

Revelation 12:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels,

Analysis

And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels,... This verse from Revelation's vision of woman, child, and dragon - cosmic conflict, satan's defeat, messiah's victory employs apocalyptic imagery rich with Old Testament allusions and symbolic meaning. The Greek text uses vivid apocalyptic language characteristic of Jewish prophetic literature, drawing heavily from Daniel, Ezekiel, Isaiah, and Zechariah.

The symbolism must be interpreted within its first-century context while recognizing timeless spiritual realities. The imagery would resonate powerfully with persecuted believers facing Roman imperial cult worship, providing hope that despite present suffering, Christ reigns sovereign and will consummate His kingdom. The apocalyptic genre uses symbolic numbers (seven, twelve, 144,000), colors, beasts, and cosmic imagery to convey theological truth rather than photographic descriptions.

Christologically, Revelation consistently exalts Jesus as the victorious Lamb, the faithful witness, the King of kings and Lord of lords. Every vision ultimately points to Christ's supremacy, His finished redemptive work, and His certain return to judge the living and dead and establish the new creation.

Historical Context

John received this revelation circa AD 95 during Domitian's persecution, exiled on Patmos for his testimony. The seven churches of Asia Minor faced increasing pressure to participate in emperor worship and pagan religious practices. Refusal meant economic hardship, social ostracism, and potential martyrdom. Understanding this context illuminates Revelation's encouragement to faithful endurance.

The apocalyptic genre was familiar to first-century Jewish and Christian readers. Rather than newspaper-style predictions, apocalyptic literature uses symbolic imagery to reveal spiritual realities behind earthly events, encourage the faithful, warn the unfaithful, and assert God's ultimate sovereignty over history. Parallels with Daniel, Ezekiel, and intertestamental apocalyptic writings would help original readers decode the symbols.

Rome's imperial cult demanded worship of Caesar as divine, placing Christians in impossible situations—compromise their faith or face persecution. Revelation identifies Rome as "Babylon" and assures believers that despite appearances, the Lamb conquered through His death and resurrection, and all earthly kingdoms will submit to His reign.

Related Passages

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. How does Revelation 12:7 reveal God's character, particularly His sovereignty, holiness, and justice?

2. What specific encouragement or warning does this verse offer for maintaining faithful Christian witness amid cultural pressure?
3. How does this passage point to Christ's victory and the hope of new creation, and how should that shape your present priorities?

Interlinear Text

καὶ	ἐγένετο	πόλεμος	ἐν	τῷ	οὐρανῷ	ὁ	Μιχαὴλ	καὶ
And	there was	war	in	G3588	heaven	G3588	Michael	And
G2532	G1096	G4171	G1722		G3772		G3413	G2532
οἱ	ἄγγελοι	αὐτοῦ	ἐπολέμησεν	κατὰ	τοῦ	δράκων	καὶ	
G3588	angels	his	fought	against	G3588	the dragon	And	
	G32	G846	G4170	G2596		G1404	G2532	
ὁ	δράκων	ἐπολέμησεν	καὶ	οἱ	ἄγγελοι	αὐτοῦ		
G3588	the dragon	fought	And	G3588	angels	his		
	G1404	G4170	G2532		G32	G846		

Additional Cross-References

Jude 1:9 (Parallel theme): Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.

Daniel 12:1 (Parallel theme): And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.

2 Peter 2:4 (Parallel theme): For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment;

Ephesians 6:12 (Parallel theme): For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

Revelation 20:2 (Parallel theme): And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,

Daniel 10:13 (Parallel theme): But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia.

Daniel 10:21 (Parallel theme): But I will shew thee that which is noted in the scripture of truth: and there is none that holdeth with me in these things, but Michael your prince.

Revelation 12:9 (Parallel theme): And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

Psalms 78:49 (Parallel theme): He cast upon them the fierceness of his anger, wrath, and indignation, and trouble, by sending evil angels among them.

2 Corinthians 12:7 (Parallel theme): And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.