

Revelation 12 Commentary

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Revelation 12:1

The scene which John is shown next is an extension of what has preceded. In the previous chapter, [Revelation 11](#), John was shown two witnesses who prophesied and tormented the whole world and were eventually killed in Jerusalem. The character of their ministry is that of Jewish [OT](#) prophets and their connection with Jerusalem emphasizes their probable Jewishness. It is our view that one of their ministries is to act as witnesses in a way which is especially effective at reaching unbelieving Jews and so contribute toward the spiritual restoration of Israel prophesied elsewhere in Scripture (Jer. 31:34-37; Eze. 37; Rom. 11:25-27). Now, the scene shifts to a series of signs which depict a woman struggling against her adversary, the dragon. This too is a *Jewish scene*, but with aspects which range all the way back to man's Fall in the Garden of Eden and the subsequent promise of a redeemer. The signs which John sees in heaven portray events which have happened and will happen on the earth.

a great sign

Sign is [σημεῖον](#) [sêmeion], from the same root word translated *signified* in [Revelation 1:1](#). It indicates that what John sees is symbolic or figurative of the reality being conveyed. This is not a real woman in the heavens standing literally on the moon! Rather, the elements which John sees *signify* truths which are not directly stated in the text, but which are conveyed by the symbolism. "A picture is worth a thousand words." In this case, the symbolism is drawn *entirely from the OT*—as one might expect since all revelation is given by the same Holy Spirit.

And the fact that we are here told that this is a *sign*, goes far to prove that the Apocalypse in general is to be taken literally, except where indication to the contrary is given. It would be quite superfluous to tell us that this thing is a sign, and that certain things mean certain other things, except upon the assumption that whatever is not so labelled is to be taken just as it reads, . . . But, whatever else is literal in this book, the case of this woman is not.¹

See [Interpreting Symbols](#). See commentary on [Revelation 1:1](#).

a woman

John is introduced to a woman. She is one of a number of women found in Scripture. Within this book alone, we find four important women:

1. [Jezebel](#) of Thyatira typifies the apostate church, which is not taken in the [Rapture](#), but contributes to [The Great Harlot](#). See commentary on [Revelation 2:20](#), [Jezebel](#).
2. The woman before us in Revelation 12⁺ who struggles to give birth and then flees from the dragon to the wilderness.
3. The woman of Revelation 17⁺ who is said to be a "great [Harlot](#)" (Rev. 17:1⁺). See commentary on [Revelation 17:1](#), see [The Great Harlot](#).
4. The bride (Rev. 19:7⁺; 21:2⁺, 9⁺; 22:17⁺).

Each of these women symbolizes a spiritual system or development of importance from the perspective of God. Although the symbolism must not be missed, neither should it be overemphasized because the symbols also speak of *real people* who participate or contribute to each system of development in *real history*. So although the symbols which these women represent may span more than an individual lifetime, at any given time in history, the women consist of a portion of the human population. And so it will be with the woman before us here. She denotes a spiritual development spanning back to Eve, but also a specific group of individuals who make up that development at the time of the end, when she flees for 1260 days (Rev. 12:6⁺). There are two main errors which consistently arise in interpretations of this chapter. We hope to avoid both:

- Pagan Symbolism** - Many commentators attribute the symbolism in this chapter to pagan sources. The significance of the woman, and the attendant sun and moon, is thought to be found by searching out vague similarities from pagan mythologies. But such an approach has several shortcomings. *First*, it assumes that God subjected the correct understanding of His [inspired](#) revelation to a dependence upon uninspired and blasphemous writings of those who do not know Him. *Second*, it ignores the many evidences that suggest just the opposite: that pagan mythology is dependant upon God's inspired revelation —serving up a vague distorted echo of the truth (e.g., the heel of Achilles, Gen. 3:15). See [Searching Pagan Mythology](#).
- The Church is Everywhere** - Among those commentators which manage to steer clear of interpreting this woman from a background of pagan sources, another error beckons: that of pouring the Church into every passage of Scripture from the beginning of Genesis through the end of Revelation and everywhere in between. Clear clues in the text which preclude an interpretation of the woman as the Church are ignored in favor of a preunderstanding that since this woman appears to be glorious, she *must* denote the "Church Triumphant!" But this view runs roughshod over the many interpretive clues in the text before us: "By far the majority interpretation is that the woman is 'the church' which is entirely unsatisfactory and ignores all sorts of basic interpretive cues: (1) Christ birthed the church (Mat. 16:18), not the other way around. (2) The sun/moon/stars have a direct corollary in Joseph's dream (Gen. 37:9). Sun = Joseph's Father (Jacob), moon = Jacob's mother, 11 stars = brothers (12 stars meaning all twelve tribes). Hence a strong reference to Israel. (3) The reference to clothed with the sun' and 'the moon under her feet' refer to many passages which declare that the promises made to Israel (especially for a Davidic ruler and the continuation of the nation) can be thwarted only if the sun and moon can be made to cease from before God (Ps. 89:35-37; Jer. 31:36). Hence the reference is to the permanence of Israel and its promises in the mind of God as evidenced by His oaths involving the sun and moon. (4) The woman travails to give birth to the man-child (singular, male) who is caught-up. This would seem a clear allusion to the promise of the seed of the woman (Gen. 3:15) and the man-child is obviously Christ and not [the Rapture of] the church."²

As we shall see as we proceed through the chapter, the woman is best understood as representing *Israel*, but with elements which reflect the role of *Mary* and which stretch back all the way to *Eve* and the promise of a redeemer (Gen. 3:15). This harmonizes with the gospels which present both aspects of Messiah: his Jewish (Abrahamic) genealogy (Mat. 1:1) and his human (Adamic) genealogy (Luke 3:23). See [Four Gospels](#). To capture all that is related concerning the woman, she must be seen as representing an historic development within God's overall plan which:

- Originated with the promise of a redeemer to *Eve* (Gen. 3:15).
- Led to the creation of the nation of *Israel* through whom the redeemer would come (Isa. 7:14; 9:6-7; Mic. 5:2; Rom. 9:5).
- Found partial fulfillment in His First Coming by virgin birth from *Mary* (Isa. 7:14; Mat. 1:25; Luke 1:34).
- Finds ultimate fulfillment in His Second Coming to establish the Millennial Kingdom and to rule in the line of King David of Israel (Isa. 9:7; Jer. 23:5; 30:9; Amos 9:11; Zec. 6:12-13; Luke 1:32-33; Acts 1:6; Rev. 20:4+). It is this aspect, often overlooked, which explains the continued persecution of the woman *after* having birthed the Man Child.

That Israel will play a key role in the end-time drama is not surprising. The seventieth week of Daniel's prophecy (the Tribulation) will primarily concern Israel, just as the first sixty-nine did (cf. Dan. 9:24-27). Israel's presence in the end times is consistent with God's emphatic promises of her continued existence as a nation . . . (Jer. 31:35-37; cf. 33:20-26; 46:28; Amos 9:8).³

A Virgin and a Harlot

In contrast to [The Great Harlot](#) of Revelation 17+ who embodies the very origins of harlotry and blasphemy (also stretching back in history), as the deliverer of the redeemer she represents the development of God's ultimate *solution* to the problem of the [Harlot](#). A comparison of this woman with [The Great Harlot](#) is instructive:

Two Women Compared

Woman with Sun and Moon	Woman who Rides the Beast
Clothed with the sun (Rev. 12:1+).	Clothed with purple and scarlet (Rev. 17:4+).
A virgin (Isa. 7:14; Mat. 1:25; Luke 1:34-35).	A fornicator (Rev. 17:4+).
In pain (Rev. 12:2+).	At ease, drunk (Rev. 17:4+, 6+, 18:7+).
Stands (Rev. 12:1+).	Sits (Rev. 17:3+, 9+, 15+).
Supported by moon (Rev. 12:1+).	Supported by beast (Rev. 17:3+).

