

Apocalypse of the Manger – Revelation 12

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Do you ever find yourself searching for something bigger than you? For a community to be a part of? A place founded on truth and love. A place to worship the King of Kings, the Lord of Lords, and the Son of God. Welcome to Founded in Truth, where we're more than just a fellowship. We're a family. So welcome home. Welcome to Founded in Truth. All right, Shabbat Shalom, everyone. Gosh, I'm so excited to be here today, truly am.

If this is your first time visiting or first time watching online, guys, we are a community of very diverse families and individuals who love the Sabbath, find joy in the entirety of the Bible, but most of all, we are a community that seeks first and foremost to orbit the person of Jesus who we call Yeshua. So welcome to Founded in Truth Fellowship.

So guys, you need to say a special prayer for all of the messianic pastors all over the world today because every one of them is giving their very first Christmas sermon. In 15 years of teaching or preaching, I have never given a Christmas message before. So today is a special day regardless.

So today, as Al remarked, is a day when the world around us and the majority of believers honor and reflect on the fact that Yeshua was born. And they do this in various ways, but it's Christmas, right? And of course, it's our tradition here at Founded in Truth to honor his birth officially during the Feast of Tabernacles. But if someone is legitimately honoring or even just reminding themselves of my king's entrance into this world, man, I can't help but smile. I appreciate that.

You also have the Orthodox Church that will be honoring Yeshua's birth on January 6th. And then you have the Armenian church in Israel that will be doing it January 19th. So I always find it kind of neat, the diversity of different Christian traditions and brotherhoods all over the

world. Because it's just a testimony that the message has reached even to the corners of the earth.

We're in Revelation 12

So we're in this series of Revelation. And a few weeks ago, I mentioned that we would be coming back to [Revelation 12](#), which at the time I referred to as John's apocalyptic nativity. And so guess what? Here we are. Has the Revelation series been at least a little edifying for you guys? Great. Revelation is a really neat book, but sometimes it's difficult to work through, and so I'm glad it's been a blessing.

Typically, when we think of the nativity—Yeshua's birth, associated, of course, with Christmas and all of the Advent traditions, including our own—we draw primarily from Luke and Matthew, right?

What do you think of? Well, you think of Mary and Joseph in a room with a feeding trough for the animals and this newborn king that caused such a joyful cry in heaven that the party and the celebration could not be contained in heaven. That the army of heaven broke through the atmosphere into this world to express the celebration of what was taking place and who lies in this feeding trough. That's [Luke 2](#), verses 13 through 14. Literally in the Greek, it says the heavenly army, right? So the myriad of legions that Yeshua said he could call down to deliver him from the cross if he wanted to, the army of heaven was so excited that they broke into this physical world because it couldn't even be contained in heaven.

I find that image that Luke portrays here so exciting. And I know there are some people that are very fundamentalistic in their mindset and how they treat the scriptures. And since they don't see a specific commandment to celebrate or honor or acknowledge or rejoice at the fact that Yeshua was born, they don't. And if I can be blunt, I'm not. The entire army of heaven would disagree.

The Nativity in Luke and Matthew

And when we think about the nativity, the elements that we think of, we think of the shepherds, right? The shepherds coming and seeing this child here, the divinely appointed king of creation laying in the feeding trough in a home just like they were most likely placed.

If you've never heard about Jesus being born in a house instead of a barn or a sukkah or a cave, it's because more recent archaeological discoveries have shown that the typical first century

home had a great room for sleeping. Sometimes it was downstairs, sometimes upstairs. And then there was an outer room, a living room, right? And in the living room, it was kind of open, but you would bring the animals in—maybe a cow or goat or whatever—at night. And they found that typically in these homes, there were feeding troughs dug out near the front.

You know, when we think about "there was no room in the inn," we typically think of it like a hotel—like, oh, that's the Motel 6. We'll leave the light on, but not for baby Jesus, right? But it wasn't a hotel. The CSB Bible actually translated it "there was no room in the guest room." So they laid him in the manger, right?

The word there that we typically translate as "in" is katalima or katalama—that's katalama. And it's only used in one other place in the New Testament. And that's when the disciples found the guest room that they were going to hold Passover in. It wasn't a hotel. It was a room.

The House and the Manger

And because this was Joseph's hometown, we always get this vision that Joseph and Mary were kind of alone, right? They're walking through and she's on the donkey, looking for a place to stay. But this was a census for everybody to return to their hometown. Is it a stretch? It could be. Is it a stretch to think that Joseph maybe had some family that lived in his hometown that they went to in the house and there were so many of them that there was no room in the guest room—the katalama, the guest room? And so they had to stay out and put him in the manger, the feeding trough.

