

<b>Series</b>	Gamma 16 – Study 11
<b>Reference</b>	Revelations 12
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Good evening. Welcome back to our Gamma series. Today we are going to finish off the last bit of chapter 11 of Revelations, as well as chapter 12 the whole chapter. So let's start out with a word of prayer.

Lord, we ask that you be with us today, speak to us, help us understand the seventh trumpet and also the spiritual warfare that occurs in Revelations chapter 12. We ask this for Jesus' sake. Amen.

Right. Let's look at our scheme of Revelations. Again, we're over here at the seven trumpets. We are going to cover what happens at a seven trumpets first, before we go to Revelations chapter 12.

**Rev 11:15** Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, “The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever.”

This part is the final judgment. The reason why I say it is a final judgment, because it says that the kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and his Christ and he shall reign forever. Which means the final kingdom would have already come in the final judgment.

Here you actually have a recapitulation because not only at the end of chapter six, there is a final judgment where it says,

**Rev 6:16** Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who is seated on the throne, and from the wrath of the lamb, 17, for the great day of the wrath has come and who can stand.

This is the great day of the wrath, final judgment. And again final judgment in chapter 11 the last part, where the nations rage and there is final judgment. So therefore there are no real two final judgments. There is just recapitulation or repeat with a different slanted view for each one. So now verse

**16** And the twenty-four elders who sit on their thrones before God fell on their faces and worshiped God, **17** saying, “We give thanks to you, Lord God Almighty, who is and who was, for you have taken your great power and begun to reign. **18** The nations raged, but your wrath came, and the time for the dead to be judged, and for rewarding your servants, the prophets and saints, and those who fear your name, both small and great, and for destroying the destroyers of the earth.”

So therefore there will be a final judgment at this particular time, which is the fulfillment of the gospel for which the angel said, there's no delay. And when this final judgment comes upon the world where the people are being judged,

**19** Then God’s temple in heaven was opened, and the ark of his covenant was seen within his temple. There were flashes of lightning, rumblings, peals of thunder, an earthquake, and heavy hail.

Again, the flashes of lightning, rumbling, peals of thunder and earthquake and heavy hail these are cosmic signs of God's final judgment. So that's going to come, but in the midst of all the hell that is

breaking out as it were, the judgment is falling upon the world, you see a very amazing thing, it is the ark of the covenant and what is the Ark of the covenant? Well it is something like the rainbow, which is a sign of God's covenant too that is above in Revelations chapter four in the throne. Okay. Just above the throne is a rainbow in the midst of great devastation of judgment there is ark. All right. Which illustrates God's promises to his people.

This is tabernacle where the people of Israel journeyed through the wilderness, they would be instructed by God through Moses to build a tabernacle. The Holy of Holies, a tabernacle is the Ark of the covenant and this is where the high priest would come once a year. And he would offer a sacrifice and this is a blood sacrifice. It is put on the mercy seat. There's a mercy seat between the two cherubims and this is where the mercy seat is and he takes blood and the splashes there for the forgiveness of sins. So therefore when you talk about the ark of the covenant, it is a symbol of God's covenantal faithfulness to us and that is a symbol of atonement. The blood of the lamb is put there and here in the final judgment, although all hell will break out for the rest of the world, for the people of God, God remembers. There is an ark of his promise, and there is atonement and that blood is the blood of Jesus. So that's the end of the seven trumpets.

And now we go into revelation chapter 12. Let's recap. Letters to the churches, Revelations 1-3, talks about the pressure on the church to compromise or being persecuted, the ultimate authority and control of history is in the majesty of God in Revelations four to five. Seven seals are the spiritual forces unleashed against both believers and unbelievers and God's judgment against hardened humanity in the seven trumpets, but behind the scenes what is happening to God's church during this time. Well, you're looking at seven seals, seven trumpets, and this deeper conflict God's spiritual protection and control of the church.

So today we are going to look into this section. This is Revelations 12 verses 1 to Revelations 15. There are seven sections here, which indicate a deeper dimension of the spiritual conflict between the church and the world. Now last week we talked about how God could protected the church by measuring. A part of the church that is protected spiritually and the part of the church that even was protected is also persecuted. Looking at the church from one point of view, from the point of view of how God protects and also allows persecution for the sake of the mission.