Head crowned (Rev. 12:1 [±]).	Head marked as harlot (Rev. 17:5 [±]).
Persecuted by dragon (Rev. 12:4 [±] , 13 [±]).	Rides beast empowered by dragon (Rev. 13:1-4 [±] ; 17:3 [±]).
Flees to wilderness (Rev. 12:6 [±] , 14 [±]).	Seen from the wilderness (Rev. 17:3 [±]).
Associated with Jerusalem (Rev. 12:5 [±] cf. Rev. 11:8 [±]).	Associated with Babylon (Rev. 17:5 [±] , 18 [±]).

clothed with the sun

Clothed is [περιβεβλημένην](#) [peribēblēmēnē], a perfect tense participle: *having been clothed*, “cast around, wrapped in.”⁴ When John saw her, she had already been clothed by God and enjoyed the protection afforded by her clothing (Isa. 61:10). Her being clothed with the sun is often the departure point for grand speculative expositions which interpret the woman as the church or specifically as Mary, the mother of Christ.⁵ It is also a frequent point of departure to search pagan writings for an understanding of her interpretation. One of the problems with such an approach is that the sun is employed as a symbol in many different ways in many different writings. The key to understanding the contribution of the sun to the identity of the woman is found by examining the way the sun is used *within Scripture*. First, it should be noted that a primary function of clothing is to provide shelter and protection from external elements.

Thus says the Lord GOD to Jerusalem: “Your birth and your nativity *are* from the land of Canaan; your father *was* an Amorite and your mother a Hittite. *As for* your nativity, on the day you were born your navel cord was not cut, nor were you washed in water to cleanse *you* you were not rubbed with salt nor wrapped in swaddling cloths. No eye pitied you, to do any of these things for you, to have compassion on you; but you were thrown out into the open field, when you yourself were loathed on the day you were born. And when I passed by you and saw you struggling in your own blood, I said to you in your blood, ‘Live!’ Yes, I said to you in your blood, ‘Live!’ I made you thrive like a plant in the field; and you grew, matured, and became very beautiful. *Your* breasts were formed, your hair grew, **but you *were* naked and bare**. When I passed by you again and looked upon you, indeed your time *was* the time of love; **so I spread My wing over you and covered your nakedness**. Yes, I swore an oath to you and entered into a covenant with you, and you became Mine,” says the Lord GOD. “Then I washed you in water; yes, I thoroughly washed off your blood, and I anointed you with oil. **I clothed you** in embroidered cloth and gave you sandals of badger skin; I clothed you with fine linen and covered you with silk.” Eze. 16:3-10 [emphasis added]

Whatever the sun represents, it protects the woman in some way. “For the LORD God is a sun and shield” (Ps. 84:11a). When we examine the Scriptural use of the sun, we find both the sun and the moon often appear together as a *dual witness*. When God created the sun and moon, He said they would be “for signs and seasons, and for days and years” (Gen. 1:14). Most of us can readily understand how the sun is for “seasons, and for days and years,” but in what way is the sun “for signs?” The word for *sign* here is [σημειον](#) [‘ōtī] which indicates a token or mark, something designed as a memorial, *to bring to remembrance*.⁶ It is the same word which describes Cain’s mark (Gen. 4:15), the *sign* of the rainbow (a memorial of God’s covenant with Noah, Gen. 9:12), the *sign* of circumcision (a memorial of the Abrahamic covenant), the *sign* of the Passover (a memorial of the Exodus, Ex. 13:9), and the *sign* of the Sabbath (a memorial of the Mosaic covenant, Ex. 31:13). Thus, one function of the sun was to be used as a reminder in various ways. We’ve already seen one such use of the sun in our study of Revelation because God promised there would be *signs* in the sun and the moon at the time of the end (see commentary on [Revelation 6:12](#)). We also know that there was a great sign via the sun when Jesus was crucified (Luke 23:45). Perhaps some of the signs of the sun in the time of the end are intended to bring the crucifixion to mind? There is another way in which the sun serves as a sign, along with the moon. God uses the sun and the moon as dual witnesses to important promises He has made, much in the same way that He swears by heaven and earth.⁷ Of particular interest to our passage, God has said that both sun and moon will be witnesses (signs) of His unconditional promise to *preserve the nation Israel*:

Thus says the LORD, Who gives the **sun** for a light by day, the ordinances of the **moon** and the stars for a light by night, Who disturbs the sea, and its waves roar (The LORD of hosts *is* His name): “**If those ordinances depart from before Me, says the LORD, then the seed of Israel shall also cease from being a nation before Me forever.**” Thus says the LORD: “If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done,” says the LORD. (Jer. 31:35-37) [emphasis added]

In relation to the events which transpire in Revelation 11[±] concerning the two witnesses, we note that the promise to preserve the nation Israel is found in the context of His promise to regenerate the nation—the only explicit mention of the New Covenant in the OT. This promise given through Jeremiah is essentially restated in the words of Paul: “I say then, has God cast away His people? Certainly not! For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin” (Rom. 11:1). Let the reader and the nations

of the world take note! **The Jews will continue as a people so long as the sun and moon remain visible in the sky!** If the enemies of Israel understood the full impact of this verse, they would immediately reprogram their missiles for a new target: they must first take out the sun and moon before they will be able to wipe out the *physical seed* of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob! The sun and moon not only witness of His promise to preserve the nation, but also His promise that the throne of David shall continue before Him and that there will be Levites to minister to Him:

Once I have sworn by My holiness; I will not lie to David: his seed shall endure forever, and his throne as the sun before Me; it shall be established forever like the moon, even *like* the faithful witness in the sky. Selah (Ps. 89:35-37)

Thus says the LORD: 'If you can break My covenant with the day and My covenant with the night, so that there will not be day and night in their season, then My covenant may also be broken with David My servant, so that he shall not have a son to reign on his throne, and with the Levites, the priests, My ministers. As the host of heaven cannot be numbered, nor the sand of the sea measured, so will I multiply the descendants of David My servant and the Levites who minister to Me.' (Jer. 33:20-23a)

As we have seen, Jesus is not now seated on the throne of David, an *earthly throne centered in Jerusalem*. These promises are important to grasp because they are key to understanding why the dragon continues to persecute the woman, even after she successfully brings forth the Man Child Who then accomplishes the crucifixion and resurrected. For what purpose could the dragon have in pursuing the woman beyond the victory of Messiah at the cross? The answer is found in understanding that God's purposes include elements which go beyond the crucifixion, but include promises and themes which are intimately connected with the Second Coming when Christ returns to earth to establish His millennial reign. See commentary on [Revelation 3:21](#). See [The Arrival of God's Kingdom](#). The promise that Israel will always exist is a key motivator behind the doctrine of the faithful remnant of Jewish believers which stretches throughout Scripture. It is part and parcel of the sealing of the 144,000 in Revelation 7:4[±]. See commentary on [Revelation 7:4](#).

with the moon under her feet

The emphasis in relation to the *moon under her feet* is not so much *standing upon*, as in trampling or having authority over, but *being supported*. She is clothed (sheltered) by the sun and standing (supported by) the moon. Her position is sure. (See commentary above concerning the promises of God to Israel witnessed by the sun and the moon.)

a garland of twelve stars

Garland is [στέφανος](#) [stephanos]. See [Crowns](#). Here we are given another evidence concerning the identification of this woman. What do these stars represent? Earlier we saw that stars represented angels of the churches (Rev. 1:20[±]). But they were only *seven* in number, not twelve. At times, stars also represent angels (Job 38:7; Rev. 9:1[±]; (4)). Yet here the stars are not in isolation, but found with the *sun and moon*. This clearly is an allusion to Joseph's dream which mentions the sun, moon, and stars:

Then he dreamed still another dream and told it to his brothers, and said, "Look, I have dreamed another dream. And this time, the **sun**, the **moon**, and the **eleven stars** bowed down to **me**." So he told *it* to his father and his brothers; and his father rebuked him and said to him, "What *is* this dream that you have dreamed? Shall your mother and I and your brothers indeed come to bow down to the earth before you?" (Gen. 37:9-10) [emphasis added]

The sun represents his father Jacob, the moon represents *Leah*,⁸ and the eleven stars represent his eleven brothers. When we include Joseph as an additional star, we have our sun, moon, and twelve stars. This is perhaps the most important aspect of the identification of the woman: the *twelve* stars are to be understood in the sense of the *gates* (tribes) rather than the *foundations* (apostles—representing the church) of the New Jerusalem (Rev. 21:12[±]). See [Twelve: Jewish Tribes, Completeness](#).