So more recent archaeology has convincingly convinced most Christian scholars that this is most likely the scenario here. Regardless, whatever tradition you want, that's fine. And I love that. And so you have these shepherds coming in and seeing this child. It's not too far-fetched to think that in the lower classes of those who had homes, it would be a cradle—very likely the same place they were placed as children.

The king of creation in the upside-down world of him being placed in a feeding trough. So this is the setup, right? The vision of the nativity: Shepherds, the army of angels, maybe some donkeys, and throw the camel in there because everyone loves the camel with the humps, right? Sitting in the barn. And maybe go ahead and toss in the wise men, even though they weren't there, but whatever. Toss them in too. And we have the little ceramic nativity, right?

But there's one person or one individual that we never include in the nativity scenes or in any of our movies or in any of our ugly, outdated, blown plastic models of Mary and Joseph we stick in our front yards. And it was the big red dragon that was there to devour baby Jesus. Right?

The Dragon in John's Apocalyptic Vision

Now this dragon is not found in the accounts of Luke or in Matthew, but it's found in John's writing, his apocalyptic vision of the nativity found in Revelation chapter 12. There's no baby in a manger there. There's no shepherds rejoicing or wise men bringing gifts or worshiping, but we do find angels. But these angels aren't singing in unison with the ranked army of Yahweh singing and rejoicing. No, these angels are engaged in a cosmic battle, a war on an eschatological level.

In this Christmas story, there is a woman who is beautifully clothed. The sun itself is her attire. There is a son, a male child—who is destined to shepherd all nations—and there's a great fiery red dragon with seven heads who stands ready to devour.

This is the apocalypse of the manger, the true revealing of what was actually happening behind the scenes when Yeshua was born.

Revelation 12: The Grand Redemption Story

Revelation 12, 1 through 17, tells us the Bible's grand redemption story can be summarized in just a few paragraphs. It provides a glimpse into the history of salvation. It tells us the true tale of the entire universe in a way that is both beautiful and enthralling. Look back in time, look forward in time, look back again. Three portions emerge in this chapter: After the account of the mother and her son who was snatched away from the dragon up into heaven, there's a conflict in heaven, and then a hymn of deliverance, then there's Satan's unsuccessful plan of destruction again. It's one of the strangest nativity or Christmas stories you've ever heard, right?

Revelation 12.

A city called Bethlehem is not the beginning of the narrative for this nativity story. Eden is the place where this story begins. Immediately after Adam and Eve succumbed to the seduction of that ancient serpent, that dragon in the garden, God promised to send a Savior.

From Eden: The Proto-Evangelium

It was there in Genesis 3:15 when he declared to Satan and Eve, "I will put enmity—war—between you and the woman, between your seed and her seed. You'll strike his heel, but he will crush your head." This section of scripture is traditionally known in Christianity as the Proto-Evangelium, the first gospel, or the earliest gospel. And it was further extended to God's promise to Abraham, God's promise to David, and so on.

Revelation's Violent Nativity

Our text now explains how such promises came to fruition. So turn with me to Revelation chapter 12, where we find a not-so-joyful and lighthearted nativity story, where another old hymn was sung, probably something like: Silent night, violent night, hell and heaven meet to fight. This is the context of this story.

According to John, if you're following along, in verse 2 she notifies us that she's pregnant. In labor and anguish, in torment, and on the verge of giving birth. And in verse 5, she brings forth a son, a baby boy who was to rule or shepherd—that's what the word means—all nations with a rod of iron. And her child was caught up unto God and to his throne.

Now, ruling with a rod of iron all nations—it's a reference to Psalms chapter 2, if you're familiar, where the poem illustrates God installing this new Davidic king in which he will be a father to and the king will be his son. Pretty common language in the ancient world when a king was installed, they became kind of the son of God, right? But in this poem, in [Psalm 2](#), this king is going to inherit all the nations. All the nations will be his. And this king will rule over them with a rod of iron. And then it gets kind of violent—it says they will be smashing them into pieces. It's pretty graphic poetry, right? What do you do with that?

But as believers, we read the Old Testament through the lens of Yeshua and what took place on the cross, just like Paul and the gospel account writers did. And so in [Psalm 2](#), in light of Yeshua, we have this Davidic king, which we know is messianic, who is going to rule and shepherd over all nations. And he's here depicted with this rod of iron as a warrior king. He's going to fight. John is alluding that this child king—this baby king—is going to fight and be fierce in battle.

The child king is then brought up into heaven to be installed in God's throne room or on God's throne. And at the end of verse five, there, this is where it takes place. And there's something about the time between when the child is born on earth and when the child is taken up to the heavens to God's throne. Something about this timing sparks a heavenly war in which Michael and Satan clash and go into battle with all of their followers and angels, and Satan is defeated.

