

## A Christmas Revelation

Revelation 12 and John 1 are taken from the NIV translation.  
All other Scriptures are from The Voice translation.

**Narrator:** Listen as we retell the story of the War on Christmas: A great pageant enacted in the sky.

The story is described in the Revelation to John, foretold by the prophets and came to pass in the town of Bethlehem, in the land of Israel, in a small corner the Roman Empire around 2000 years ago.

**(Reader 1)** John, writing the heavenly Revelation of Jesus Christ, in Chapter 12 tells us: *A great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and a crown of twelve stars on her head. She was pregnant and cried out in pain as she was about to give birth.*

**(Narrator)** Who is this woman? Clothed with the sun, with 12 stars on her head: we have a sign of her royalty, as glorious and far-reaching as the sun. We have a sign of her identity as being part of the people of God, the 12 tribes of Israel, the Mother of the Messiah. We see that her importance comes from giving birth to this Child. Jewish prophets foretold this woman, who even in their ancient texts, is about to bear a child:

**(Reader 3)** The prophet Isaiah proclaimed: *Therefore, the Lord himself will give you a sign: **The virgin** will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel, which means “God is with us”.*<sup>1</sup>

**(Reader 2)** The Prophet Micah wrote:

*But you, Bethlehem of Ephrathah,  
of the clans of Judah, are no poor relation—  
From your people will come a Ruler  
who will be the shepherd of My people, Israel,  
Whose origins date back to the distant past,  
to the ancient days.*

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<sup>1</sup> (Isa 7:14)

*So God will abandon Israel*

*only until **the now-laboring mother** gives birth,*

*And then those of His people who survive*

*will be gathered back together with the rest of Israel.*

*And he will stand and feed his flock in the power of the Eternal One,*

*with the majesty of the name of the Eternal, his True God.*

*And they will live in safety, for his greatness will extend to the farthest parts of the earth.*

*He will be our peace.<sup>2</sup>*

**(Narrator):** The prophets spoke their words and died, and rested in silence. But the echoes of their prophecy swirled around the universe, reaching the corners of heaven and earth, sweeping the skies, the seas, the land. At last, after hundreds of years, the words came together and became flesh. It was time for the woman to give birth, for the Child to be born.

**(Reader 2) Luke, the writer of the third gospel tells us:**

*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, you who are highly favored! The Lord is with you."*

*Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary; you have found favor with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. 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."<sup>3</sup>*

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<sup>2</sup> (Micah 5: 2- 5)

<sup>3</sup> (Luke 1: 26-33)

**(Reader 3)**– Matthew whose book opens the New Testament, writes: *This is how the birth of Jesus the Messiah came about: His mother Mary was pledged to be married to Joseph, but before they came together, she was found to be pregnant through the Holy Spirit. Because Joseph her husband was faithful to the law, and yet did not want to expose her to public disgrace, he had in mind to divorce her quietly.*

*But after he had considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, “Joseph son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins.”<sup>4</sup>*

**(Reader 2)** Luke continues the story:

*So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.<sup>5</sup>*

**(Narrator)** The baby was born on earth, but unseen to all below, a great battle was being waged in the heavens:

**(Reader 1) John, in his book of Revelation, writes:** *Then another sign appeared in heaven: an enormous red dragon with seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns on its heads. Its tail swept a third of the stars out of the sky and flung them to the earth. The dragon stood in front of the woman who was about to give birth, so that it might devour her child the moment he was born.<sup>6</sup>*

**(Narrator)** Who is this dragon? Have we heard of him before now? Yes! Throughout Scripture, this same dragon has had many names including serpent, the adversary, Leviathan, Satan, the Devil:

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<sup>4</sup> (Matthew 1:18)

<sup>5</sup> (Luke 2: 4-7)

<sup>6</sup> (Revelation 12: 3-4)

**(Reader 3)** *It starts way back in the book of Genesis, where we read: Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the Lord God had made. He said to the woman, “Did God really say, ‘You must not eat from any tree in the garden?’”*<sup>7</sup>

**(Reader 3)** John’s gospel reflects this, saying: *You belong to your father, the **devil**, and you want to carry out your father’s desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.*<sup>8</sup>

**(Narrator):** Throughout Scripture we see that this dragon, this serpent, was working behind the scenes to attempt to destroy “the child”. The birth of the child excites more than wonder; it excites evil. Evil’s intention is focused, his fear and fury explode in the story of some visiting wise men, who had followed a star and were looking for the child.