Revelation 12:2

being with child

[ἡ γαστήρ ἔχουσα](#) [en gastri echousa], *in the womb having*. Something we should immediately notice about this entire vision is the lack of any mention of a father. This is most uncharacteristic of a Jewish writing dealing with genealogy (cf. Mat. 1:1; Luke 3:23). The lack of a father is significant and, when combined with the rest of Scripture (Isa. 7:14; Luke 1:34), points strongly toward the virgin birth. Another point which is critical that we understand: the woman *produces* the child and not the other way around! How often commentators stumble over this simple point! If we keep in mind that the woman is the source of the child, then we avoid all sorts of confusion as to the identity of the woman in relation to the child. She is the *mother* of the child and not his offspring!

cried out in labor

[κράζει](#) [krazei], present tense, the woman was in the midst of birth pangs at the time John saw her. Although Scripture is replete with

instances of women experiencing birth pangs, this is one instance where the pain is both symbolic and *literal* for it finds its fulfillment in the virgin birth of Christ by Mary. Yet there is more. Remember that the book we have before us is one of [two bookends](#) of Scripture, and that many of the themes from the beginning of creation (Gen. 1) are to be brought to consummation in the eternal state (Rev. 22+). When we consider the woman *in labor* from the perspective of the grand scheme of Scripture, we think immediately of the curse. For it is at the curse, God's response to The Fall of mankind, where we see the first mention of both childbirth and labor pain:

And the LORD God said to the woman, "What *is* this you have done?" The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate." So the LORD God said to the serpent: "Because you have done this, you *are* cursed more than all cattle, and more than every beast of the field; on your belly you shall go, and you shall eat dust All the days of your life. And I will put enmity Between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel." To the woman He said: "I will greatly multiply your sorrow and your conception; in pain you shall bring forth children; your desire *shall be* for your husband, and he shall rule over you." (Gen. 3:13-16)

Notice several elements of this most important passage and their correlation with the chapter before us:

1. A woman and the serpent.
2. Enmity between the woman and the serpent.
3. Conflict between her offspring and the serpent.
4. Childbirth (first mention in Genesis).
5. The woman will experience labor pains.

The ties between the curse brought about by The Fall and the events of the chapter before us are undeniable⁹ Here we see the Eve/Mary aspect of the symbolism of the woman. For Eve received the initial promise that a redeemer would come by the seed of a woman.¹⁰ Thus is the genius of God: *through the same vessel by which mankind fell would the redeemer of mankind come forth!* The woman was first to eat of the forbidden fruit, but she would have the ultimate honor of producing the Fruit which would crush the head of the serpent!¹¹ This promise of a redeemer must be seen as a backdrop for all biblical history which flows forward from this point. It must never be forgotten or overlooked. In all the subsequent births, deaths, covenants, kingdoms, and promises, *this central promise of the redeeming seed through woman* is paramount in God's plan. This, and nothing less, is what is set before us in this chapter of John's vision. We find another woman in Scripture who is in labor. Unlike this woman, she gives birth *before* her labor pain came. "Before she was in labor, she gave birth; before her pain came, she delivered a male child" (Isa. 66:7). This speaks of the suddenness of the establishment of the Jewish nation prior to the Millennium (cf. Mic. 5:3-5; Mat. 24:8):

The people and their land will be reborn in a day (Rom. 11:26), suddenly at the Messiah's coming (Zec. 12:10-13:1), unaccompanied by travail pains (Isa. 54:1, 4-5). . . . The figure of the male child comprehends the spiritually regenerated nation, the many sons being viewed as one under the returning Messiah, who will then be manifested as their one representative Head. . . . Will the LORD begin and not finish His work of restoring Israel?¹²

While it has been customary for commentators to view this as the church (spiritual Israel) quickly springing up and spreading across the world, it should rather be viewed as converted Israel who will come to faith during the Tribulation Period and quickly spread the message of the gospel around the world.¹³

Thus, the labor of our woman precedes and differs from the woman of Isaiah 66. Our woman has been in labor for long ages. She labored from the first promise to Eve until its culmination in the virgin Mary:

But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. (Gal. 4:4-5)

No matter how definite the text before us, there will always be some who avoid the obvious in favor of another interpretation. Thus it is with those who attempt to make the woman the Church, totally reversing the symbolism of the text which indicates that she gives birth to Christ and not the other way around:

Israel, not the Church, gave birth to Christ (Rom. 9; Mic. 5; Isa. 9:6; Heb. 7:14). In no possible sense did the Church do so. Seiss, generally very helpful, most strenuously asserts the Woman to be "the Church Universal"—whom he calls "the Mother of us all," etc. But this is a Romish relict, nothing else. The "church of all ages" is a pleasant theological dream, wholly unscriptural. No wonder Mr Seiss proceeds to call the Child "the whole regenerated purchase of the Savior's blood," though how the Mother and the Child can be thus *the same company*, even the author's utmost vehemence fails to convince you! [Seiss: Lectures 26 and 28]¹⁴

Revelation 12:3

another sign appeared in heaven

Like the woman clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet, a second sign is introduced. These two signs are meant to find juxtaposition and highlight the contest between God's promise to the woman and the intention of the dragon to undermine God's work.

fiery red dragon

Red is [πυρρος](#) [pyrros] meaning *fiery red*, like the horse which rode forth at the loosing of the second seal (Rev. 6:4+). The color speaks of blood and destruction.

With what carnage and misery has he overflowed the earth! There has never been a murder, but he caused it. There has never been a sanguinary war, but he instituted it. There has never been a death scene, but it is traceable to him. Every blight of human happiness, every failure of human peace, every sorrow of human life, has come from him. All the fiery passions that rankle in men, and break forth in deeds of violence and blood, are his inspirations.¹⁵

The dragon is a key player in the events of the end time. He is explained to be "that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan" (Rev. 12:9b+). It is the dragon who gives the beast his power, throne, and great authority (Rev. 13:2+) and receives worship along with the beast (Rev. 13:4+). His words are those spoken by the False Prophet (Rev. 13:11+). Later, a demonic spirit comes forth from the mouth of the dragon to lead the kings of the earth to the [Campaign of Armageddon](#) (Rev. 16:13+). Although he works intensely during the period of the end (Rev. 12:12+), he is unable to prevail and is eventually cast into the bottomless pit (Rev. 20:2+). The dragon is known by several names:

Five names are given to Satan, all describing his person and his work. In the *great dragon*, his fierceness and ferociousness is seen. The *old serpent* points back to the Garden of Eden . . . In the word *devil* [diabolos], Satan is viewed as the accuser of all of God's children. *Satan* means adversary and in this he is seen as the opponent to God's program. As the *deceiver*, he is pointed out as the great master counterfeiter who attempts to deceive the elect and non-elect alike.¹⁶

Professor Milligan says: "In these words ['devour,' Rev. 12:5+] we have the dragon doing what Pharaoh did to Israel (Ex. 1:15-22), and again and again, in the Psalms and the Prophets, Pharaoh is spoken of as 'the dragon' (Ps. 74:13; Isa. 27:1; 51:9; Eze. 29:3). Nor is it without interest to remember that Pharaoh's crown was wreathed with a dragon (the asp or serpent of Egypt), and that just as the eagle was the ensign of Rome, so the dragon was that of Egypt. Hence, the significance of Moses' rod being turned into a serpent."¹⁷

See [#15 - Dragon](#).

seven heads and ten horns

Some see the seven heads and ten horns as representing the original *ten* kings of the time of the end, three of which are overcome by the [little horn](#) leaving *seven* (Dan. 7:8).¹⁸ We believe it is better to understand the heads and horns as representing *different entities* rather than different numbers (phases) of the same group of kings. We believe the seven heads represent seven sequential kingdoms of history while the ten horns represent the ten contemporaneous kings which emerge from the final kingdom (Dan. 7:7). See [Beasts, Heads, and Horns](#).