Today, we're going to look at the persecution of the church undergoes from the cosmic point of view, just like the seals were actually ground eye view of what happens when judgment falls upon the world, where else the trumpets were basically a God's eye view of what happens when judgment falls upon the earth. Here we have what happens in the cosmic scale. Now there are basically three visions and all these three visions are actually in parallel. They occur in parallel, they don't look sequentially. There is the woman and the dragon, verses one to six. Then the battle of the angels verses 7 to 12, and then the dragon attacks the woman's offspring for the rest of chapter 12.

So let us look at the woman and the dragon. So here we have a vision of a woman, not any woman, it's a pregnant woman and a seven headed dragon. This pregnant woman is clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet and on the head is a crown of 12 stars and she gives birth to a male child who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron.

Now, no prizes for anybody to tell me who this pregnant woman is because she is clothed with the sun. So obviously something special. With the moon under her feet and on her head, a crown of 12 stars. So basically, this woman would probably be the people of God where it is Old Testament or New Testament or combined. Let's have a look. So she has got a 12 stars, which is 12 tribes of Israel, so Old Testament and then she gives birth to a male child, Jesus comes from Israel, correct. Okay. And the sun

and moon that she has represents like Jacob and his wife, remember the dream of Joseph, but I think it's more than Israel. It's a people of God, both the Old Testament and the New Testament. The reason why is that the woman once she gives, but the dragon makes war on the woman's offspring, the church.

So therefore it's most likely the people of God, the pregnant woman, the people of God, both Old Testament and New Testament now.

Rev 12:1 And a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. 2 She was pregnant and was crying out in birth pains and the agony of giving birth.

So here the birth pains indicates persecution of the Jewish people before Christ was born. And you can actually see that in the irony of Christmas. Good news of great joy announced by the angels, at the same time great sorrow because every child under the age of two was slaughtered by Herod. So there is the irony of Christmas, great joy and great sorrow because of persecution. And this birth of this child is a fulfillment of the prophecy in Genesis chapter 3:15, where God says,

I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, which means he will defeat you and you shall bruise his heel, you persecute him, you will strike him and cause suffering.

And here we have the dragon, which is a second player here and another sign appeared in heaven,

3 And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads seven diadems. 4 His tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven and cast them to the earth.

So here behind all the wicked kingdoms, which persecute God's people, all the successive kingdom, persecute God's people like the Persians, the Babylonians, the Assyrians is actually a demonic force. A powerful demonic force because it has got seven heads and also seven crowns, seven heads, seven horns. Horns is a symbol of power, the completeness of power and it's worldwide particular effect. Why red colors? This dragon is red. If you look in Revelation 17:3, there was a woman which is basically a harlot she is dressed in scarlet red. The beast is scarlet red. **Why red?** Because all these kingdoms of evil Satan and his harlot is basically drunk with the blood of saints. So it paints you a very blood thirsty picture of evil. And this is a fulfillment of Daniel 7:7

After this I saw in the night vision and behold a fourth beast, terrifying and dreadful and exceedingly strong. It had a great iron teeth; it devoured and broke into pieces and stamped what was left with its feet. It was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns.

So just before the final kingdom is this kingdom which is from devil which influences the world which causes persecution of the saints. Now this is an attack on the covenant community, chapter 4

4 His tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven and cast them to the earth.

So this is a symbolic representation of attack on the people of God

And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she bore her child he might devour it.

So here is a symbolic representation of the fact that the devil attempted to destroy the Christ child. Not only on Herod's attempt to destroy Jesus when you tried to kill all the children under the age of 2, but Matthew chapter 4, the temptation of Jesus, and then Jesus death on the cross. These are all demonic efforts to destroy the Christ child, but instead of destroying Christ child, the moment of Christ's greatest weakness on the cross was the moment of his greatest victory.

5 She gave birth to a male child, one who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron, but her child was caught up to God and to his throne, 6 and the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, in which she is to be nourished for 1,260 days.

And this, again, is the picture of 1,260 days, is 42 months, three and a half years, time, time, and half, symbol of this time mean that the first coming of Christ and the second coming of Christ. And this describes this child will rule the nations with an iron rod is taken from Psalm 2, which a messianic Psalm that talks about the final authority of the Messiah.

Psalm 2:7 I will tell the decree: The Lord said to me, "You are my son, today I have begotten you. 8 Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession. 9 You shall break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel.

So here when the messiah come, he will smash opposition, he will rule and this is the child.

5 She gave birth to a male child, one who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron, but her child was caught up to God and to his throne, 6 and the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, in which she is to be nourished for 1,260 days.