The Revelation Behind the Nativity

This is the flashback to the visions of [Revelation 5](#). Remember the throne room scene that I talk about all the time, right? Where a slain lamb stands in the throne room of God having just

conquered Satan, covered in his own blood, not the blood of his enemies. This is that moment in [Revelation 12](#) when the child king is taken up to God's throne room.

Now, who is this talking about? Who's the child king that is going to shepherd all nations, be this warrior king, gets caught up to heaven, to God's throne, to reign and rule, and is essentially, he inaugurates Satan's defeat? It's Yeshua, right? Not that hard to decipher here.

In verses three to five, we see another vision: a great fiery red dragon. In verse 9, he is identified as the ancient serpent, the devil, Satan, personification of evil in the world. Thirteen times in Revelation, Satan is described as a dragon, which is a flashback in the Hebrew Bible, in the Old Testament, of the chaotic sea monster Leviathan, right? As a dragon, he strikes fear in our hearts. He's described as fiery red, revealing a type of murderous character.

This dragon sweeps his tail and knocks out a third of the stars out of heaven. Likely, this is connected to the stars three verses earlier around the woman's head. Here John seems to be utilizing a snippet from another apocalyptic vision found in the Old Testament in Daniel, in [Daniel 8](#), verse 10, which depicts the beast growing so large that it knocks the stars out of heaven in order to trample upon them. The stars are Israel in Daniel, the people of God, and this is made known in [Daniel 12](#), verse 3.

In Daniel, the beast grows so large that it knocks the stars out of heaven and tramples them—this depiction, of course, is Antiochus of Epiphanes, the Greek ruler that oppressed and tormented the Jews two centuries before Yeshua. But here, John is reinterpreting this vision as a dragon, the devil himself, working through the beastly nations to torment and trample and deceive the saints throughout history.

Satan's Failed Opposition

But then a child is born. It's here we see the dragon's intentions after he tramples on the people of God. He knows something is coming. He knows something is going to come that will defeat him. He does not want it to happen. The child king is coming. So the dragon takes his stand in front of the woman to devour, consume, eat up her child.

This action is not new. Since the declaration of God in [Genesis 3.15](#), Satan has sought to prevent this male child from ever coming. It's what moved Cain to kill Abel. It's what moved Pharaoh to kill all the Hebrew baby boys. It's what moved Saul to try to kill David. It's what moved the wicked Athaliah to destroy the royal heirs of the house of Judah. It moved Haman to plot the genocide of all of the Jews in Esther. It moved Herod to kill the babies in Bethlehem. But he failed.

Verse 5 tells us: but she gave birth to a son, a male who is going to shepherd over all nations with an iron scepter. This child was born in Bethlehem. And when that happened, it inaugurated the death of the serpent, just as it was promised in Genesis chapter 3. The adversary had been defanged at this moment. The apocalypse happened.

What John Is Really Revealing

What is really being revealed here is not just a baby that is going to die one day. It is the warrior king of [Psalm 2](#). It is the seed of the woman that will crush the serpent's head. It is the explosive reality that the dragon has lost. That's the overlay that John places over the nativity stories of Yeshua. A violent battle broke out when the baby was laid in the manger. And in John's eyes, it was heavy. It was grisly. It was violent.

And so let's unpack a few things, right? The woman. Who is that? Who is the woman that gives birth to the child—Jesus, right? Now, it's not a trick question. Good job. But there is an apocalyptic answer.

And as we discussed earlier, the Greek word behind revelation is apocalypse, right? And apocalypse is not about the end of the world. It's not about all of this destruction coming, even though Hollywood would make us feel that. Apocalypse just means the revealing. And the type of literature that has been lost for 2,000 years—apocalyptic literature—sought to bend time and bend the dimensional space between this world and the spiritual world to show us what was actually going on in the spiritual world behind the scenes despite what was going on in this world, right?

Seeing Behind the Scenes

So in Revelation, we see a lot of stuff and action and violence happening on the earth, but then John switches, and this is what's actually happening in heaven. Yeshua is actually still in control, right? And the beast is going to war, but he's gonna be defeated because we know what's going on behind the scenes. And so the apocalyptic manger is what is actually going on behind the scenes because of what took place in the manger.

Now, who is this woman? There is an apocalyptic answer. Remember, Revelation is not a new vision, right? It's a retelling of the entire narrative, the entire story of the Bible through the lens of Yeshua and what took place on the cross. So the woman is obviously linked to Mary. Obviously.

And I make that point because, guys, don't you... Do we ever have our own bias of Scripture? Of course we do. Is our bias of Scripture sometimes based not on the theology of what the text says, but on what we want Scripture to say because we disagree with someone else about what Scripture means? Right?