The Dragon with Seven Heads



[19](#)

Albrecht Durer's woodcut above, as beautiful and devotional as it is, fails to convey an important detail of the image seen by John: the placement of the ten horns in relation to the seven heads. Although Scripture gives no explicit indication of their arrangement, a study of related passages indicates that all ten horns are found on one head—the seventh, or last, head. "If the seven heads stand for seven successive world empires, the ten horns must be on the seventh head to agree with Daniel's placement of the ten horns at the time of the end (Dan. 7:24)."²⁰ See [#4 - Seven Heads/Kings](#). See [#22 - Ten Horns/Kings](#).

seven diadems on his heads

Some believe *diadem* speaks of royalty whereas *stephanos* a victor. But this may be an oversimplification as these terms are not technical terms, but have an emphasis defined by the context. See [Crowns](#). Here, the seven diadems denote seven kings and seven historic kingdoms. See [#4 - Seven Heads/Kings](#). The ten horns upon the seventh head also wear ten crowns (Rev. 13:1+). See [#22 - Ten Horns/Kings](#). These are the kingdoms which were delivered to Satan and through which he has dominated earthly history:

Then the devil, taking Him up on a high mountain, showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. And the devil said to Him, "All this authority I will give You, and their glory; for *this* has been delivered to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. Therefore, if You will worship before me, all will be Yours." (Luke 4:5-7)

At the time of the end, he shares this authority with the [Beast](#) who also has these seven heads (Rev. 13:1+).

Revelation 12:4

his tail drew

Drew is [οὐρα](#) [syrei]: "To drag, pull, draw . . . in catching fish,"²¹ "as moving someone or something along by force."²² He exhibited considerable influence over the stars with his tail. He was key in their rebellion. This is not his final casting out, but his original fall in sin and corruption of a portion of the heavenly host (Isa. 14:12; Eze. 28:14). This occurred early in God's created order, prior to the temptation of Eve in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3:1-5).

a third of the stars of heaven

Stars refer to the angels (messengers or leaders) of the churches (Rev. 1:20+). They also refer to angels (Job 38:7; Rev. 9:1+; (4). Here, they refer to angels which followed the dragon in his rejection of God and fall into sin (Isa. 14:12; Eze. 28:15). They are "his angels" (Rev. 12:7+, 9+). Since there is an innumerable host of angels (see commentary on [Revelation 5:11](#)), one-third of such a vast number is countless. Those angels which remained in heaven are God's elect (1Ti. 5:21).

threw them to the earth

Fallen angels (demons) were on the earth well in advance of Christ's advent (Gen. 6:2-4; 1K. 22:22-23; 2Chr. 18:21-22). See commentary on [Revelation 9:1](#).

woman who was ready to givebirth

The promised birth witnessed by the law and the prophets (Gen. 3:15; Isa. 7:14; 9:6-7) was about to find fulfillment (Mat. 1:20; Luke 1:34). See commentary on [Revelation 12:2](#).

to devour her child

As God had prophesied, there was established ongoing enmity between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent (Gen. 3:15). This is born out in the lengthy pattern throughout history of attempts to destroy the line leading from Adam—through Abraham—to bring forth the promised Lion from the tribe of Judah (Gen. 49:10). See diagram and commentary at [Revelation 5:5](#). Historic evidence of Satan's attempt to thwart the Messianic promise is abundant: Cain's murder of Abel (Gen. 4:8); the pollution of the offspring of men by the "sons of God" with the "daughters of men" (Gen. 6:2-4);²³ Pharaoh's attempt to kill all male Hebrews (Ex. 1:16, 22; Acts 7:19); Haman's attempt to wipe out the Jews (Est. 3:6); Athaliah, Ahaziah's mother, attempts to wipe out all the royal heirs of Judah (2Chr. 22:10); Herod's slaughter of the babes in his attempt to murder Jesus (Mat. 2:16). "The most direct attempt was, of course, in the crucifixion of Christ."²⁴ The importance of the line leading to the Messiah is also seen in God's supernatural intervention to allow Sarah to conceive in her old age (Heb. 11:11). Ultimately, the seed of the serpent did in fact bruise the heel of the redeemer—at His crucifixion (John 8:44). Yet this "victory" of the serpent resulted ultimately in the bruising of his own head (Gen. 3:15). For the child overcame death and was ultimately caught up to God (see commentary on [Revelation 12:5](#)).

as soon as it was born

Although the serpent stood before the woman over an extended period of time, he made one last attempt when the child was first born. Through Herod, the serpent ordered the slaughter of all male children in Bethlehem and its districts who were two years old and under (Mat. 2:16).

Revelation 12:5

a male child who was to rule with a rod of iron

To rule is [Ποιμαίνειν](#) [Poimainein]: "Herd, tend, (lead to) pasture."²⁵ Elsewhere, it is translated as *feed* (Luke 17:7; John 21:16; Acts 20:28; 1Cor. 9:7; 1Pe. 5:2; Jude 1:12), but also *rule* (Mat. 2:6; Rev. 2:27+, 7:17+, 12:5+, 19:15+). Ruling, but in the sense of leading, guiding, protecting, as a shepherd.²⁶ A related noun, [ποιμην](#) [poimen] is translated by *pastor* (Eph. 4:1) and *shepherd* (Mat. 9:36; 25:32; 26:31; Mark 6:34; 14:27; Luke 2:8, 15-20; John 10:2, 11-16; Heb. 13:20; 1Pe. 2:25). A *rod of iron* alludes to Psalm 2 which makes clear that the initial form of His rule will be violent. "They shall be dashed to pieces like the potter's vessels" (Ps. 2:8 cf. Rev.

2:27[±]; 19:15[±]). His rule with the rod extends through those who will co-rule with him. “Scripture clearly shows that Christ (Ps. 2:8), the man child (Rev. 12:5[±]), the church saints (Rev. 2:26-27[±]), the tribulation saints (Rev. 20:4-6[±]), and indeed all the saints (Ps. 149:6-9) are to so rule.”²⁷ The certainty of the rule of Christ and His kingdom was set forth in the sounding of the seventh trumpet (Rev. 11:15-18[±]). See [The Arrival of God’s Kingdom](#). See commentary on [Revelation 2:27](#) and [Revelation 11:15](#).

caught up

[ῥιπασθῆναι](#) [Hērpasthē]: “Take suddenly and vehemently, or take away in the sense of . . . steal, carry off drag away.”²⁸ The same root describes how the violent *take* the kingdom *by force* (Mat. 11:12). It describes how the “wicked one comes and *snatches away* what was sown” (Mat. 13:19). The term is used to describe physical transportation by the power of the Holy Spirit: Philip is *caught away* from the sight of the Ethiopian eunuch and is later found in Azotus (Acts 8:39); Paul was *caught up* to the third heaven (2Cor. 12:2); and the church will be *caught up* with the dead in Christ to meet the Lord at the [Rapture](#) (1Th. 4:17). Here it is passive—an external agent (the Father) catches the child away. The same passive aspect is seen in Luke’s detailed record of the event which employs a passive verb and participle to describe the ascension:

Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, **He was taken up** ([πῆρθῆναι](#) [epērhē]), and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, who also said, “Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This *same* Jesus, who **was taken up** ([ἁναλήμφθησιν](#) [analēmphtheis]) from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven.” (Acts 1:9-11) [emphasis added]

The child ascends and remains until the time of restoration predicted by the prophets.

Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began. (Acts 3:19-21)

The times of the restoration of all things includes the regeneration (Mat. 19:28) which precedes the promised [Millennial Kingdom](#) (Rev. 20:4-6[±]). See [The Arrival of God’s Kingdom](#).

to God and His throne

Notice that the child is caught up to *God’s throne*, not His own throne. He remains seated to the righthand of the Father until the time comes for Him to rule from the throne of David on earth (Dan. 7:13-14, 21-22, 26-27; Mat. 25:31; Rev. 3:21[±]). See commentary on [Revelation 3:21](#).

