preparation for judgment 4-5

Judgment of the seven seals 6-8:2

Judgment of the seven trumpets 8-11

Cause of judgment 12-18

Results of judgment 19-22:5

Seventh trumpet: CLIMAX: coming of Christ and His judgments 11:14-19

<=> (19:6b-7, 11-16)

Events lead to **CLIMAX of God's judgment** as 7th trumpet sounds,

CHRIST RETURNS to earth, accompanied by praise of heaven (11:15-17).

Nations unite to oppose Him and are judged by Him (11:18-19).

With coming and judgment of Christ, the Great Tribulation concludes.

NEW START: John is informed he must repeat the message again 10:11

Repetition begins with Ch. 12

CAUSE OF JUDGMENT: SATAN'S PROGRAM 12-18

Repeats description of judgment from different perspective.

Focuses on *CAUSE* of judgment => Satan's program (12:1-18:24).

Satan has a plan for God's creation.

He's opposed to God and His people.

He wants us to acknowledge him-to worship HIM!!

Since people choose to submit to Satan's authority rather than God's, God responds to their rebellion by judging Satan's followers.

SATAN'S PROGRAM INTRODUCED 12-13:18

The things you have seen:

Satan seeks to destroy God's people and God's Son 12:1-5

Returns to things which happened previously.

Description of Israel 12:1-2

Introduces Israel as woman clothed with sun and moon under her feet and crown of 12 stars on her head.

–probably related to Joseph's dream (Gen. 37:9-10).

Sun and moon, as starting point on which Israel's place in God's program is based, would refer to Jacob and Rachel.

12 stars would be 12 sons and descendants.

She's about to give birth.

Opposition of Satan 12:3-4

Identified with world system identified by Dan. and later in Rev.

Brings along 1/3 of host of heaven in his fall.

Satan opposes this part of God's program and seeks to destroy child.

Fulfills title as "*adversary*"—as "*the destroyer*"

Seeks to destroy God's program and God's people.

Uses every means possible to destroy God's people.

First coming of Christ 12:5

Satan is unable to destroy Him at birth.

Child is designated ruler over all nations but is snatched away before assuming authority.

The things which shall be later 12:6-13:18

Historical backdrop leads into future to show things which happen afterwards . . .

Israel's escape 12:6

Satan pursues Israel into wilderness where God protects her for 3 1/2 yr.

Satan's earthly opposition to God's program leads to a heavenly conflict . . .

Angelic war 12:7-12

1. Satan is overpowered by God's hosts 7-8

2. Satan is thrown out of heaven 9a

3. Satan is cast down to earth 9b

4. Christ's authority is established 10a

5. Christ's followers triumph over their accuser. 10b-11

"They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb"—those who don't shrink from death ultimately win with Him!

6. Heaven is *relieved* by Satan's departure 12a

7. Earth is *afflicted* by Satan's arrival 12b

Heavenly conflict between God's messengers and Satan's hosts leads to his expulsion from heaven.

He's cast down to earth and furiously functions to accomplish his purposes because *he knows his time is short.*

The object of his furious attack is ISRAEL!

Satan's attack against Israel 12:13-17

Satan seeks vengeance against God's people

Primary target is Israel which he seeks to destroy.

He goes after them—but is ineffective.

So he turns on anyone who seeks to please God and follows Jesus.

Divine protection frustrates his plan but his opposition continues.

1. Satan pursues Israel 13
2. God protects His people 14
3. Satan tries to sweep them away 15
4. Earth intervenes to protect them 16
5. Satan attacks those who obey God's commands and hold testimony of Jesus. 17

Now we understand real issue in affliction God's people endure.

Satan couldn't stop God's program so he's after God's people!

You can count on him to use every weapon in his arsenal to destroy us!

PERSPECTIVE FOR TODAY:

Satan still seeks to destroy God's people and God's Son

However frightening the storms may seem, . . .

Satan still isn't strong enough to win the conflict!

In spite of his attacks and attempts to destroy God's people, *he can't win!*

Heavenly victory is precursor to ultimate victory.

Satan has been thrown out of heaven; he can't win on earth either!

God's in control!

God will ultimately triumph!

Those who are faithful will triumph with Him!

Whose side are YOU on?

Satan has declared war on the people of God

HE KNOWS his time is short!

Peter and Paul indicate that our temporary trials aren't worthy to be compared with glory that shall be ours!

THE LORD WINS! Will we triumph with Him?

It's the faithful who ultimately triumph with Him.

Are we committed to being among them?