Interpreting Mary's Role

So in this section of Scripture, the Catholic and Greek Orthodox tradition is very heavily set on emphasizing Mary as being the exalted queen of heaven here because she is the one who gave birth to Yeshua. But they also lean towards the idea that, yeah, this is also a reflection of all of Israel, obviously.

And then you go over to the Protestant commentaries and they will do their damndest to say this has nothing to do with Mary. Absolutely not. I read two commentaries that said Mary is not even an option for the woman, not even an echo behind her. It only means Israel. And it is obviously an echo of Mary, right? On top of an echo of Rachel mourning in torment for her children. On top of an echo of all of Israel—which we'll get to in a minute—that suffered the birth pangs waiting for the moment that their Savior would come forth.

This is apocalyptic literature. And there are shadows and echoes and links from all different areas of Scripture culminating in one vision. And this is intentional for John's vision. And so that's why I say, obviously, there is an echo of the mother of Yeshua here that gives birth to the son that's gonna reign and rule, who is Yeshua, right?

And of course, this woman in [Revelation 12](#) represents other figures as well, as I just said. And they took over the scene very quickly in the chapter. But the echo of Mary—blessed among women. Sorry, I gotta use the biblical language: Blessed among women are you—is forced into our minds whenever we think of Mary. That's what she's called. Like, Mary's kind of a big deal in the Bible and in the story of Yeshua, right?

And I feel that Protestants as a whole, we've done an absolutely shameful job at minimizing her to be just some girl that was uneducated and just so happened to be chosen by God to be a vessel for Jesus to be born.

Women Magnified in Scripture

Now, we may not say that, but we sure do act like it sometimes. We've also done a really good job at minimizing all of the women in the New Testament to simply being at the right place at

the right time. As men, we have to stop being such cowards when it comes to our identity and masculinity and how we feel that women magnified in the biblical text somehow threaten that. We need to get over that. We really do. The gospel writers were so intentional about how they crafted their stories of Yeshua and overemphasized women being a major part of God's plan. You can even say the drivers of it. That's the Old Testament too.

Two Encounters with Gabriel

I mean, in Luke, you have an instance where the angel announced the future birth of a child to two people. One was Zechariah, the priest who finally got his once-in-a-lifetime chance. There was a lottery that was done every single day. Once in a lifetime, a priest would have the chance to go into the holy place and offer the incense on the altar of incense. It was kind of a really, really, really big deal. Zechariah, in his old age, finally got it after all of these years. The honorable priest whom the angel tells will soon father John the Baptist. The other instance is Yeshua's mother, Mary. Both ask Gabriel, how can this be? But while Zechariah is punished with months of dumbness for his unbelief, Mary is only exalted and commended. That's how Luke starts his gospel out. Luke did that intentionally as he crafted his gospel account.

The Women of Luke

The prominent role of women in Luke continues as Mary and her cousin Elizabeth confess prophesy over Jesus in the womb. Elizabeth was the first person to be filled with the Holy Spirit in all of the stories of Jesus. She was only followed by her husband, Zechariah, after he could speak again. After the two women prophesy over Yeshua, they are followed by a man named Simeon. And then another woman comes by the name of Anna, who was a prophetess. According to [John 11](#), it was Martha who was the first to proclaim, "You are the Christ, the Son of God," not Peter in John's account. Martha said that at the resurrection of Lazarus. That's neat Bible trivia, by the way.

Blessed Among Women

But Mary, Mary was called blessed among women. And what's so awesome about that phrase is it's only found one other place in scripture, given to Yael in Judges after she crushed the skull of the enemy of Israel. Remember the whole stake for Sisera? Yeah, in Judges chapter four. The first woman in the Bible called by this phrase was a skull crusher. Why is that significant? Because of the proto-evangelium. [Genesis 3.15](#) says, "I will put enmity between you and the serpent. Warfare between." Eve was the one that was at war against the serpent from the very

beginning. Eve was the one that would usher in the conclusion of the battle. Eve was the one that would stand as a vessel for the victory of God and the good news to be proclaimed. Eve was given the prophecy that she and her seed would be the warriors engaged in battle, in enmity and war against the dragon. And here in Luke, Mary is referred to as blessed among women, an echo from Yael, who crushed the skull of the enemies of Israel. It is through Mary that the skull crusher will come forth. Mary's seed is going to crush the head of the serpent. In the next chapter in Revelation, doesn't the beast get fatally wounded?

The First Vessel

She is the first vessel. Mary is the first vessel that truly held the body and blood of Christ. That's significant. [Luke 1](#), verse 26. We're going to read the encounter that Mary has when she goes to visit Elizabeth, right? And she's been told by the angel that she's going to bring forth the skull crusher, and Elizabeth is already six months pregnant, right? Love that. That's significant. It's kind of neat because I believe Mary only stays there for three months and then she leaves before she gives birth. It's kind of weird why she left before, but anyway.