Revelation 12:6

Then the woman fled

The connective, “Then,” indicates a sequence between the catching up of the child and the fleeing of the woman. But are these two events *necessarily* closely correlated in time? How soon must the flight be to the catching up of the child? Some interpreters relate this flight to that of the Jews from Jerusalem in the destruction by Rome in 70 A.D.²⁹ Yet even that flight was approximately 4 decades after the ascension of Christ. Nor was there any indication of supernatural assistance as this passage describes (Rev. 12:14[±]). Certainly nothing like the Exodus occurred in relation to the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A.D. which would allow for the use of similar phraseology involving “wings of a great eagle.” Here we are faced with one of the characteristics of prophetic passages: events which appear side-by-side in the text can often be separated by long ages. This occurs because the prophetic vision has two characteristics which we need to be aware of. *First*, the prophets were only shown important highlights of the final development (1Pe. 1:10-11). *Second*, the full range of history was often collapsed in their view, much as when looking through a telescope. “Somewhat as a picture lacks the dimension of depth, the prophecy often lacks the dimension of time: events appear together on the screen of prophecy which in their fulfillment may be widely separated in time.”³⁰ There are numerous examples of this phenomenon. The First and Second Coming of Christ are juxtaposed in numerous passages (Isa. 61:1-2; Zec. 9:9-10; Mal. 3:1-2; 4:5-6; Luke 4:17-19). Yet history has shown these events to be separated by at least 1900 years. The first and second resurrections are juxtaposed (Dan. 12:2; John 5:28-29), yet they are separated by no less than 1,000 years (Rev. 20:4-6[±]). We have a similar sequence before us: The child is caught up and the woman flees. The child was caught up over 1900 years ago and the woman has yet to flee in the sense of this passage.

[When] the woman flees into the wilderness . . . we meet with another, and yet more lengthened parenthesis. Between the ascension of the Man Child and the woman’s flight—*yet future*—the history of Christianity comes in. The great point to lay hold of is the connection between Christ and *Israel*, not Christ and the Church, hence the two omitted parenthetical periods: (1) between the birth

and ascension; (2) between the ascension and the flight.³¹

This vision next recognizes Jesus' ascension (Rev. 12:5⁺), and then takes up Israel's story as though the Church Age does not intervene, just as Dan 9:26 ignores the same period. The Church Age is the "mystery" of the Old Testament (Rom 11:25; 16:25), and is distinct from Israel's history.³²

Zechariah saw the same sequence, contiguous in the text, but separated by the age of grace during which the body of Christ preaches the gospel before the focus shifts back again to Israel:

"Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd, against the Man who is My Companion," says the LORD of hosts. "Strike the Shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered; then I will turn My hand against the little ones. And it shall come to pass in all the land," says the LORD, "That two-thirds in it shall be cut off *and* die, but *one*-third shall be left in it: I will bring the *one-third* through the fire, will refine them as silver is refined, and test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, and I will answer them. I will say, 'This is My people'; and each one will say, 'The LORD is my God.' " (Zec. 13:7-9)

In Zechariah's passage, the shepherd is struck (the Great Shepherd crucified) and then the sheep are scattered. In the time of testing, only one-third survives. The remainder turn to God in faith. Can this be said of the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70?

The prophecy that *two parts . . . shall be cut off and die, but the third shall be left* in the land cannot refer contextually to the destruction wrought in Judea during the Jewish War of A.D. 67 to 70. . . . Nor can its sequel regarding *the third part* that survives the terrible time of judgment by being brought *through the fire* (Jer. 30:5-7; Mat. 24:13) be reconciled with the facts of history under such an interpretation. The remnant of the Jews who survived the horrors of the Jewish War from A.D. 67 to 70 did not come forth refined *as silver is refined* and tested *as gold is tested*, a regenerated and spiritual people. On the contrary, the preponderating majority remained in their unbelief, were scattered worldwide, and to this day have remained in spiritual darkness, with only a *very few* believing and forming "a remnant according to the election of grace" (Rom. 11:5).³³

Both Zechariah's passage and this passage refer to the *same events* of the time of the end. In both contexts, they are related as being immediately after the First Coming (shepherd struck, child caught up) yet an intervening age occurs. The flight of the woman takes place after the final casting out of the dragon (Rev. 12:7-12⁺). The woman fled because of intense persecution by the dragon (Rev. 12:13-14⁺). Although the woman has not yet fled in the sense of this passage (where only 3.5 years exist before the return of Christ, Rev. 12:6⁺, 14⁺), the dragon has great enmity toward her on an ongoing basis. For, as we have mentioned, the return of Christ involves the Jews coming to repentance and calling for His return (Mat. 23:39). And the character of His millennial reign upon earth is intensely Jewish, as indicated by a temple standing in Jerusalem. This all reflects the important fact that *God is not through with the Jews: they remain an important part of His plan* (Rom. 9-11). Therefore, we should *expect* to see great opposition by the god of this age to the chosen nation. And indeed we do! Is there any one nation which has survived persecution and pogroms as have the Jews? Can one point to any other nation which has a Holocaust like that of the Jews? A Holocaust, which destroyed some *six million* people, and is even now denied as a ruse by some—a mere six decades after the event, when the piles of shoes, teeth, and hair of the victims may still to be seen? Even portions of the Church serve as a hireling of the dragon. Large numbers among Christianity deny Israel's right to the Promised Land and oppose her attempts to defend herself against unreasonable hostility. The same wayward Church denies God's OT promises which are manifestly for Israel—attempting to rob them for her own purpose and producing a distorted understanding of Scripture in the process. Although all race-related persecution is of the dragon, he has a special penchant for opposing Israel because she is a key in what remains for God's program of the end times and beyond. Unless we realize this spiritual reality, we will be forever puzzled by anti-Semitism. How else does one explain the possession of The Temple Mount by Israel, but her inability to ascend there to worship? Or her possession of Jerusalem while the nations of the world, including our own United States, refuse to recognize Jerusalem as her capital? Or what about the countless resolutions of the United Nations condemning Israel and the veritable silence from the same body in regard to hostilities by her enemies? None of this makes *logical sense* because it has nothing to do with logic! There is a *dark spiritual dimension* behind anti-Semitism and its cousin, anti-Zionism:

You declare, my friend, that you do not hate the Jews, you are merely "anti-Zionist." And I say, let the truth ring forth from the high mountain-tops, let it echo through the valleys of God's green earth: when people criticize Zionism, they mean Jews—this is God's own truth. . . . And what is anti-Zionist? It is the denial to the Jewish people of a fundamental right that we justly claim for the people of Africa and freely accord all other nations of the Globe. It is discrimination against Jews, my friend, because they are Jews. In short, it is anti-Semitism. . . . Let my words echo in the depths of your soul: when people criticize Zionism, they mean Jews—make no mistake about it.—Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., cited in *Levitt Letter*, December 2002, p. 28. www.levitt.com

One of the darkest stains on the history of mankind has been the persistent specter of anti-Semitism. Over the centuries the Jews have faced more hatred and persecution than any other people. Much of that suffering was chastisement from God to turn the nation away from their sin and unbelief and back to Him. God repeatedly warned Israel of the consequences of disobedience (cf. Deu.

28:15-68) and punished them when they failed to obey (cf. 2K. 17:7-23). Within the paradigm of God's sovereign purpose for His people, Israel also has suffered constantly and severely at the hands of Satan, acting as God's instrument. Unlike God, however, Satan's purpose in causing the Jewish people to suffer is not remedial, but destructive. He seeks to bring them not to repentance and salvation, but to death and destruction.³⁴

Among the most notable times of Jewish persecution are found the Crusades, the Inquisition, the pogroms of Russia, and the Holocaust. Sadly, the persecution of God's chosen nation has not yet reached its climax, for Scripture reveals the darkest hour is yet to come.

into the wilderness

The woman flees from the dragon. But where? She flees to the *wilderness*. Note that her flight is to a place of refuge for a period of 1,260 days (see below). This indirectly tells us *when* she flees—the precise event which triggers her flight. She flees at the middle of [The 70th Week of Daniel](#) when sacrifice and offering is halted and the [Temple of God](#) is made desolate:

"Therefore when you see the 'abomination of desolation,' spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place" (whoever reads, let him understand), "then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house. And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes. But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath. For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be." (Mat. 24:15-21)

We believe this event occurs just after the [Beast](#) overcomes the two witnesses (Rev. 11:7+). See [The Final Week](#). See commentary on [Revelation 11:3](#). When reading Jesus' words recorded by Matthew, one is immediately struck with the *Jewishness* of His comments which speak of a "holy place," "Judea," and the "Sabbath." This is no accident! For the words of Jesus in Matthew 24, while of value for all saints of all ages, are of *ultimate value* to the Jewish saints at the time of the end who reside in Judea and understand the signs of their times. For them, Matthew 24 will not just have a spiritual application, but *areal physical application* for it is they who will see the abomination set up at the mid-point of the Tribulation and will know to flee.

