

Patient Endurance (Seven Visions)

Revelation 12:1 – 15:4

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In a vision, John saw Satan, the Accuser, the serpent of ancient times, the Adversary, the Devil, the Deceiver of the whole world. But the Deceiver was deceived. Satan's plans were frustrated by the loving act of Christ on the cross and his subsequent resurrection and exaltation to authority. Satan and a band of angelic allies were expelled from heaven, where there was no longer a place for them.

Exasperated by defeat and desperate, Satan expressed outrage by tormenting believers and luring unbelievers into self-destructive evils. Working through the governing authorities and the social and commercial practices of the world in a feeble imitation of Christ's true rulership, Satan's methods were comparable to those of a prostitute getting people drunk and enticing them into sexual immorality. Those not under God's protection readily succumbed to the Deceiver's empty promises. They ended up trusting in what the world had to offer rather than in God, the creator of the world.

Believers were called to patiently endure the persecutions they encountered and remain ever faithful to the Lord. Their suffering in this world will give way to eternal rest in the world to come, where they will celebrate God's justice, truth, and holiness. On the other hand, those who reject God's offer of salvation will find no rest in the hereafter.

Satan's futile efforts to gain dominion will continue until the return of the Christ resulting again and again in defeat as the message of Christ's self-sacrifice leads more and more people to faith.