

In Revelation chapters 12-14 God outlines the intense suffering, and the triumphs, of His people. Revelation 12 portrays the church from the time of Jesus Christ up to the last days. Revelation 13 and 14 portray the crisis and tribulation of the last days. In this seminar we will study Revelation 12.



Q1 **At the beginning of this vision, what appeared before John?** Revelation 12:1

A

In the Bible a pure WOMAN was a symbol of God's people or church. (See Isaiah 51:16; Jeremiah 6:2; 2 Corinthians 11:2.) In Revelation we also read of the impure woman called Babylon who represents those who have turned from Jesus Christ and His Word. (See Revelation 17 and 18.)



Q2 **What are the characteristics of the woman of this vision?** Revelation 12:1

A Clothed with

Standing upon

Upon her head

When the sun, moon and stars are spoken of as fallen or darkened, they represent Satan, evil and damnation. (See Isaiah 14:12-14; Jude 13; Revelation 8:10; 9:1; 12:3,4,7-12. Compare Matthew 24:26-31; Revelation 6:12-17.) However, the SUN, MOON and 12 STARS, as light givers, represent God's people: (See Genesis 37:9,10.)

1. The SUN: Jesus Christ is called "the sun of righteousness." Malachi 4:2. (Compare Psalm 84:11; Isaiah 9:2; 60:19.) He said of

Himself, "I am the light of the world." John 8:12. (Compare John 12:46.) The true church is made up of individuals who have put on Christ and are "the light of the world." Matthew 5:14. Paul wrote, "The night is nearly over; the day is almost here. So let us put aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armour of light... clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature." Romans 13:12,14.

2. The MOON: The moon reflects the light of the sun. God's people are reflectors of the character of Jesus Christ, "the sun of righteousness." Malachi 4:2. God's people stand upon the Word of God, which reveals the Lord Jesus in all His glory and perfection. It reveals His character that is expressed in the ten commandments. (Compare Revelation 21:23.)

3. The CROWN - 12 STARS: Stars represent heavenly messengers. (Revelation 1:20; Hebrews 1:14.) They also represent God's earthly representatives or messengers. The leaders of Old Testament Israel were symbolized by stars. (See Genesis 37:9,10.) The New Testament Church had twelve leaders or messengers. (Matthew 10:2.) And in Revelation the number twelve is associated with those who will be ready for Jesus Christ to come. (See Revelation 7:1-8.)

THE WOMAN

— EXPECTING A SON



Q3 **John saw the woman, God's people, at a particular time. What were God's people**

earnestly longing for and expecting?
Revelation 12:2

A



Q4 **Who was the child?** Revelation 12:5

A

The CHILD was Jesus. The people of God had been longing for His arrival since the promise of a Saviour was given to Adam and Eve after their rebellion and sin. (Genesis 3:15. Compare Isaiah 7:14; 9:6; Galatians 4:4.) Jesus Christ will rule with an iron sceptre. (See Psalm 2:7-9; Acts 13:32,33; Revelation 19:11-16.) Christ "was snatched up to God and to his throne" (Revelation 12:5) at His ascension to heaven to become our High Priest. (See Acts 1:9-11; Hebrews 4:14-16.)



Q5 **After seeing the people of God waiting for the arrival of the Messiah, what was John then shown?** Revelation 12:3

A

Q6 **Who is represented by the dragon?**
Revelation 12:9

A

Q7 **How is the dragon Satan portrayed?**
Revelation 12:3,4

- A
1. dragon.
 2. heads.
 3. horns.
 4. crowns.

5. from sky to earth.

This description of Satan helps us understand his characteristics and schemes:

- **The RED:** is a symbol of sin and bloodshed. (Isaiah 1:18; 63:2,3.) Bloodshed and evil are often associated with the maddening wine of Babylon's adultery.
- **The SEVEN HEADS:** represent the mountains of evil and the kingdoms by which Satan has oppressed God's people down through history. (Revelation 17:9,10.)
- **The TEN HORNS:** represent the agencies that are used by Satan in his last day attacks upon God's truth and people. (Revelation 17:12.)
- **The CROWNS:** represent Satan's evil and counterfeit rule.
- **The throwing down of a third of the STARS:** represents the messengers or angels who have fallen to sin because of Satan's deceptions. Satan is also spoken of as the serpent. (Compare Revelation 12:9,15; Genesis 3:1-4.)



Q8 **What did Satan attempt to do to Jesus as soon as He was born?** Revelation 12:4

A

The story of early attempts upon Jesus' life reveals that Satan used pagan Roman leaders in his attempts to achieve his ends. (See Matthew 2:1-18.) However, Satan's plot failed. Speaking of the meaning of Christ's death Paul wrote, "And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross." Colossians 2:15.



Q9 **By His death and resurrection, Jesus Christ defeated Satan and cast him down. (Read Revelation 12:7-12.) How do believers overcome Satan the accuser?** Revelation 12:10,11

- A 1.
2.
3.



Q10 **Because of His defeat, what does Satan now realize?** Revelation 12:12

A

Satan was engaged in direct conflict with Jesus Christ. However, Jesus Christ was victorious and was caught up to heaven. (Revelation 12:6.) There was war in heaven and Satan "was hurled down." (Revelation 12:7,9.) Because the battle had been won and Satan had been cast down, John "heard a loud voice in heaven say: 'Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Christ.'" Revelation 12:10. The members of the early church believed the scriptures, believed in the victory of Christ their Saviour, joyfully obeyed the standard of the commandments, and longed for the second coming of their Lord.