The urgency of Christ's command to flee as soon as the abomination of desolation stands in the holy place . . . indicates that they must flee immediately—no opportunity for plane reservations, packing belongings, or anything else. The nearest desert area they can reach will be their only opportunity for survival.³⁵

Her Master gives her with necessary instructions: "let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains."

Judean Wilderness West of Jericho



³⁶

Those who are in Judea will flee eastward to the nearest mountains. Initially, they will probably attain the Judean wilderness westward of Jericho (shown above). "Fleeing first to the 'mountains' and then on to the 'wilderness.'"³⁷ *In the day of Jacob's trouble* (Jer. 30:7-8), the latter days (Jer. 30:24), prior to Israel's restoration for the Millennial Kingdom (Jer. 30:9-10) God promises to give a surviving remnant grace in the *wilderness*. "Thus says the Lord: 'The people who survived the sword Found grace in the wilderness Israel, when I went to give him rest.' " (Jer. 31:2) Those who are in Jerusalem flee to the wilderness. Jews will also undergo purging among *the wilderness of the peoples*—among the nations where they have been scattered. In the same way that the rebellious of Israel fell in the wilderness and were prevented from entering the Promised Land, so too will the rebellious of Israel in the time of the end perish rather than participate in the promised [Millennial Kingdom](#).³⁸

"As I live," says the Lord GOD, "surely with a mighty hand, with an outstretched arm, and with fury poured out, I will rule over you. I will bring you out from the peoples and gather you out of the countries where you are scattered, with a mighty hand, with an outstretched arm, and with fury poured out. And I will bring you into the wilderness of the peoples, and there I will plead My case with you face to face. Just as I pleaded My case with your fathers in the wilderness of the land of Egypt, so I will plead My case with you," says the Lord GOD. "I will make you pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant; I will purge the rebels from among you, and those who transgress against Me; I will bring them out of the country where they dwell, but they shall not enter the land of Israel. Then you will know that I *am* the LORD." (Eze. 20:33-38)

Sheep in Bozrah

where she has a place

[ΠΥ ΧΕΙ ΚΕ ΤΌΠΟΥ](#) [Hopu echei ekei topon], *where she is having there (a) place*. This appears to speak of a specific location within the wilderness, rather than merely fleeing to the wilderness in general. This is “her place” which the eagle takes her to (Rev. 12:14+). It is a specific place which was prepared beforehand by God (Rev. 12:6+). Does Scripture give any indication where her place might be? Some think not:

Petra, the ruins of an ancient city of Edom carved out of rock and protected by high mountain walls and with a narrow access, has been a suggested location of the “place,” but this is pure speculation. The only stipulation possible is that it is a place of refuge for converted Israel during the last half of the seventieth week.³⁹

While we agree that the precise identification of Petra as the place of refuge is difficult to assert dogmatically, we disagree that it is “pure speculation.” There are numerous passages which pertain to the flight of the remnant and her divine protection in the wilderness. Given the importance of the preservation of a Jewish remnant, we should not be surprised by this. However, many of the passages are obscure and occur within settings which have both a local and a far-future reference and distinguishing between the two can be quite difficult. We offer some of these passages below in the hopes that they will prompt further study of this matter. In the midst of a passage by Isaiah describing a time of destruction coming upon the people of Moab during which they would court Zion’s favor for refuge, there is a stunning reversal in the scene:

Take counsel, execute judgment; make your shadow like the night in the middle of the day; hide the outcasts, do not betray him who escapes. **Let My outcasts dwell with you, O Moab;** be a shelter to them from the **face [presence cf. Rev. 12:14+]** of the spoiler. For the extortioner is at an end, devastation ceases, oppressors are consumed out of the land. In mercy the throne will be established; and One will sit on it in truth, in the [tabernacle](#) of David, judging and seeking justice and hastening righteousness. (Isa. 16:3-5) [emphasis added]

Isaiah reverses the context and appeals to Moab for the protection of “My outcasts” (Israel). The context is a time of intense persecution and destruction which is followed by the just reign of Messiah upon the throne of David—the Millennial Kingdom.

Let mine outcasts dwell (sojourn) with thee, Moab (the KJV correctly follows the [Masoretic Text], as over against the LXX, Syriac, and Targum, who render it: “the outcasts of Moab”). . . . The LORD was saying to Moab, through the Spirit of prophecy in Isaiah, “When My people Israel will be outcasts, be a haven to them, hiding them from their persecutors.” Envisioned is that preeminent time of Israel’s trouble, the Great Tribulation . . . under Antichrist, Israel’s supreme “destroyer” (Rev. 12:6+-13:18+). . . . At the height of that persecution of the Jewish remnant, Christ will return in glory to sit upon His throne and judge the nations (Mat. 25:46).⁴⁰

The passage describes the path by which Moab should have sent its tribute of lambs to the king of Israel. “From Sela to the wilderness to the mount of the daughter of Zion *Jerusalem*” (Isa. 16:1 cf. 2K. 3:4-5). Sela means “Rock” and is understood to be a reference to Petra.⁴¹ Could it be that the path by which the Moabites should have sent lambs from Petra via the wilderness to Jerusalem is to be retraced by the sheep of Israel who are scattered in the time of the end (Zec. 13:7-9)? This occurs during the time when the Lord is testing those who dwell upon the earth (Rev. 3:10+). During this time, the faithful remnant will be hidden in their chambers—reminiscent to the time of the Passover in Egypt:

Come, my people, enter your chambers, and shut your doors behind you; hide yourself, as it were, for a little moment, until the indignation is past. For behold, the Lord comes out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity; the earth will also disclose her blood, and will no more cover her slain. (Isa. 26:20-21)

Daniel informs us that the domain of the [Antichrist](#) will have the following exceptions: “He shall also enter the Glorious Land, and many *countries* shall be overthrown; but these shall escape from his hand: Edom, Moab, and the prominent people of Ammon” (Dan. 11:41). For some reason the Antichrist is unable to overthrow these regions which include both Bozrah and Petra.⁴²

Bozrah in Southern Jordan



[43](#)

Bozrah, the ancient capital of Edom, is without a doubt to be identified with the modern village of Buseirah, which is located in N Edom (M.R. 208018). It guards both the Kings’ Highway (the major N-S route through Transjordan) and a major route W to the Wadi Arabah and thence to the Negeb and S Judah. It is also within striking distance of the Edomite copper mines in the Wadi Dana and Wadi Feinan some 10-15 km SSW. No water source has been found within the site, the main supply probably being the spring at `Ain Jenin, about one km E, which until recently was also the source for the modern village.⁴⁴

Interestingly, several Second Coming passages also indicate that God is seen *coming from* these regions:

Who *is* this who comes from **Edom**, with dyed garments from **Bozrah**, this *One who is* glorious in His apparel, traveling in the greatness of His strength? –“I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save.” Why *is* Your apparel red, and Your garments like one who treads in the winepress? “I have trodden the winepress alone, and from the peoples no one *was* with Me. For I have trodden them in My anger, and trampled them in My fury; their blood is sprinkled upon My garments, and I have stained all My robes. For the day of vengeance *is* in My heart, and the year of My redeemed has come.” (Isa. 63:1-4) [emphasis added]

God came from Teman, the Holy One from Mount Paran. Selah His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of His praise. (Hab. 3:3)

The prophet, under the form of a theophany, was given a vision of the second advent of the Messiah . . . seen coming *from Teman*, a district of **Edom**, poetically the part standing for the whole, . . . advancing *from Mount Paran*, the hilly country between Edom and Sinai (Deu. 33:2). Isaiah, in a vision of the second advent, similarly beheld the Messiah advancing in judgment upon His foes “from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah” (Isa. 63:1-6). [emphasis added]⁴⁵

In the Psalms, mention is made of the nation being led to Edom during a time when God has cast Israel off and is seeking help from trouble. God is appealed to as the one who will *tread down* (cf. Isa. 63:1-6) Israel’s enemies:

