

Jesus Wins, Satan Loses



SABBATH—MARCH 25

READ FOR THIS WEEK'S LESSON: Revelation 12:7–9; Revelation 12:4–6; Revelation 12:10; Revelation 12:14–16; Revelation 12:17.

MEMORY VERSE: “Then the dragon was very angry at the woman. He went off to make war against all her other children. Her children are those [people] who obey God’s commands and have the truth that Jesus taught” (Revelation 12:17, ICB).



We also are in a life-and-death fight.

CORMAC O'BRIEN wrote a book about armies. The name of the book is *Outnumbered: Incredible Stories of History's Most Surprising Battlefield Upsets*. The book tells stories about how small armies won big wars. One story is about Hannibal's army. Hannibal was a general from the city of Carthage in Bible times when Rome was a worldwide kingdom. Hannibal had only 55,000 soldiers. But his army beat the Roman army, which had 80,000 men. Cormac O'Brien also tells the surprising story about how the Greek army of Alexander the Great beat the mighty army of the kingdom of Persia.

We also are in a life-and-death fight. Satan, our enemy, is sly and tricky. He has a very big army. Satan's soldiers think they can't lose.

Don't lose hope. Yes, God's army on this earth is small. Satan's attacks are nasty. But Jesus will win the war in the end. This Bible truth is the message from Revelation, the last book in the Bible. Jesus wins. Satan loses. We can read about this final fight in Revelation 12, which we will study this week. This study will help us understand better Revelation 14 and the Three Angels' Messages.

THE FIGHT IN HEAVEN (Revelation 12:7–9)

Revelation 12 shows us the worldwide war between good and evil. This fight started in heaven and will end here on earth. Chapter 12 gives us important information about Satan's war in heaven and his attacks on God's people on earth in the end times.

Read Revelation 12:7–9, which talks about the worldwide war between good and evil. How was it possible for this war to happen in heaven? What do these verses teach us about free choice?

Freedom of choice is an important part of God's government, both in heaven and on earth. God did not make anyone to be a robot. Not in heaven and not on earth. God made both angels and humans free to choose between good and evil.

Our freedom to choose is connected to our freedom to love. What happens if God removes the freedom of choice from humans? Then we can't choose to love. Love can't be forced. Love is a free choice. Every angel in heaven had to choose between God's love and selfish pride. In the same way, the book of Revelation shows us that we each must make a choice between God and Satan in the end times.

Everyone must choose between good and evil in earth's final war. We follow Jesus, or we fight against Him (read Luke 11:23). Every angel chose Jesus' side or Satan's side in the war in heaven. So, too, all humans must choose between God and Satan in the end times. Who will you be loyal to? Who will you worship? Who will you obey? These are the questions everyone must answer.

Revelation 12 gives us hope and some wonderful news: Jesus wins in the war between good and evil. All we need to do is choose to follow Jesus. He is the winner.

Think about the freedom to choose between right and wrong. This is a very precious and holy gift. Jesus gave the human family this gift. What did we do with this gift? We chose sin and evil. So, Jesus had to die on the cross (read 2 Timothy 1:9). But did that stop Jesus from giving us free choice? No, He gave us this precious gift anyway. What does this Bible truth teach us about how we must be careful with this gift? How much did this gift cost Jesus?



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SATAN'S ATTACK (Revelation 12:4–6, 9)

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From the start, Satan tried to destroy Jesus Christ (Revelation 12:4, 5). Satan failed every time. When Jesus was born, an angel warned Joseph and Mary about King Herod's evil plans. So, Joseph and Mary escaped to Egypt. Many years later, Jesus met Satan in the desert. Satan tried to get Jesus to sin. But Jesus answered all of Satan's tricks with Bible verses. Jesus protected Himself with Bible truth. When Jesus died on the cross, He showed how much He loved us. Jesus saved us from the penalty of sin. When Jesus woke up from the dead, He went to heaven to help us. Now Jesus works in God's temple to save us from sin.