So here is a description of Jesus, living then being caught up resurrected and ascended into heaven, basically. All right. At the same time the woman, people of God fled into the wilderness. The wilderness in the Old Testament is always a picture of a place like the 40 years of wandering where Israel is completely dependent on God. And here is the people of God flee into the wilderness place prepared by God where God protects for this period of time of tribulation.

Now this is the picture of the woman and the dragon. This is what happens on earth. The same time this exact drama is played out in heaven. It is a battle of the angels, and this is the same thing. Lionel Messi kicking the football, the closer you get, you get two defenders and you look at another view it is from the side, look at another view it is back of the net and then you see the ball. It is looking at a same event from different perspectives. And now we're going to look at the perspective of persecution of this woman from the perspective what's happening in heaven.

On earth, it is the dragon attacking the woman, trying to kill the Christ child and then God brings up the heaven. In heaven this is what happens. There's a battle of angels,

7 Now war arose in heaven, Michael and his angels fighting against the dragon. And the dragon and his angels fought back, 8 but he was defeated, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. 9 And the great dragon was thrown down, that ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world—he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.

So at the same time, what is reflected in heaven is a facsimile of what is happening on earth. And while the people on God are being persecuted there is a great battle among the angels and the devil actually loses.

10 And I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of his Christ have come, for the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down, who accuses them day and night before our God.

So, the outcome of this cosmic battle is that the accuser who is basically the devil has been thrown out of heaven and Jesus actually tells us in Luke chapter 10 or what really happened? His disciples, the 72 of them had been sent out to all the villages and they came back and said, Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name. And they cast out demons. And he said to them,

I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. See, this is exactly what happened in Revelations chapter 12, I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. Behold, I've given you authority to tread on serpents and scorpions and over the power of the enemy and nothing shall hurt you. And nevertheless, do not rejoice in this that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your name is written in heaven.

So the real reason why demons are able to be exercised, but because Satan is defeated. So what happens on earth is paralleled and reflected as what happened in heaven, the victory, this is what happens on earth. There is death, resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ and in heaven, the great dragon was thrown down. This is the point of victory. This is the death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. This is a result of the cosmic battle of the angels and this is the faithful witnesses during persecution,

11 And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death.

### **What is our victory?**

Our victory is the victory is already won. The cosmic battle has already been fought. The victory has already been paid for. We have to hang on to the victory that has won for us through Jesus Christ.

Now let's look at the strategy of the devil and Revelations tells us, very important to understand what the devil does. The devil has lost, but what does the devil do? The devil does two things. He deceives and he accuses, and deception is so clearly seen in this COVID 19 crisis. We actually had a young nurse from Dakota tell us about deception and she went on CNN. Her name was Jodie Doering, and she describes treating patients with COVID-19, the ones that had been brainwashed by the media and by their president, especially that there was nothing that the COVID-19 really doesn't exist. And she writes.

*The ones that stick out are those who don't believe that the virus is real. The ones that scream at you for magic medicine or scream at you that Joe Biden is going to ruin the USA. All while gasping for breath and on 100% vapotherm.*

They tell you, there must be another reason why they are sick, they call you names. They ask, why you have to wear all that stuff? The PPE, because they don't have COVID because it's not real. And she said, I can't stop thinking about it. These people really think that this is not going to happen to them. And then they stop yelling at you when they get intubated and then they sleep on.

This is the power of deception and behind every deception is Satan and it describes the nature of man. You remember the sixth trumpet,

Rev 9:20 The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands nor give up worshiping demons and idols of gold and silver and bronze and stone and wood, which cannot see or hear or walk, 21 nor did they repent of their murders or their sorceries or

their sexual immorality or their thefts.

### Why didn't they repent?

The reason why they didn't repent is because they are totally deluded and Satan works by deception. This is an article describing deception and the power of Nazi propaganda during World War II, where small obscure party called the Nazi party who basically no backing actually rose up from 1920s to take over the entire state. How did they do that? They are principles of deception:

1. Use truths, half-truths and lies,
2. Selectively omit information,
3. Simplify complex issues or ideas.

For example, if you are disaffected, if you don't have a job point to the Bangladeshi or the Nepali. They got your job. Complex issues, but made into simple issues. Ask me most Malaysians, you think you want to work in a rubber factory, rubber tapper or Palm oil none, but the real fact is that these people have jobs take the jobs that Malaysians do not one, but we can simplify complex issues and make them very simple. And then we play with emotion and we advertise because we attack opponents and target desired audiences. This is exactly how Donald Trump make America campaign uses propaganda using truths and half-truths. What about gay people? Gay rights are human rights is actually not true. What about, this is a false teacher called Bhagwan Rashnesh. He tells the truth, you can see how cleverly he does it. He says a new man as he aims to create a new man that lives in harmony with one another, who lives in harmony with nature, wherever, all nationalities, all countries, all religions, sit together. This man new man only has respect for one another. Very nice truths aren't they. They are that one that everybody wants.