Who will bring me *to* the strong city? Who will lead me to **Edom**? *Is it* not You, O God, *who* cast us off? And You, O God, *who* did not go out with our armies? Give us help from trouble, for the help of man *is* useless. Through God we will do valiantly, *for it is* He *who* shall tread down our enemies. (Ps. 60:9-12 cf. Ps. 108:10-13) [emphasis added]

The reference to “strong city” is thought to refer to Petra, “*the strong city*. (Petra or Sela) the rock-built city of *Edom* (Ps. 31:21; 2K. 14:7)”⁴⁶, also known as *Sela*:

Let the wilderness and its cities lift up *their voice*, the villages *that* Kedar inhabits. Let the inhabitants of **Sela** sing, let them shout from the top of the mountains. Let them give glory to the LORD, and declare His praise in the coastlands. The LORD shall go forth like a mighty man; He shall stir up *His* zeal like a man of war. He shall cry out, yes, shout aloud; He shall prevail against His enemies. (Isa. 42:11-13) [emphasis added]

Petra is located in a basin within Mount Seir, and is totally surrounded by mountains and cliffs. The only way in and out of the city is through a narrow passageway that extends for about a mile and can only be negotiated by foot or by horseback. This makes the city easy to defend, and its surrounding high cliffs give added meaning and confirmation to Isaiah 33:16 . . . The name *Bozrah* means “sheepfold.” An ancient sheepfold had a narrow entrance so that the shepherd could count his sheep. Once inside the fold, the sheep had more room to move around. Petra is shaped like a giant sheepfold, with its narrow passage opening up to a spacious circle surrounded by cliffs.⁴⁷

Micah describes an assembly of Jacob, a remnant, which will be gathered into a fold (*bozrah*). The one who breaks them out is clearly a reference to Messiah, the Good Shepherd:

I will surely assemble all of you, O Jacob, I will surely gather the remnant of Israel; I will put them together like sheep of **the fold** **[בֶּרֶךְ] [bāsē'râ]**, like a flock in the midst of their pasture; they shall make a loud noise because of *so many* people. The one who breaks open will come up before them; they will break out, pass through the gate, and go out by it; their king will pass before them, with the LORD at their head. (Mic. 2:12-13) [emphasis added]

The LORD will “gather” from their worldwide, age-long Diaspora the elect “remnant,” which will survive “the time of Jacob’s trouble” (Jer. 30:5-7), the Great Tribulation (Rev. 8:1⁺-20:3⁺), preceding the establishment of the Kingdom over Israel (Rev. 20:4-6⁺; Acts 1:7). . . . The saved remnant will be the nucleus of the millennial Kingdom. The LORD declared, *I will put them together like the sheep of Bozrah* (a region in Edom well known as a sheep-raising center). . . . They (the returning remnant of Israel) will follow “the breaker,” the Messiah, who will break through and open the way, going up before them. They, following Him, will break through the gate and go out from their captivity to glorious freedom.⁴⁸

An appreciation of the ultimate setting of the previous passage sheds new light on the familiar teaching of Jesus:

Most assuredly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door, but climbs up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep hear his voice; and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. And when he brings out his own sheep, he goes before them; and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. Yet they will by no means follow a stranger, but will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers. (John 10:1-5)

Will the Jewish remnant of the time of the end be in such a physical “sheepfold” of sorts? Will they be reading these very words of Jesus penned by John thousands of years before their situation—waiting for the “shepherd of the sheep” to bring out his own

sheep? Only time will tell. These references to Edom and Bozrah are indicators that at the Second Coming, God has business to take care of in Edom. That business involves the defense of his sheep, the Jewish remnant represented by the woman who flees the dragon. See [Campaign of Armageddon](#).

prepared by God

[τοιμασμένον](#) [hētoimasmenon], perfect tense passive participle, *having been prepared by God*. The preparation is made prior to her flight so that the place is ready for her upon her arrival. In the same way that the Church has a dwelling place ([μοναί](#) [monai]) prepared by Jesus in the Father's house (John 14:2 cf. Rev. 21:2+), so the Jewish remnant has a place prepared in the Father's world (Isa. 26:20-21).

they should feed her

The physical needs of the woman are met in her wilderness hiding place. *They*, an indefinite plural, seems to indicate the participation of others in providing for her nourishment. In the same way that the ravens (1K. 17:2-3) and the widow of Zarephath in Sidon (1K. 17:8-15) were used as intermediaries to feed Elijah during his time of drought, so too will others be used to provide for the Jewish remnant. During the Tribulation, there will be numerous situations involving drought and lack of provision. See commentary on [Revelation 11:6](#). The need for provision will be exacerbated in her case because no one will be able to buy or sell without the mark of the beast during this three and one-half years (Rev. 13:17+). We note that Elijah was fed by a *raven* (an unclean bird) and a *Gentile* widow (Luke 4:26-29). Perhaps this is a typological indication that the Jewish remnant will be provided for by Gentile means. Provision for the Jews by Gentiles during this time helps explain the context of the Sheep and Goat judgment when the nations ([ἔθνη](#) [ethnē], *Gentiles*) are gathered before Christ at His return and rewarded based on their provision for *His brethren* (Mat. 25:32).⁴⁹ God used Moses as an intermediary when He supernaturally fed Israel in her previous time in the wilderness after the Exodus where he provided water from a rock and manna from heaven:

And they tested God in their heart by asking for the food of their fancy. Yes, they spoke against God: They said, "Can God prepare a table in the wilderness? Behold, He struck the rock, so that the waters gushed out, and the streams overflowed. Can He give bread also? Can He provide meat for His people?" Therefore the LORD heard *this* and was furious; so a fire was kindled against Jacob, and anger also came up against Israel, because they did not believe in God, and did not trust in His salvation. Yet He had commanded the clouds above, and opened the doors of heaven, had rained down manna on them to eat, and given them of the bread of heaven. Men ate angels' food; He sent them food to the full. (Ps. 78:18-25)

During her time in the wilderness, Israel will remember the days of her youth when she came up from the land of Egypt. God will speak comfort to her and she will be purged of idolatry:

Therefore, behold, I will allure her, will bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfort to her. I will give her vineyards from there, and the Valley of Achor as a door of hope; she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, as in the day when she came up from the land of Egypt. "And it shall be, in that day," says the LORD, "*That* you will call Me 'My Husband,' And no longer call Me 'My Master,' For I will take from her mouth the names of the Baals, and they shall be remembered by their name no more." (Hos. 2:14-17)

The context indicates this precedes the Millennial Kingdom:

In that day I will make a covenant for them with the beasts of the field, with the birds of the air, and *with* the creeping things of the ground. **Bow and sword of battle I will shatter from the earth**, to make them lie down safely. I will betroth you to Me forever; yes, I will betroth you to Me in righteousness and justice, in lovingkindness and mercy; I will betroth you to Me in faithfulness, and you shall know the LORD. (Hos. 2:18-20) [emphasis added]

Isaiah spoke of the pure who would dwell with God and would be provided with water and bread:

The sinners in Zion are afraid; fearfulness has seized the hypocrites: "Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" He who walks righteously and speaks uprightly, he who despises the gain of oppressions, who gestures with his hands, refusing bribes, who stops his ears from hearing of bloodshed, and shuts his eyes from seeing evil: he will dwell on high; his place of defense *will be* the fortress of rocks; bread will be given him, his water *will be* sure. (Isa. 33:14-16)

This time of testing in the wilderness, fed by God, will result in the full conversion of those who remain alive.⁵⁰ Whereas Israel had been "not My people," then it will be said, "You *are* My people!" (Hos. 2:23).

one thousand two hundred and sixty days

This period is also described as "time and times and half a time" (Rev. 12:14+). This corresponds to half of [The 70th Week of Daniel](#)

This is the last half of the week during which the nations trample the holy city (Rev. 11:2+) and the beast has authority (Dan. 7:25; Rev. 13:5+). A period Jesus referred to as consisting of “great tribulation” (Mat. 24:21). See [Prophetic Year](#). This is the period during which Daniel was told events of the end would come to fulfillment: “Then I heard the man clothed in linen, who was above the waters of the river, when he held up his right hand and his left hand to heaven, and swore by Him who lives forever, that *it shall be* for a time, times, and half a *time*; and when the power of the holy people has been completely shattered, all these *things* shall be finished” (Dan. 12:7). One of the purposes of this period is to shatter “the power of the holy people” to turn them back to *total dependence* upon God. In the time of [Jacob's Trouble](#), God will both *tear* and *heal* in order to bring the Jews to recognize Jesus as Messiah and urgently seek His return on their behalf:⁵¹

