

“So the dragon was enraged with the woman, and went off to make war with the rest of her children, who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus.” (Rev 12:17, NASB)

“² And he laid hold of the dragon, the serpent of old, who is the devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years; ³ and he threw him into the abyss, and shut it and sealed it over him, so that he would not deceive the nations any longer, until the thousand years were completed; after these things he must be released for a short time.” (Rev 20:2-3, NASB)

“⁷ When the thousand years are completed, Satan will be released from his prison, ⁸ and will come out to deceive the nations which are in the four corners of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together for the war; the number of them is like the sand of the seashore. ⁹ And they came up on the broad plain of the earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city, and fire came down from heaven and devoured them. ¹⁰ And the devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also; and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.” (Rev 20:7-10, NASB)

THE TIME OF GREATEST DISTRESS

Notice that it is the Archangel Michael who leads the war against Satan in Heaven (Rev 12:7). Michael is only seen fighting in one other place inside scripture, in the book of Daniel.

“Now at that time Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people, will arise. And there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time; and at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued. ² Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt. ³ Those who have insight will shine brightly like the brightness of the expanse of heaven, and those who lead the many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever. ⁴ But as for you, Daniel, conceal these words and seal up the book until the end of time; many will go back and forth, and knowledge will increase.” (Dan 12:1-4, NASB)

Daniel describes a time of great distress for the people of Israel, unlike anything that has happened before. This would be worse than the European Pogroms or the Holocaust. But Michael will protect Israel and then the resurrection of the dead and final judgment will follow. Some will rise to everlasting life, others to shame and everlasting contempt. Daniel sees the time of the end as the worst time of distress for Israel, unlike anything ever seen before in history. This ends with a battle where the

Archangel Michael protects Israel, followed by the resurrection of the dead to final judgment.

In Revelation, after the Messiah is taken up into Heaven John sees war break out there. Michael fights against Satan and Satan is cast out. Satan roams the world deceiving the nations and is eventually bound in the Abyss for one thousand years. Afterward Satan is released and once again deceives the nations. Then Satan leads the nations of the world in a final attack on Jerusalem. John sees Satan finally defeated and thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, followed by the resurrection of the dead to the final judgment.

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Daniel and John both see the Archangel Michael in their visions. They both see a time of the greatest distress for Jerusalem as being followed by the resurrection of the dead and the final judgment. As the resurrection of the dead and the final judgment have not happened yet, neither has this final attack on Jerusalem happened. However, in this final attack, the time of greatest distress for Israel, the Archangel Michael will protect and defend Jerusalem. And then Satan will finally be defeated, followed by the resurrection of the dead and the final judgment.

VIEWS OF THE RAPTURE

When Jesus was questioned by his Disciples about the time of the end, he quoted from the book of Daniel (Mark 13:14). Jesus spoke of a terrible distress, days unequalled to anything that has ever happened before, a time of tribulation unmatched from the beginning of creation.

“For those days will be a time of tribulation such as has not occurred since the beginning of the creation which God created until now, and never will.” (Mark 13:19, NASB)

Following that distress the Messiah will appear. Jesus quotes from Isaiah (Isa 13:10, 34:4) and references Daniel’s prophecy that the Messiah will appear on the clouds in glory at the final judgment (Dan 7:9–14).

“24 ‘But in those days, after that tribulation, the sun will be darkened and the moon will not give its light, 25 and the stars will be falling from heaven, and the powers that are in the heavens will be shaken. 26 Then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. 27 And then He will send forth the angels, and will gather together His elect from the four