In fact, if you look at the Bible, we have a similar one,

*Rev 7:9 After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number from every nation, all tribes and peoples and languages standing in front of the throne and before the lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands.*

Again we too have a vision of a new man, of all sitting and standing with each other. Then the half truth. The half truth comes.

*Sex is divine. The primal energy of sex Holy Spirit the reflection of godliness in it. It is obvious it is the energy that creates new life. And that is the greatest and most mysterious force of all.*

He takes it a bit further and having half-truth and then the lie.

*Go inside. The kingdom of heaven is within you. Celebrate the divinity of your own ordinary lives.*

Which means he is telling you, you are God. You see how it goes from truth, half-truth and then goes to lies. He says,

*I believe in free sex. I believe the sex is everybody's birthright. It is fun. There is nothing serious about it. No orgies are happening here, but I'm not, I'm not prohibiting them. It is up to the people, if they feel like having an orgy - so far so good.*

And then he goes on, he's accused of having 72 gold Rolls Royce and he says,

*All other religions are doing that. He says, let them do that. I let them work. Let me do my work. All religions are looking after the poor, at least leave me alone to look after the rich. I am the rich man's guru.*

Again, you can see how his propaganda makes sense to him. Here is Pastor Kenneth Copeland, very famous pastor in America and recently he went onto the TV screen and he said this and he blew.

I blow the wind of God on you and he is talking about COVID 19 virus because he stands at the TV screen and he blows, I blow the wind of God on you. You are destroyed forever. You will never be back. Thank you. God, let it happen. Cause it to happen.

After he did that today, we've got 2,500 dead Americans every single day. You see, this is deception.

And then is Steven Pinker who is a psychologist and an atheist. On the other hand, he talks about the dangers of evangelical religious belief in the coronavirus era. He says,

*Belief in the afterlife is a malignant delusion, since it devalues actual life and discourages action that would make them longer, safer, and happier.*

Again, it's people like Kenneth Copeland that causes atheist to be stumbled in disregard. So the devil works behind all this. The devil works to accuse. Job chapter 2 describes the scene where the devil goes up to God

8And the Lord said to Satan, "Have you considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, who fears God and turns away from evil?" 9Then Satan answered the Lord and said, "Does Job fear God for no reason?"

Satan is saying that God Job fears you only because you give him good things. To accuse J joke up to, to describe the scene where the devil goes up to God and God said to Satan, have you considered my seven job? There is none like him on the earth, a blameless upright man who fears God and turns away from evil. Then Satan answered the Lord, said this job, fear God for no reason, which means he implies that, you know, God job feels you only because you give good things.

10 Have you not put a hedge around him and his house and all that he has, on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. 11 But stretch out your hand and touch all that he has, and he will curse you to your face."

God Job loved you simply because you blessed him, what if you take all these material blessings away and he will actually curse you. Example of Satan accusing. Here we actually have before the cross Satan goes to God and tells God that you are corrupt. You know why, all your saints have sinned but you don't punish them and he forgets to mention that the people instigated into sin by his own deception but when the cross is there after the cross, Paul writes,

Who shall bring a charge against God's elect. It is God who justifies, who is to condemn. Christ Jesus is the one who died – more than that, who is raised, who is at the right hand of God, who is indeed interceding for us.

So after the cross, Satan can no longer stand before heaven and say, Hey, God is unfair. And these people should be punished because the punishment has been paid. Satan is cost down. He accuses us. We are not good enough. We're not Holy enough. We're failure. God will punish us, we sin again? Same sin. How can God keep forgiving you? And then he starts comparing us to others. How you did

not speak up when the time came, this is how Satan works in our lives. And how do they actually overcome? We overcome by clinging to the cross verse 11 and 12.

11 And they have conquered him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they loved not their lives even unto death.