So Luke chapter 1, verse 26, we're gonna start. "In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a town in Galilee, to a virgin pledged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of David. The virgin's name was Mary. The angel went to her and said, 'Greetings, Mary. You who are highly favored, the Lord is with you.' Mary was greatly disturbed, troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this could be. But the angel said to her, 'Don't be afraid, Mary. You have found favor with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son soon, and you are to call him Jesus, Yeshua. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over Jacob's descendants forever. His kingdom will never end.' How will this be? Mary asked the angel, since I'm a virgin. The angel answered, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the Holy One to be born will be called the Son of God. Even now Elizabeth, your relative, is going to have a child in her age as well, and she who is said to be unable to conceive is in her sixth month right now, for no word from God will ever fail.' I am the Lord's servant, Mary answered. May your word to me be fulfilled. Then the angel left her."

Gosh, I love that. So this section of scripture just bleeds and echoes with the stories from Sarah and Hannah and the mother of Samson who all had an angel tell them they were going to conceive a child. It's the same, love it.

Called and Chosen

Things to notice, and this directly relates to [Revelation 12](#) as one of the three main echoes that John has in mind when he shares his vision of the woman with the stars above her head. It's not just Mary, right? Luke is very specific about this instance. Mary does not seem to be just some random girl who happened to be the only virgin in town. Please understand what I'm saying. Because sometimes we view Mary as just a girl that was simply available. Sometimes we do. And like I said before, we may not say it, but that's just how we treat her character in the gospel accounts. Now it says here that she was chosen. And I don't think she was just chosen because she's the only one available, like "Let's pick her."

And so you could read this as Gabriel appeared and told Mary she was favored and then highly favored—why? Oh, because she's going to get pregnant and deliver Jesus. She's favored because she's going to cherish the child, carry the child. She's chosen because of what's going to happen. Or you could read it as the angel appeared to Mary because she was already favored. Mary, a girl at the bottom of the social realm. She's young, from a particular family heritage. She's from Nazareth. Nothing good comes from there, right? And she's female in a world where men would get mad if Jesus healed you on the Sabbath. But here, she turns out to be one favored by God, the one who finds her status and identity in her obedience to God and her willing participation in his salvific will.

A Costly Yes

Mary was a true dedicated daughter of Abraham. And look, I love verse 38. She even accepts the assignment and concurs with allegiance to God's mission to her. "I am the Lord's servant, Mary answered. May your word to me be fulfilled." And I don't think we've realized the weight of what Mary accepted in this mission, because when we read this, we think, "Oh, if the angel told me I would fulfill some prophecy, I'd happily accept that, right?" But unless you understood the sacrifice of what it was going to cost you...

And I submit, Mary, the new Eve, understood fully what it would cost her to go to war with the dragon. And she looks at the angel and she says, "I am here to serve. May your word be fulfilled." In context, I believe it's on par with her saying, "Long live the true king." Some people picture this type of scared little girl who doesn't really know what's going on. She's a teenager. Man, I picture Joan of Arc placing her sword before her and swearing allegiance to fight for Charles VII. Joan of Arc was also a teenager who claims to have been visited by an angel. I'm not convinced of it, not fully, but it works well with the parallel, right?

The Magnificat

How can I be so confident in this? When Mary goes to visit Elizabeth and then Elizabeth prophesies over Yeshua and Mary, and then Mary responds with a song. She composes this poetic song contained in Luke chapter 1, verses 46 through 56. And this section of scripture is known as the Magnificat. And here Mary sings a praise that carries direct echoes in the song of Miriam, celebrating the defeat of the oppressive powers of Pharaoh. It also echoes the song of Hannah, the song that testifies of God's power, his faithfulness, and the great reversals where he lifts up the humble and brings down the rulers off his throne, where the hungry are fulfilled, but the rich are stripped of everything. It also echoes the song of Deborah, testifying of the defeat of the armies that come against Israel, concluding with, "May your enemies perish." There are three recorded songs by female warriors and female prophets in the Old Testament, and Mary is the culmination of all three. She is the concluding warrior prophet who sang forth the song of God's deliverance, included alongside them.

She Knew the Cost

Mary knew the battle. Based on her song, Mary understood what the cost was. Mary understood there would be pain and suffering and sacrifice. But just like Hannah, she delivered a son knowing she would be handing him back over to the Lord.