Read Revelation 12:4–6, 9; Ephesians 5:25–27, 32; and Psalm 2:7–9. These verses show us three symbols or word pictures: a woman, a male child, and an “iron stick” (Revelation 12:5, WE). What do these symbols mean?

Woman _____

Male Child _____

Iron Stick _____

In the Bible, a stick is a word picture or symbol for a powerful king. An iron stick is a symbol for an all-powerful government. What do these word pictures show us? They show us that Jesus is a powerful king. Jesus won the fight against Satan while He lived on earth. Jesus won the fight against Satan when He woke up from the dead. Because Jesus won, we can win, too. Satan tried to get Jesus to sin in every way that he tries to get us to sin. So, Jesus understands our experience. For sure, Satan is a loser. But the worldwide war between God and Satan isn't over yet.

We accept by faith what Jesus has done for us. Jesus forgives our sins. God forgives our sins and makes us holy. So, we stand perfect in front of God. Paul explains this wonderful Bible truth in these words: “Now that I belong to Christ, I am right with God and this being right does not come from my following the law. It comes from God through [because of] faith. God uses my faith in Christ to make me right with him” (Philippians 3:9, ICB). When we believe in Jesus, He gives us everything He won.

**ACCEPTING EVERYTHING JESUS WON FOR US
(Revelation 12:10)**

The Bible shows us that Jesus never lost a fight with Satan. Jesus is a mighty warrior. Jesus wins against Satan's evil army. So, we must believe that everything Jesus won He won for us, too.

Read Revelation 12:10. This verse says, “ ‘the accuser of our brothers and sisters has been thrown out’ ” (ERV). Who is the accuser? Why does this news about what happened to Satan help you feel better?

Yes, the worldwide war between good and evil continues to this day. But Satan has lost. That is good news! Jesus will win the war against evil at the Second Coming. The news keeps getting better. Jesus also wins the fight against evil for us in our personal lives. Some Christians live in fear. They are always worried about fighting sin in their own strength. They don't really understand in their personal lives how much Jesus won for them.

Read Revelation 12:11. What hope of winning does Jesus give us in this verse?

Jesus gives messages to each of the seven churches in the book of Revelation. In each message, Jesus talks about “ ‘anyone who has victory [wins] over sin’ ” (Revelation 2:7, 11, 17, 26, NIV; Revelation 3:5, 12, 21, NIV). The word written as “victory [wins]” comes from the Greek word “**nikao**.” “**Nikao**” can mean “to win” or “to beat in a fight.” Do you see in these verses how Jesus says seven times that it's possible for us to win the war against sin? Revelation 12:11 tells us how we win. We win “because of the blood of the Lamb and by telling what He had done for them” (NIV).

In Revelation 5:6, God gives John a special dream about heaven. John sees a Lamb in his dream. This Lamb looks as if it had been killed. This Lamb is a word picture for Jesus. John's dream shows us that all heaven is paying attention to Jesus and His death for us on the cross. The cross shows God's love for us more than anything else can. So, we must accept with faith everything Jesus did for us. Then God will forgive our sins (Colossians 1:14; Ephesians 1:7; Colossians 2:14). Praise God that Satan, who likes to blame us, is thrown out of heaven! We are saved because of Jesus.



Jesus gives messages to each of the seven churches in the book of Revelation.

THE WOMAN IN THE DESERT (Revelation 12:6)

Read Revelation 12:6 and compare it to Revelation 12:14–16. These verses talk about Satan’s attack on the woman. The woman is a word picture for God’s church. How long does Satan’s attack on the woman continue?