THE WOMAN — IN THE DESERT



Q11 **After the triumphant ascension of Jesus to heaven, who did Satan attack?** Revelation 12:5,6,13,14

A

Q12 **Where did the followers of Jesus go to escape Satan's attacks?** Revelation 12:6,14

A



Q13 **How long was this attack to last?** Revelation 12:6,14

A 1. Revelation 12:6

2. Revelation 12:14

Christ's ascension (Revelation 12:5,6) and Satan's being "hurled to the earth" (Revelation 12:13,14) triggered the attacks that resulted in the persecution of "1,260 days," or "a time, times and half a time." Whenever God's Word has been faithfully preached Satan has attacked. Elijah's ministry caused such a reaction in Old Testament times that he had to flee to the desert for 1,260 literal days. There he was out of wicked Ahab's reach. It was a time of intense persecution for many of God's people. (See 1 Kings 17:1-4; James 5:17; Luke 4:25. Compare Revelation 11:2,3,11.)



Q14 **Initially, what did Satan's attack involve?** Revelation 12:13

A

Q15 **What did Satan do next?** Revelation 12:15

A

God's true people are the object of Satan's malice. The flood of water is a symbol of the multitudes of evil with their persecution and false teachings. (See Revelation 17:15; Isaiah 8:6,7; 28:2; Daniel 9:26.) Satan tried to destroy the church from within. (See Acts 20:28-31; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-4; 1 John 2:18,19.) During the early centuries and the Dark Ages the Bible was put aside and the church became the persecutor. (See Acts 7:38; Matthew 21:33-46; 23:37-39; 24:10,11; 27:32-44.)



Q16 **In what way are God's true people helped?** Revelation 12:16

A

Here is a powerful image of deliverance. In the Bible, the earth or desert is a symbol of refuge and protection for God's people. The drying up of waters is also a symbol of deliverance. (See Isaiah 44:24,25,27; Jeremiah 51:36; Revelation 16:12.) Even though the rebellion and persecution of the Dark Ages was intense, a time of restoration and Reformation came. It is impossible to name all of those who had a part in uplifting the Bible and the gospel message, however, there are certain names that stand out in the Reformation and Radical Reformation.

The Reformation: John Wycliffe, who risked his life translating the Bible into the language of his people, has been called the "Morning Star of the Reformation." Other leading reformers were Hus, Jerome and Martin Luther. Attention was drawn to God's Word and the gospel of salvation through faith in Jesus Christ. However, there were many earnest Bible students who were concerned for they did not believe that the main stream of the Reformation was going far enough in its reforms.

The Radical Reformation: The many individuals and groups who chose to be faithful to all of Scripture made up what has been called the Radical Reformation. Some of the names that stand out are those of John Bunyan, John Flavel, John Owen, Joseph Alleine and Richard Baxter. Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*, written while suffering for his faith in the loathsome dungeons of the Bedford gaol, and *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners* have guided many to Jesus Christ. Flavel's *Fountain of Life and Method of Grace*, and Baxter's *Saint's Everlasting Rest*, have taught thousands how to commit themselves to Jesus Christ and how to find salvation and rest in Him.

Many of the Radical Reformers were Puritans, who wished to live according to God's Word. The Anabaptists and the Baptists, including John Smyth in Amsterdam in 1609, were part of this movement. From 1641 baptism by immersion began to replace infusion in the forty Baptist congregations in England for immersion was seen to be the Bible teaching. (See Bryan W. Ball, *The*

English Connection, p. 92.) Bible study brought many to the clear conviction that the gospel of salvation called for obedience to the ten commandments. By the mid 1650's many congregations in England were keeping the seventh-day Sabbath. (Ibid, p. 140.) The prophecies of Daniel and Revelation were studied. The High Priestly ministry of Jesus Christ, and His second coming in power and glory to end sin and deliver believers, became subjects of intense study by many.

The Seventh-day Adventist Movement: In the eighteenth century reformers such as John Whitefield and the Wesley brothers appeared as light bearers for God. The spiritual descendants of the Reformers, the Radical Reformers, the Puritans and the Pilgrim Fathers continued their study of God's Word. This resulted in the Adventist revival of the nineteenth century. Out of that came the Seventh-day Adventist movement. The Seventh-day Adventist Church is committed to upholding the SCRIPTURE, the gospel of SALVATION, the STANDARD of the ten commandments, the eternal significance of the seventh-day SABBATH, the ministry of the SPIRIT and the SECOND COMING of Jesus Christ.

THE WOMAN — THE REMNANT



Q17 **Who suffers Satan's malicious attacks at the end of time?** Revelation 12:17

A

Q18 **How are God's people at the end of time identified?** Revelation 12:17

A 1.
2.

The REST, or the REMNANT, of God's people are a source of extreme annoyance to Satan for

they represent Jesus faithfully in their lives and proclamation. They bear the same characteristics as the woman clothed with the righteousness of Jesus Christ. (Revelation 12:1.) They have the same faith, bear the same message, obey the same commandments and hold to the same testimony of Jesus Christ as the early Christians.



Q19 **What two powers does Satan enlist for his final attack upon obedient believers?** Revelation 12:17; 13:1,2,11

A 1.

2.

my

response...

The Greek word for church is "ekklesia." It means assembly or "those called out." God's final call is for His people to leave the evil woman, Babylon. (See Revelation 18:4) God's people can be identified for they stand for those things that Satan hates: the scriptures, the Saviour, the standard, the Sabbath, the gifts of the Holy Spirit and the second coming of Jesus.



Acknowledging the claims of Jesus Christ upon your life, what do you think it will mean as you choose to stand with God's called out people in these last days?