She Understood the Assignment

Mary was there at the beginning of Yeshua's life and she was standing at the cross at the very end of it. She understood the assignment and she deserves recognition for that. Just like Peter, just like John, just like Paul. We do a great disservice when we minimize the heralds of God's battle cry in Scripture. And so the woman in [Revelation 12](#) does reflect on Mary bringing forth the warrior king as well as being in the midst of the battle. Mary in Luke's gospel is portrayed as also representing the faithful remnant of Israel who alongside Elizabeth, Zechariah, Simon, and Anna were the ones that were anticipating the battle. The return of the Messiah. And they recognized it because they were on the watch.

The Woman Crying Out in Labor Pains

This woman in [Revelation 12](#) also has the 12 stars above her head and the sun and the moon are seen with her. Wasn't there another vision somewhere where someone had stars and a sun and a moon? Joseph. It's an echo of Joseph. Joseph had the dream of the sun and the moon and

the 11 stars and the sun represented Jacob. And the moon represented Rachel and the stars all represented the rest of the sons of Jacob. The woman here also represents Israel, crying out in labor pains, anticipating the coming of the child king. Crying out in labor pains, and specifically during childbirth is reminiscent of Old Testament imagery used to describe Israel as a woman giving birth in [Isaiah 26](#), 17 through 18, and [Micah 4](#), 10, and 5, 2 through 3. These are messianic passages depicting Israel coming out of exile and moaning, groaning the birth pains as a woman about to give birth. The conclusion is coming.

Indeed, the nation agonized and suffered throughout the centuries as she longed for her deliverer to come. God promised us he would send a rescuer, a deliverer, and a savior. And it also riffs off the idea of Rachel as well, mourning, tormented on behalf of her children, just like Matthew portrays the prophecy being fulfilled in Bethlehem. And so this child, this son is born, and he is destined to be a shepherd over all nations and become the warrior king that will resolve the pain and suffering of the woman.

Three Sections of Vision

The chapter continues. In a bit of a back and forth motion, if you see, and in your scriptures, depending on the translation, it should be divided up into three sections, right? The first section we just reviewed speaks of the defeat of Satan and the enthronement of the child king. The third section at the bottom there, most would consider it a conclusion of the first section, okay? So that's the same timeline. It's the same story, right? During this we have the continuation where the dragon responds to his defeat of being thrown down. And those words thrown down appear six times in this chapter. And six is significant in Revelation. And so he goes after the woman and she's kept safe from the wings of evil. But then this beast goes after the rest of her offspring who keep the commandments of God and hold the testimony of Yeshua.

Right? The center section is believed to be the conclusion, or at least it seems to point mostly to being the conclusion of the first and third sections. So it's the concluding part, and it's in the middle. And it is poetry. Usually when the translators believe that a section is poetry because of many different indicators, it'll be formatted kind of shorter and longer, right? Less words going out. Some translations have that, some don't. But let's read this together. Let's read the conclusion of [Revelation 12](#) right here, what seems to be the conclusion.

Triumphed by Blood of the Lamb

Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say, now... Therefore rejoice, you heavens And you who dwell in them, the heavenly host. Where did we see the heavenly host breaking through and rejoicing? Because of something about us in Luke. But woe to the earth and the sea because the devil has gone down to you. He is filled with fury because he knows that his time is short. So this section, this conclusion kind of overlays both the present of what's going on in the vision as well as the conclusion. This is the work of the child king in the dirty house in Bethlehem, placed in a feeding trough, the warrior king of Israel. And we triumphed over the dragon by the blood of the lamb and by the word of his testimony.

The child king taught us how to defeat Satan by example, through the cross. He ascended to heaven, the son of man riding on the clouds of heaven. That's the image of [Daniel 7](#), when the son of man ascended, defeats the beast, and he ascends into heaven to be enthroned in the throne room of God, not descending from heaven back to earth. Whenever you see that, it alludes to his enthronement and the praise of that. That's why John starts his letter, the introduction of his letter out to the seven churches, and he quotes that from [Daniel 7](#). It's not part of the vision. It's part of his introduction. It's part of his greeting to the seven churches. It's part of reminding them that he is enthroned now. He's there before we go into the vision. This is why you need to get your act together and this is why you're doing a great job because he is ruling and reigning now and we need to take that seriously.

He Knows His Time Is Short

Something about this child in [Revelation 12](#) being born erupts into battle where Michael, who represents Israel and Daniel, fights the dragon and throws him down from heaven. This child king ascends to heaven and the devil is mad so he tries to take it out on you, spewing lies and accusing you of being deserving of death, manipulating you through politics of the world, whispering lies in order to thwart your true allegiance to God. He wants to draw you in to pledge your allegiance to the beasts of the world, which are the nations, the kingdoms, the countries, and yield to the emperors and the politicians, to give them your loyalty to do whatever they say. He'll even whisper in your ear that if you serve Caesar, you're actually serving God.