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Revelation 12:6 says that God took care of the “woman” for 1,260 days. The 1,260 days in Revelation are the same as the three-and-a-half years in Revelation 12:14. The Bible also talks about this same time in Daniel 7:25, Revelation 11:2, 3, and Revelation 13:5. The woman in Revelation 12 is not a real woman. (A real woman with wings did not go into the desert!) So, we understand that the woman is a word picture. We also understand that the times in these verses in Daniel and Revelation also are word pictures. We must use the day-year rule to understand what these times mean. The Bible gives us the day-year rule in Numbers 14:34 and Ezekiel 4:4–6. The day-year rule helps us understand that a day is the same as a year in a special message about time. *The Andrews Study Bible* says, “Down through history, many Bible thinkers believed the 1,260 days were 1,260 years. The 1,260 years started in A.D. 538 and ended in 1798.”—Page 1,673, comments on Revelation 11:2, adapted. During the 1,260 years, the church in the Middle Ages worked together with the kings and queens of Europe to hurt God’s loyal people.

The attacks against God’s people during the 1,260 years were part of the worldwide war between God and Satan. During this time, people started to study the Bible. They saw that the church was not following the Bible. Men and women needed to make a choice. Would they obey God and the Bible? Or would they accept the teachings of the church? Many people chose to obey God. Sad to say, the church hurt many of these people because they believed in the teachings of the Bible.

Revelation 12 shows us how much God cares for His church. In Revelation 12:6, God makes a safe place for the woman. Revelation 12:14 says that God takes care of her. Revelation 12:16 says that “the earth helped the woman” (ERV). So, God took care of His church when Satan attacked it. God will do the same for His end-time church, too.

Think of a hard time in your life when God took care of you. How did God help you when you needed it most?

GOD'S END-TIME PEOPLE (Revelation 12:17)

As we saw earlier this week, Satan started a war in heaven against God (Revelation 12:7). Satan has fought with Jesus ever since. Satan's plan is the same now as it was then. He wants to get control of everything in heaven and on earth (read Isaiah 14:12–14). Satan will make a special attack on God's people in the end times. Revelation 12:17 announces that the dragon (a word picture for Satan) is angry at the woman (the church). The dragon makes war with the woman's children. Another word for her children is "remnant." The King James Bible uses this word. A remnant is a piece of cloth left over from a larger roll of cloth. In the same way, a remnant is a small group of people who stay in God's church at the end of time. This group of people stays loyal to God and obeys Bible truth. They have faith in God's kingdom.

Read about God's remnant people in Revelation 12:17. The remnant is a word picture for God's end-time church. What does this verse teach us about God's remnant? Who are they, and what do they do that makes them special?

In Revelation 12:17, Satan (the dragon) is angry with the woman, God's end-time church. The devil is angry because this church keeps God's commandments. So, Satan will do everything he can to destroy them.

Finally, Satan makes a law against God's people so they cannot buy or sell. God's people will be thrown into prison or put to death (read Revelation 13:14–17). Satan tried to destroy Jesus. He failed. So, now Satan will try to destroy the thing that Jesus loves most: His church. The final war on earth will not happen in the Middle East. This war will happen in our hearts. This war is between Jesus Christ and Satan. Everyone on earth must choose a side.

The most important questions in this final war are, "Who has our loyalty and love? Who has our hearts?" Has Jesus' love touched your heart? Have you been saved by His mercy? Have you given your life to serve Him? Does His Spirit control your life? Do you obey His commands? Are you willing to die for the One who died for you? The final war is coming. Because of Jesus, we will win if we stay connected to Him. The choice is ours.

How is the war between God and Satan happening in your own life?

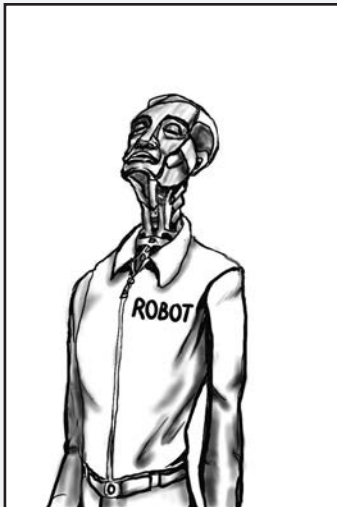


Has Jesus' love touched your heart? Have you been saved by His mercy?

