



Shelby Christian Church

CORE 52: NEW LENS - THE SUPERNATURAL * MATTHEW 25:41, REVELATION 12 & 13,
EPHESIANS 6:12, HEBREWS 1:14, REVELATION 20:10 * 9/14/2025

MAIN POINT

Is there really a spiritual world active around me?

INTRODUCTION

What are some of the images of Satan you see in our culture right now?

Based on those images alone, how do you think most people in the world view Satan?

Do you think it's much different for Christians? How do you think most Christians view Satan? How do you think we should view him?

It has often been said that the devil's greatest trick was convincing the world that he doesn't exist. If we examine the way Satan is depicted in popular culture and even in some Christian circles, it's clear he has succeeded. Many people see him as little more than a caricature and have only a vague idea of his true nature or his active work in the world. Yet if we truly accept that we are engaged in a spiritual battle, it becomes essential that we learn to recognize our enemy accurately and understand how he operates.

UNDERSTANDING

ASK A VOLUNTEER TO READ MATTHEW 25:41

Who are "those on his left," and why are they being separated? What does this passage reveal about God's justice and holiness?

How can we live in a way that reflects the compassion Jesus calls for in this chapter?

What does it look like to serve "the least of these" in your daily life?

Matthew 25:41 is part of Jesus' teaching on the final judgment, where He describes the separation of people based on how they treated others—especially the vulnerable. In this verse, He addresses those on His left, symbolizing those who failed to show compassion and care. He declares that they will be cast away from His presence into eternal punishment, a place originally prepared for the devil and his angels.

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ REVELATION 12

What does this passage teach us about the reality of spiritual conflict?

How does knowing that Satan has been “hurled down” (v.9) affect your view of daily struggles?

What role does testimony and sacrifice play in spiritual victory?

Have you ever felt like you were in a spiritual battle? What helped you stand firm?

Revelation 12 presents a symbolic vision of the cosmic struggle between God and Satan. A woman, representing God’s people or Mary, gives birth to a male child, symbolizing Christ. A great red dragon, representing Satan, attempts to destroy the child but fails. The child is taken to God, and the dragon turns his fury toward the woman and her other offspring, who keep God’s commandments and hold fast to their testimony. The chapter emphasizes God’s protection, the spiritual conflict between good and evil, and the ultimate defeat of Satan through Christ and His faithful followers.

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ REVELATION 13

What do the two beasts represent, and how do they differ in appearance and function? Why do you think the first beast is given authority and power by the dragon? What might the “mark of the beast” symbolize, and how does it contrast with the seal of God in earlier chapters?

How can we recognize spiritual deception in today’s world? What does this chapter teach us about counterfeit worship and false authority?

Revelation 13 depicts the rise of two beasts that symbolize oppressive, anti-God powers. The first beast emerges from the sea, representing a political or worldly authority that blasphemes God, wages war against the saints, and demands worship. The second beast rises from the earth, symbolizing religious or deceptive influence that promotes the first beast, performs signs, and enforces the infamous “mark of the beast” (666) on people. The chapter highlights the persecution of God’s people, the allure and danger of corrupt power, and the call for spiritual discernment in resisting evil.

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ EPHESIANS 6:12

What does Paul mean by “not against flesh and blood”? How does this shift our perspective on conflict?

Who or what are the “rulers” and “authorities” mentioned here? How do you interpret these spiritual forces?

Have you ever faced a situation where you realized the real battle wasn’t with a person, but something deeper?

Why do you think Paul emphasizes the unseen nature of our struggle? How does this verse challenge the way you respond to conflict or opposition in your life?

Ephesians 6:12 reminds believers that their true struggle is not against people but against spiritual forces of evil. The verse emphasizes that the battle is against powers and authorities in the unseen realm, highlighting the reality of spiritual warfare. It calls Christians to recognize the unseen, spiritual nature of their struggle and to rely on God’s strength rather than human ability.

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ HEBREWS 1:14

What does it mean that angels are “ministering spirits”? How does this description shape your understanding of their role? Have you ever felt that God sent help in a way you couldn’t explain—perhaps through a person, a moment, or even something mysterious?

How does knowing that angels serve believers affect your sense of spiritual security or encouragement?

Why do you think the author emphasizes the service of angels rather than their power or glory? Do you think we often overlook the spiritual support God provides? Why or why not?

Hebrews 1:14 describes angels as ministering spirits sent by God to serve and assist believers. The verse emphasizes their role in supporting and protecting God’s people as part of His divine plan. It highlights the active involvement of spiritual beings in carrying out God’s purposes on behalf of those who belong to Him.

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ REVELATION 20:10

What does this verse reveal about the final fate of Satan, the beast, and the false prophet?

What does this verse teach us about God’s authority over evil?

How do you reconcile the idea of eternal torment with God’s love and mercy? Why do you think eternal punishment is emphasized here?

Revelation 20:10 describes the final fate of Satan, the beast, and the false prophet. After being defeated, they are thrown into the lake of fire, where they will be tormented forever. The verse emphasizes the ultimate and eternal judgment of evil, confirming God’s final victory over all forces opposed to Him.