And that took place already throughout Israel. And it took place already in Revelation. It was taking place in Asia Minor. And it's taking place right now. We can sing our victory song, though, right now. We can sing our victory song right now. It's right here. This is our victory song. Even though Satan is still mad and trying to fight us because he knows his time is short, that's the vision. This is what John is putting forth.

A Telescoping Glimpse

Gosh, isn't that beautiful? And also humbling? Sobering. Somber. This is all a telescoping glimpse into the entirety of the life and ministry of Yeshua, as well as the entirety of the revelation and the history of everything that God has done for man and revealed to man. I love art because art specifically in the time of the renaissance. Whenever you view art, you're viewing a television show that someone has crafted. You're viewing a story. It's not simply like, oh, okay, there's a really weird looking woman screaming on a bridge. But man, those stars are pretty. Starry night. The intention is more than that. There's a story being written. So I want to show you a painting that Leonardo da Vinci did known as the Adoration of the Magi.

The Apocalypse of the Manger

Go ahead and put that up. Look at that. Look at how colorful and vibrant and happy it is. Yeah, it's not. It's dark, right? Notice the shades. We're going to zoom on it in here in just a minute. But notice the shades. There's no rainbows and butterflies. But yet we have the Madonna and Child right there in the middle. Baby Jesus is born. Why isn't this scene happier? Why aren't the shepherds like rejoicing? Where are the angels? Where's the camel? No, you have everybody. No one's smiling. Not even Mary. But they're yielding and worshiping with a somber appearance. Look at the guy with his hand over his head. I love that. Let's zoom in to the bottom. So whenever you see paintings depicted of scenes, typically it's wise to interpret it as a story that moves from bottom to top. Okay?

So we're going to look at the bottom section of this painting. I think we have it. Do we? There we go. So we have Mary there with Yeshua. And look at everybody. Okay? They almost look like dead people, right? And they're almost concerned but anticipating something grim. And you just have this idea that what is happening? But then we look up. We start to go up in the painting and we notice what's happening in the background. The revelation, the revealing. What is happening behind the scenes? Go ahead and go to the top shot. Look what's happening in the background. There's a fierce battle going on. Look at that, the horses and they're swinging. And you even got this one horseman right here looking over into the earthly domain, looking on the child king. In the background, there's blood and feces and sweat being poured out because of the blades strung across each other. It's a fierce battle going on at the birth of this king.

Conquered by Blood and Testimony

Go ahead and go back to the lower section. We don't see all of the wise men here, the Magi, but we see the one kneeling down and offering his gift to Yeshua. This is the only gift that Yeshua is reaching for and grabbing, and it's the gift of myrrh that was used for anointing the dead bodies. This is John's vision of the birth of Yeshua, of what was really happening. This is the apocalypse of the manger. Mary understood that she was going into battle. Zechariah and Elizabeth, they understood. They were going into battle. Simon and Anna understood they were going into battle. And the king will free the remnant of Israel. This king will end the exile. This king will kill the dragon, the serpent. But there will be birth pangs. There will be a response from the world. There will be a response from the dragon. And the only way that we conquer, and this is the message of [Revelation 12](#), the only way that we conquer and we fight is by the blood of the lamb and the word of our testimony.

Oh, there's another element that contributes to overcoming the dragon and conquering him that we always leave out of that section of the poem: that we not love our lives even unto death. Paints the picture a little bit like Leonardo da Vinci did, right? We did not love our lives even unto death. That is how the dragon is defeated in John's portrayal.

By pledging allegiance to the blood of the lamb and testifying that the dragon has no power, there is another king. Even when the dragon slowly runs the blade through your torso. Even when he unleashes the lions upon you in the arenas. Even when his forehead sweats and drips down on you as he hammers the nails into your hands and lifts you up. Even when he lights you on fire to illuminate his gardens for his evening parties, John reinforces the idea that God protects you. Your body doesn't matter. It's not physical protection. He joins you and he never forsakes you and he ushers you into his house under the altar. He is there with you and will never abandon you no matter what tribulation you incur.

But you need to respond like the new Eve, like Mary. I am the Lord's servant. May your word be fulfilled in me. You have to give it to him, all of it. Why do you think the painting is so grim? Because there's a cost to victory.

We Not Love Our Lives Even Unto Death

We are called to bear the cross just like Yeshua did. Oh, he did it for me? No, he invites you to follow him to defeat the dragon. He invites you to be his hands and feet. He invites you to be the ambassador of Christ—Paul says, the reflection, the emissary of Christ. Follow the pattern of self-sacrificial love, no matter what the cost, and do not love your life more than death.

And if you do that, the dragon can take nothing from you. You will always stand in victory, and he will always stand defeated.