**(Reader 3)** Matthew tells us that: *Herod called the wise men to him, demanding to know the exact time the special star had appeared to them. Then Herod sent them to Bethlehem.*

*Herod said: Go to Bethlehem and search high and low for this Savior child; and as soon as you know where He is, report it to me so that I may go and worship Him.*

*The wise men left Herod’s chambers and went on their way. The star they had first seen in the East reappeared—a miracle that, of course, overjoyed and enraptured the wise men. The star led them to the house where Jesus lay; and as soon as the wise men arrived, they saw Him with His mother Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped Him. They unpacked their satchels and gave Jesus gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And then, just as Joseph did a few months before, the wise men had a dream warning them not to go back to Herod. The wise men heeded the dream. Ignoring Herod’s instructions, they returned to their homes in the East by a different route.*<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> (Genesis 3:1)

<sup>8</sup> (John 8:44)

<sup>9</sup> (Matthew 2:7)

**(Narrator)** The hunt goes on.

**(Reader 2)** Matthew continues: *After the wise men left, a messenger of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream.*

***The messenger said to Joseph:*** *Get up, take the child and His mother, and head to Egypt. Stay there until I tell you it is safe to leave. For Herod understands that Jesus threatens him and all he stands for. He is planning to search for the child and kill Him. But you will be safe in Egypt.*

*So Joseph got up in the middle of the night; he bundled up Mary and Jesus, and they left for Egypt.*

*After a few months had passed, Herod realized he'd been tricked. The wise men were not coming back. Herod, of course, was furious. He simply ordered that all boys who lived in or near Bethlehem and were two years of age and younger be killed. He knew the baby King was this age because of what the wise men told him.*

*This sad event had long been foretold by the prophet Jeremiah:*

*A voice will be heard in Ramah,*

*weeping and wailing and mourning out loud all day and night.*

*The voice is Rachel's, weeping for her children,*

*her children who have been killed;*

*she weeps, and she will not be comforted.*<sup>10</sup>

**(Narrator)** The child was born. Amongst hundreds of baby boys who died, the child survived this first attempt on his life. But did the dragon stop his chase? No. As the child grew, the dragon continued his plot to kill the child. His focus was deadly. After all, here, in the flesh, was his arch enemy. This was his chance. And when the child had grown, the dragon's plan came to fruition.

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<sup>10</sup> (Matthew 2:13-17)

**(Reader 3)** Jesus was the child. Jesus grew to be a man. John tells us about the end of his life:

*Before Jesus and His disciples gathered for dinner, Satan filled Judas Iscariot's heart with plans of deceit and betrayal.*

*After this occurred, **Satan** entered into Judas.*

*Jesus said to Judas): Make haste, and do what you are going to do. <sup>11</sup>*

**(Narrator)** In John's revelation of the story of Jesus Christ, the whole 33 years of the child's life are compressed into 2 short sentences, sentences which echo prophecies and witnesses in Scripture.

**(Reader 1)** *First: She gave birth to a son, a male child, who "will rule all the nations with an iron scepter."*

**(Narrator)** This son, as Messiah, ruling with an iron scepter, was prophesied in Psalm 2:8.

**(Reader 1)** *Second: And her child was snatched up to God and to his throne.<sup>12</sup>*

**(Narrator)** The Apostle Paul follower of Jesus, describes the life of Jesus in a similar way.

**(Reader 3)** Paul writes to Timothy: *He, Jesus, was revealed in the flesh,  
proven right in the Spirit;  
He was seen by the heavenly messengers,  
preached to outsider nations.  
He was believed in the world,  
taken up to the heavens in glory. (1 Tim 3:16)*

**(Narrator)** This child, like the dragon, had many names. He was called - Jesus of Nazareth, The Word, The Messiah, The Christ, the Anointed one. His birth, his life, his death, his power, his defeating the dragon, and his ascension to the throne of God are described clearly throughout the Bible. This is the cosmic war of which our passage, Revelation 12, is speaking.