APPLICATION

What are the most commonly perpetuated misconceptions of “heaven.”

Pretend for a moment that you were God. If you couldn’t use hell as described in the Bible, what would you do to carry out justice?

If you were a demon, what would you do to destroy you? Have you ever experienced that?

If you were an angel, what would you do to protect you? Have you ever experienced that?

PRAYER

COMMENTARY

Matthew 25:41

In biblical symbolism, the right hand often signifies favor, blessing, or honor, while the left hand represents rejection. Those on the left are those who have failed to respond to the needs of others, reflecting their failure to love God through loving people.

The word “cursed” conveys divine condemnation and exclusion from God’s presence. The separation is decisive and final—there is no appeal or reversal. It underscores the seriousness of rejecting God’s standard of love and mercy.

“Into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels” - The phrase links human judgment with the ultimate judgment of Satan and his followers. The “eternal fire” (Gehenna) symbolizes permanent separation from God and ongoing punishment. The passage emphasizes that this fire was originally prepared for the devil and his angels, showing that rebellion against God is treated seriously and that human sin aligns with the forces of evil.

Revelation 12

Revelation 12 is part of John’s apocalyptic vision, illustrating the cosmic conflict between God and Satan. The chapter uses vivid symbolism to describe spiritual realities and the unfolding of God’s plan of salvation through Christ. It emphasizes both divine sovereignty and the ongoing struggle between good and evil.

The Woman (vv. 1–2) - Symbolism: The woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and a crown of twelve stars, represents God’s people—often seen as Israel (the twelve tribes) and the faithful community of believers. A more literal explanation is that the woman represents Mary.

The imagery conveys glory, authority, and God’s protection. She gives birth to a male child, representing Christ. Her travail symbolizes the struggles of God’s people throughout history.

The male child is Christ, destined to “rule all nations with a rod of iron,” echoing Messianic prophecy (Psalm 2:9). Christ’s birth and mission are central to God’s redemptive plan. The child’s being “caught up to God” refers to Christ’s ascension and divine authority.

The Dragon (vv. 3–4, 7–9, 13–17) - The great red dragon represents Satan, the adversary, characterized by fury and destruction.

The dragon attempts to devour the child (Christ) and persecutes the woman (God’s people or Mary). This portrays Satan’s ongoing opposition to God’s plan. The dragon and his angels are defeated in heaven by Michael and his angels, showing God’s ultimate victory over evil forces.

The Woman’s Flight (vv. 6, 14–16)

The woman flees into the wilderness, symbolizing God’s protection over His people during persecution or Mary and Joseph’s fleeing to Egypt. Even in times of suffering and opposition, God sustains and preserves His faithful community.

Frustrated at failing to destroy the child, the dragon persecutes the “rest of her offspring,” those who keep God’s commandments and hold Christ’s testimony. The spiritual battle continues on earth, targeting believers who remain faithful.

Revelation 13

The First Beast (Verses 1–10) -The beast rising from the sea is often interpreted as a political power or empire. Its features—seven heads, ten horns, and blasphemous names—mirror the dragon from Revelation 12, suggesting it’s empowered by Satan.

The beast resembles a leopard, bear, and lion, echoing Daniel 7's vision of world empires. This fusion implies terrifying, global authority.

One head appears fatally wounded but is healed, leading the world to marvel and worship. Some commentators see this as a revival of a fallen empire or deceptive resurrection.

The beast speaks arrogantly against God and wages war against the saints. It rules for 42 months, a symbolic period of intense tribulation.

False Prophet Role: This beast arises from the earth and has two horns like a lamb but speaks like a dragon—suggesting deceptive gentleness masking satanic intent.

It performs miracles, even calling down fire from heaven, to convince people to worship the first beast.

It enforces the infamous “mark of the beast” (666), which restricts buying and selling to those who accept it. This mark symbolizes allegiance to worldly power over divine truth.

Some scholars (like Matthew Henry) interpret the beasts as representations of pagan and papal Rome—secular and ecclesiastical powers that opposed the church. Others see the chapter as a vivid portrayal of spiritual deception and the battle for human allegiance between good and evil.

Ephesians 6:12

Paul emphasizes that our real battle isn't with people (“flesh and blood”) but with spiritual entities. This challenges believers to look beyond surface-level conflicts and recognize the deeper spiritual forces at work.

The verse lists four categories of spiritual opposition: **Principalities and Powers:** These are often interpreted as ranks of demonic beings or fallen angels with delegated authority. **Rulers of Darkness:** This phrase suggests those who influence the moral and spiritual blindness of the world. **Spiritual Hosts of Wickedness:** These are forces operating in the “heavenly places,” indicating their activity in the spiritual realm, not just earthly affairs.

Recognizing that human conflict may be a symptom of spiritual manipulation helps believers respond with grace and prayer rather than retaliation. Understanding that people may be influenced by unseen forces can foster empathy instead of resentment. This verse sets the stage for the Armor of God passage (vv. 13–17), urging believers to equip themselves spiritually for battle.

Rather than being overwhelmed by the idea of spiritual warfare, Paul's message is empowering. It reminds us that we're not defenseless—we have divine armor, spiritual authority, and the presence of God to stand firm.