

Cosmic View – The Spiritual Battlefield (part one)

A Different View...The book of Revelation covers the period between the time of Christ and the Last Day. This time frame is also the subject of the cosmic view recorded in chapters 12–14. This view marks the introduction of the second division of Revelation. The first 11 chapters form a whole in themselves—after which the book might well have ended. In Revelation 12:1 John makes a fresh beginning. Although the theme of the second division is the same as that of the first, John pursues new regions of thought and uses symbolic figures that are almost wholly new.

The Cause of the Conflict...In the first part of Revelation, John pictures the outward struggle between the church and the world. Now, in chapters 12-14, the underlying cause of this hostility is revealed. It is the age-old conflict between God and Satan, which accounts for the persecution of the church. Through His life, suffering, death, and resurrection, Christ won the crucial battle on behalf of all His people. But the devil still does not give up; he continues his struggle to enslave and destroy all of God's creatures and His creation. All history from the victorious work of Christ on earth to the Last Day is the violent death-struggle between the church and Satan, with Christ behind the church.

How It Ends...The actors playing the major roles in this cosmic struggle are introduced in Revelation 12–14. Then, in chapters 15–20, John depicts God's coming in judgment to destroy His enemies once for all. Finally, in chapters 21–22 he describes the eternal future that awaits all the faithful people of God.