So therefore the way of victory has already been won by the cross and what we as saints have to do in order to appropriate a victory is to cling to the cross and not only we cling to the cross, we bring others to cling to the cross because the victory has already been won. We don't have to do anything to bring the victory on. The victory has been won and we need to bring others to this victory. We need to cling on to the cross and then he writes,

12 Therefore, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them! But woe to you, O earth and sea, for the devil has come down to you in great wrath, because he knows that his time is short!"

Now we endure simply because we understand that the sign of the devil's defeat is the persecution of the church. If the devil is basically defeated because he is defeated his time is short and during this time he has got to bring as many with him as possible. So therefore persecution is actually not the sign of the devil strength. Because we often misunderstand that the onslaught of persecution is like communist China, for example, the onslaught of persecution comes because the communist party of China realizes that they have 70 million members and the Christian Church has more than hundred million Christians. So therefore the persecution is sign of the devil's defeat.

Finally, the last parallel view is a dragon attacks the woman's offspring. And here you actually have,

13 And when the dragon saw that he had been thrown down to the earth, he pursued the woman who had given birth to the male child. 14 But the woman was given the two wings of the great eagle so that she might fly from the serpent into the wilderness, to the place where she is to be nourished for a time, and times, and half a time.

Remember a time, time, half time is equal to 42 months ago, equals to 1,260 days, which is basically the time between Jesus' first coming and second coming. So what is this two wings? But this two wings is a metaphor. You go back to Exodus where the people of God were actually saved, walking through the dead sea and God describes this,

Exodus 19:4 You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to myself.

So therefore the Eagle's wings given by God is a metaphorical way of say how God saved his people.

15 The serpent poured water like a river out of his mouth after the woman, to sweep her away with a flood. 16 But the earth came to the help of the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed the river that the dragon had poured from his mouth.

So therefore, the concept of being drowned. If you look in the Old Testament and the Qumran community, the flood indicates both persecution and deception. This is how Satan attacks the people of God using persecution and deception. And we can see that. Just a couple of days ago on 28 November Christian families beheaded and burned in central Sulawesi, a fire set to six chapels, three of the people were actually beheaded. Persecution comes from Satan and deception is a great thing even within the church.



Martin Luther was the first person who translated the Bible into German, before that it was always in Latin, and when he did that, it actually freed the German people to understand God's word for themselves and not continue under the authority of papal oppression and they used to tithe, all the people in Germany used to tithe and at one time the authorities were getting too greedy, they wanted a tithe to include animals too. And for the first time, because of German Bible being translated by Martin Luther, they are able to read the Bible and they told the priest, hey there is no such thing as tithing animals too. And this actually liberated people. This is how God's what liberates people.

On the other hand, because they read the Bible how equal they were they started to revolt against the people above them and it triggered a massive peasants' revolt. In 1524 to 1525 and 70,000 peasants were actually killed. You see, the devil deceives, you can be quality, but you don't use violence to achieve your equality. And so therefore this deception continues to plague the church today with prosperity gospel where all sorts of funny doctrines come up and Christians. And the typical case, if you look at a white evangelical Christians in the United States, they've got two presses.

Somebody actually pointed this out recently and I thought it had great merit. White evangelicals when they look at Obama, they demonized him. Why? Because they never prayed for him, they demonized him because he supported LGBT and abortion rights. But he was an honest man, faithful husband, empathetic person who loved and served his nation. They never prayed for him. They demonized him.

On the other hand, we've got this chap who recently lost his election, Donald Trump. They idolized him. They talk about forgiveness and grace for him, they proclaimed him as God's chosen one, even though he's amoral, a liar, adulterer incompetent, selfish narcissistic. But for him, we pray for him. For him. He's the chosen one for him there is grace and forgiveness. And after the election, white evangelical church has lost its reputation because of deception. They are willing to do whatever it takes and give up their own morals to have a particular game.

Our challenge verse 17,

17 Then the dragon became furious with the woman and went off to make war on the rest of her offspring, on those who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus. And he stood on the sand of the sea.

So therefore the ones, God will preserve us. Those who keep the commandments of God and hold on to the testimony of Jesus. You can see the devil's persecution and deceptions are like a flood but the earth comes and sucks up and eats up and basically swallows up the flood of lies and deception of persecution. God will intervene for his people as long as we keep his commandments, Holy living, and hold on to the testimony of Jesus.

May God bless you as you continue to take his word, stick closely to word and not get deceived or frightened or discourage by the persecution of the devil.