We are called to bear the cross. We're called to live it out. Not a life of material blessings and prosperity. We're called to live out a cruciform life, where we see and interpret and navigate this life through the lens of what took place on the cross, through the lens of the child king. And we act on it.

A Cruciform Life

We give love to those that no one else will. And we don't use the excuses that everyone else gives to stop giving it. We do not find excuses not to pour into people, no matter how hard it is. We do not distribute bitterness through our actions and our words. We sacrifice our pride so that others can feel the love of God. We forgive and we never retaliate in a way that makes us look like the world. We choose the third option. We don't fight, we don't flee. We find the way that disrupts the way of the dragon and we give it our all.

This is the way of the child warrior king who was born of a warrior prophetess. And who trains us to be warrior servants. But if we choose to follow this king that was born and laid in a manger, we commit to standing in his presence, looking like a lamb, bloodied and slain, but standing in his victory, just like him.

Which King Do You Follow?

And is that something you're prepared to do? Because that is what John was encouraging the seven churches to do while they lived in a world of oppression and tribulation under the regime of a Roman empire. And he says, do not hide your light. You're being persecuted. You're doing it right. Oh, you're living in luxury. Oh, so you've lost your first love. You've lost your allegiance. You've lost your commitment.

In our time, we don't know what persecution is. Let's be honest. We have no idea what persecution is. We tend to be so desperate to identify with the saints of the past that we grab at anything in order to claim persecution first. And many times we just end up trying to make our status of God's people known by accusing others of compromise and sin and disloyalty so that we don't have to face the shallowness of our own faith.

You can be a warrior that follows the lamb, but it takes sacrificing your pride. It takes forgiving others that hurt you. It takes practicing. Everybody know what it means to practice? You

practice, right? You may not be able to fully do it at first, so you practice, right? You practice giving grace and mercy first in all scenarios. It takes viewing the people in your life through the lens of the lamb.

Standing in Victory

On this Christmas day, who in your life has hurt you? Who is it? Who in your life feels betrayed by you? Who in your life have you hurt intentionally? Who in your life has injured you? And you don't want to acknowledge it enough to forgive them or feel like you have to.

There are those who follow the lamb in this story of John's visions. And there are those who follow the beast. Which are you? How do you acknowledge the birth of the king that says, follow me? Worship team, you can come up as we conclude with worship.

And I'd ask everybody to stand as we end in prayer. Guys, if you need prayer today for any reason related to the message or not related to the message, I want to invite you to take advantage of the prayer team off to the side. It's not front and center, but these are individuals, prayer warriors, that will stand with you and lift you up in whatever circumstance you face.

I hope that John's vision—about what it meant for the king to be born—had the same impact on you as it did for the seven churches he wrote to.

Alvina Malkinu, our Father, our King, Father, we thank you for the birth of the king. We thank you for the examples in scripture of the warrior prophets that fought and pushed forward. We thank you for the example that Yeshua left us to follow of defeating the dragon, that you would allow us to reach that victory today by the blood of the lamb and the word of our testimony, but also acknowledging and accepting the sacrifice and everything that will cost.

That we would put away the things in our life that keep us from truly embodying that and throw them down just like the dragon. That we would fully embrace the mission that you have given to us to bring forth the kingdom of God and overshadow the kingdom of the beast no matter what. That you would give us the heart that would acknowledge the areas in our lives that we need to address and we need to purify with fire.

That you would acknowledge the things in our life—the offenses and the hurts and the scars—and although we can feel the pain and that's okay, that we would forgive just as Yeshua forgave those who spat and threw stones and called names and betrayed and stabbed. That we would use that as our example and that we would have the strength to walk through that trial and

become a new, stronger warrior on the other side. That we would have the strength to apologize and ask forgiveness of those that we have intentionally hurt because of our own pride.

Father, have mercy on us and forgive us. Make us the warriors under the Lamb. In Yeshua's name we pray, amen.

Hear, O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is one. Blessed is the name of his glorious kingdom for all eternity. May the God of patience and encouragement grant you to be like-minded with one another in the manner of Messiah, so that together with one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Yeshua Messiah. Shabbat Shalom. Shalom.

I'm Matthew Vanderells, and I hope you enjoyed this message. Founded in Truth exists to build a community that bears the image of God and lives the redeemed life only Yeshua gives. If this message impacted you or if this ministry has been a blessing to you, we invite you to take part in making sure the message of Yeshua and the truth of God's word continues to reach others. To make sure this happens, you can donate through our online giving portal at foundedintruth.com/give or by texting any amount to 704-275-0752. Don't forget to like and subscribe for new content every single week. And we thank you for your continued support. And we look forward to seeing you next time. Shalom.

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