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<sup>11</sup> John 13: 2 & 27

<sup>12</sup> Rev 12:5b

**(Reader 2)** Paul writes to the Galatians: *But when the set time had fully come, God sent his Son, born of a woman.*<sup>13</sup>

**(Reader 2)** John puts it this way: *The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth.*<sup>14</sup>

**(Reader 3)** Luke, in his book “Acts”, tells of Peter preaching about Jesus’ resurrection:

*“All of you Israelites, listen to my message: it’s about Jesus of Nazareth, a man whom God authenticated for you by performing in your presence powerful deeds, wonders, and signs through Him, just as you yourselves know. This man, Jesus, who came into your hands by God’s sure plan and advanced knowledge, you nailed to a cross and killed in collaboration with lawless outsiders. But God raised Jesus and unleashed Him from the agonizing birth pangs of death, for death could not possibly keep Jesus in its power.”*<sup>15</sup>

**(Reader 2)** Paul writes to the Romans:

So, we stand firm in the conviction that death holds no power over God’s Anointed, because He was resurrected from the dead never to face death again.<sup>16</sup>

**(Narrator)** Clearly, the dragon’s fierce and fearful intent did not succeed. Death and destruction were his goal. Instead, the way to eternal life was opened. Resurrection happened! What happens when “the child” is snatched up to the throne of God?

**(Reader 1)** *In John’s Revelation: The woman fled into the wilderness to a place prepared for her by God, where she might be taken care of for 1,260 days.*

*Then war broke out in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. But the dragon and his angels were not strong enough, and they lost their place in heaven. The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who*

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<sup>13</sup> (Gal 4:4)

<sup>14</sup> (John 1: 14)

<sup>15</sup> Acts 2:22- 24

<sup>16</sup> (Romans 6:9)

*leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him.*

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**(Narrator)** A war is being waged in the heavens and the ancient promises of old are being fulfilled. The power of the dragon is being broken. It's broken, not just in his war against the Child, but his power is diminished also against all those associated with the child.

**(Reader 2)** *Mark writes: "It's time! The kingdom of God has come near."*<sup>18</sup>

**(Reader 3)** In Genesis, **God said to the serpent:**

What you have done carries great consequences.

Now you are cursed more than cattle or wild beasts.

You will writhe on your belly forever,

consuming the dust *out of which man was made*.

I will make you and your brood enemies

of the woman and all her children;

The woman's child will stomp your head,

and you will strike his heel.<sup>19</sup>

**(Reader 2)** Isaiah prophesied:

*On that day, the Eternal One will unsheathe His sword—fierce, great, and strong—and punish the monster of chaos and terror, Leviathan the fleeing serpent. He will strike Leviathan, the twisting serpent, and slay the dragon of the sea.*<sup>20</sup>

**(Reader 3)** Luke quotes Jesus, who declared: *I saw Satan falling from above like a lightning bolt. I've given you true authority. You can smash vipers and scorpions under your feet. You can walk all over the power of the enemy. You can't be harmed.*<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> (Revelation 12: 6)

<sup>18</sup> (Mark 1:15)

<sup>19</sup> (Gen 3:14-15)

<sup>20</sup> (Isaiah 27: 1)

<sup>21</sup> (Luke 10: 18-19)



**(Reader 2)** The book of Hebrews teaches that *Since we, the children, are all creatures of flesh and blood, Jesus took on flesh and blood, so that by dying He could destroy the one who held power over death—the devil— and destroy the fear of death that has always held people captive.* <sup>22</sup>

**(Narrator)** All Scripture shows that The woman and her offspring are being freed by the Child! The child is Also known as the Lamb. The Lamb slain from the foundations of the world, who yet remains standing.

**(READER 3)** And then John, in Revelation .... *heard a loud voice in heaven say:*

*“Now have come the salvation and the power  
and the kingdom of our God,  
and the authority of his Messiah.  
For the accuser of our brothers and sisters,  
who accuses them before our God day and night,  
has been hurled down.*

<sup>11</sup> *They triumphed over him  
by the blood of the Lamb  
and by the word of their testimony;  
they did not love their lives so much  
as to shrink from death.*

<sup>12</sup> *Therefore rejoice, you heavens  
and you who dwell in them!  
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.”* <sup>23</sup>

**Narrator:** His time is short. The day of the dragon is almost over. The child of the blessed woman has defeated him. But he’s not giving up yet. Wounded, crushed under the foot of the child, as prophesied in Genesis, the dragon limps on, angry with his wounds, furious against the winner who inflicted them. He sees a last chance to destroy on earth, which is his only aim. And so, the final conflict of the dragon against the woman and her offspring, begins. It is not the end. It is only the beginning of the end.

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<sup>22</sup> (Hebrew 2:14-15)

<sup>23</sup> (Revelation 12: 10 )