ADDITIONAL THOUGHT: We can say that God really had no choice: if He wanted us to love Him freely, He had to make us free. If we are not free, then we cannot love. What is life in heaven or on earth without love? If we are not free, then we are the same as machines or robots. Machines and robots do the work they were made to do. But they have no free choice. That is a sad way to live, right? We can be glad that the Bible teaches that we are free to choose to love God and obey Him.

“God’s law is love. Love is the law of His government. When the angels and people in heaven kept this law, then they were happy. God wants everyone to serve Him because they love Him. We will want to serve God more when we know who He really is. God is not happy when people feel forced to obey Him. So, God makes people free. He gives them choice. Then they can choose to serve Him or not.

“When everyone was loyal to God and served Him from love, there was peace everywhere in heaven. The angels felt joy in doing whatever God asked. They were happy to show other people and angels that God was very mighty and filled with love. The angels loved to praise God. The angels loved God more than they loved anything else. Their love for each other was not selfish. No sin or selfish behavior destroyed the peace that the angels felt.”—Ellen G. White, *Patriarchs and Prophets*, pages 34, 35, adapted.



Machines and robots do the work they were made to do. But they have no free choice.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- ① How does Revelation 12 help us understand the Three Angels’ Messages? That is, how does Revelation 12 help us understand what will happen in the end times?
- ② How does Revelation 12 give you hope to be strong during all the tests and troubles you have each day?
- ③ Some people believe that we can’t control our thoughts, feelings, or behavior. These people believe that we behave the way we do because we are born that way or because of where and when we were born. Do you agree or disagree? Explain your answer. How do our choices control our behavior?

RUN TO JESUS

My name is Alicia Marie Harding. I am a stay-at-home mom. My job includes homeschooling my kids, cleaning the house, and cooking meals for my family. I love my job as a stay-at-home mom! I also am an American Bible worker overseas in Zambia, where I live with my husband and four kids. All the things I do as a mom help me to honor and love Jesus. But what happens when the things we do **for** Jesus get in the way of our being **with** Jesus? Then we need to “run” to Him.

At 10:00 A.M., I was teaching my kids. I also was doing laundry and fixing lunch at the same time. Then everything started to go wrong. My oldest daughter got mad at my youngest son for getting in her way while she was doing her schoolwork. Another one of my children started crying because she could not figure out how to solve her math problem. My two oldest children got into a fight because each one of them wanted to boss the other one around. I also got upset because I had to keep telling another one of my kids to pay attention to me.

Before things got worse, I knew I had to decide. I had two choices. I could get mad and yell at everyone. Or I could stay sweet, cheerful, and calm. I could invite my kids to join me in taking our problems to Jesus. What good was anything we did in work and school if we did not have Jesus in our hearts?

I smiled at all my kids, and then I said each of their names. “Shayla,” I said to my 11-year-old daughter. “Wesley,” I said, turning to my 9-year-old son. “Sienna and Winston,” I said to my 7-year-old daughter and 3-year-old son. “We are going to take all our problems to Jesus and let Him help us fix them.”

My children and I went outside. We knelt under the shade of a tree and told Jesus our problems. Next, we read in the Bible about how Jesus caused a storm to stop blowing. Then we hugged each other and started our day all over again. With Jesus. When we walked back into the house, each child was at peace. Inside, my children paid careful attention to what I told them to do. They were willing to work out their problems together and not fight. They were nice to each other. We all felt that Jesus was very near to us that day. Having Jesus with us is more precious than getting things done on a to-do list.

Ellen G. White wrote, “Many mothers wish they could go overseas and work for Jesus. But these mothers have work to do for Jesus in their own homes. . . . A mother should do everything she can to lead her children’s growing minds to Jesus. She should connect their thoughts to God. Who can do this work better than a loving mother who loves God?”—*Adventist Home*, page 245, adapted. Being a mother is about helping your little ones “run” or come to Jesus.

INSIDE *Story*

by ALICIA MARIE HARDING



We knelt under the shade of a tree and told Jesus our problems.