“For I *will be* like a lion to Ephraim, and like a young lion to the house of Judah. I, *even I*, will *tear them* and go away; I will take *them* away, and no one shall rescue. I will return again to My place till they acknowledge their offense. Then they will seek My face; in their affliction they will earnestly seek Me.” Come, and let us return to the LORD; for He has torn, but He will heal us; He has stricken, but He will bind us up. After two days He will revive us; on the third day He will raise us up, that we may live in His sight. (Hos. 5:14-6:2)

He would withdraw His favor, and His sinning people would be scattered worldwide and be *temporarily* set aside in their national election. He will remain in His place (the prophecy spanning the centuries until the second advent of Christ) until the remnant of Israel (Zec. 12:10-13:1; Rom. 11:26; Rev. 7:1-8+) will *acknowledge their offense* . . . accepting the full punishment of their guilt and not considering themselves to be *not* guilty (Zec. 11:5). *And seek My face*, through faith in their future incarnate Messiah-Savior (Isa. 53:1-10). . . . This prophetically presupposes Christ's incarnation and redemptive work at the first advent and the application of His salvation to Israel at His second advent (Rom. 11:26).⁵²

They will then repeat the praise which they first gave at His first advent (Mat. 21:9), but now with genuine commitment:

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under *her* wings, but you were not willing! See! Your house is left to you desolate; for I say to you, **you shall see Me no more till you say, “Blessed is He who comes in the name of the LORD!** (Mat. 23:37-39) [emphasis added]

Revelation 12:7

war

[Πόλεμος](#) [Polemos]: “Opposite . . . peace; as a single engagement battle, fight.”⁵³

Michael and his angels

Michael is one of the “chief princes” who aided the heavenly messenger of Daniel against the prince of Persia and Greece (Dan. 10:13, 21). Daniel is told that Michael is “your prince” (Dan. 10:21), and “The great prince who stands *watch* over the sons of your people” (Dan. 12:1). Thus, he is uniquely associated with the protection of the Jewish people.⁵⁴ It is during the time of [Jacob's trouble](#), when “there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a [Jewish] nation” that “shall stand up” to protect Israel (Dan. 12:1-2). Jude informs us that Michael is an “archangel” and his connection with Israel is also reflected in the fact that he “disputed about the body of Moses” with the devil (Jude 1:9).

fought with the dragon

“With what weapons and tactics this heavenly warfare will be waged is beyond our understanding. Angels cannot be injured or slain with earthly weapons, and such physical forces as we know about are not able to move spiritual beings. But these beings do operate in a physical universe, so there must exist powerful physico-spiritual energies of which we yet can have only vague intimations, . . . It is with such energies and powers that this heavenly battle will be waged.”⁵⁵

Michael and His Angels Fight the Dragon

⁵⁶

dragon and his angels

This refers to “a third of the stars of heaven” which were thrown to the earth by the tail of the dragon (Rev. 12:4+). See Commentary on [Revelation 12:4](#). Their eventual destiny is the Lake of Fire, which was specially prepared for them (Mat. 25:41; Rev. 20:10+). Some are confined, reserved for judgment (see commentary on [Revelation 9:1](#)). The dragon's angels are organized by rank.

Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against **principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness** in the heavenly *places*. (Eph. 6:11-12) [emphasis added]

Perhaps one of the more powerful ones is the angel of the bottomless pit (Rev. 9:11⁺). An angel which spoke with Daniel fought against high-ranking angels on his way to Daniel (Dan. 10:13, 20-21). The existence and influence of these malevolent spiritual beings is a well-established theme of Scripture. This is why it is so important for believers to have a grasp of what Scripture reveals concerning the world which we live in. For there are forces and objectives at work that underlie the physical realm which the instrumentation of science is entirely unable to reveal. They are at work in the non-physical realm where science is blind. Yet we see their results in the workings of sin, reigns of terror, and the machinations of powerful nations and corporations through history.

The movements of nations, their wars, their politics, and social policy, are shaped and directed by higher powers. There are angels, good and bad, who are constantly influencing men and governments, and of this [Daniel 10] is a conspicuous example. Wars and strife on earth are the reflex of opposing spiritual powers in the lower heavens.⁵⁷

No more so than in the plight of the Jews and the illogical conditions which attend the disfavor they suffer by the majority of the world's nations. And this is exactly one of the goals of this chapter—God is revealing to us the true nature of anti-[Semitism](#). Although the world is full of destructive biases and half-truths, none is as malignant nor hell-bent as Satan's desire to destroy the woman of Revelation 12⁺. As significant as *his angels* are in terms of powers which influence and manipulate the world, these ranks of fallen angels are not of primary concern for the believer "because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world" (1Jn. 4:4). "For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom. 8:38-39).

Revelation 12:8

they did not prevail

Prevail is [οἰσθεν](#) [ischysen], indicating that the dragon and his angels had *insufficient power* to withstand Michael and his angels. The elect angels of God are able to defeat the most mighty of the fallen angels, including Satan (Rev. 20:2⁺). Christ does not even condescend to participate in the conflict, for like all the angels, Satan is a *creature*, albeit a powerful one. Many people have the completely cockeyed view that the Bible concerns a battle between Satan and Christ. Nothing could be further from the truth, because Satan himself is a creature of Christ's creating (Col. 1:16). The gap between Creator and creature is inestimable. Christ could merely *blink* and Satan and all evil would instantly and permanently be vanquished. Yet he withholds their doom for His purposes, only a tiny corner of which He reveals to us—much of it in this book. For Christ, as God, to stoop to battle directly with the devil would be providing Satan with a great compliment. Hence, he is dealt with by Michael or other angelic powers, who are themselves creatures.

nor was a place found

The woman had a place prepared for her to which she fled, but the dragon no longer has a place in heaven.

any longer

Prior to this battle with Michael, the dragon had access to heaven as he does in our day. See commentary on [Revelation 12:10](#). See commentary on [Revelation 20:2](#).

Revelation 12:9

cast out

This is the first stage in the *de facto* fulfillment of what was previously accomplished *de jure* at Christ's First Coming (Luke 10:18; John 12:31; 16:11; Col. 2:15; Heb. 2:14; 1Jn. 3:8). The next stage occurs with his binding in the abyss (Rev. 20:1-3⁺) after which he is released, but then cast into the Lake of Fire (Rev. 20:10⁺).

that serpent of old

[ὄφις ὁ ἀρχαῖος](#) [ho ophis ho archaios], *the serpent, the ancient*. This is a direct allusion to his role as the serpent in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3:1-4), and especially God's prophecy which set forth a number of truths concerning the serpent and the line leading to Messiah (Gen. 3:14-16):

1. God would put enmity between the serpent and the woman and between the serpent's seed and her Seed.
2. The woman's seed would bruise (crush) the serpent's head.
3. God would bring Messiah via the rebellious woman, but only through pain (of childbirth).

The reference to *serpent of old* indicates that the stand-off between the woman in labor and the serpent is an age-old situation which spans the time from Eve to the virgin Mary and beyond. Thus, the woman signifies not just *Mary*, nor just *Israel*, but the promise of a redeemer through the line of Israel stretching all the way back to the first woman, *Eve*. See commentary on [Revelation 12:1](#).

the devil

[Διάβολος](#) [Diabolos], a compound word made up of [δία](#) [dia] (*against*) and [βάλλω](#) [ballō] (*to throw*). This title emphasizes his role as slanderer, *throwing* accusations *against* the saints. "Diabolos is the usual rendering of [ἠὲ](#) [šātān], "satan," in the LXX (e.g., Job 1:6) suggesting the two words are almost synonymous."⁵⁸

who deceives the whole world

World is [ο κουμένην](#) [oikoumenēn]: "The whole inhabited earth,"⁵⁹ with reference to those portions which are populated by humans, the region to which the gospel of the kingdom will be preached to all nations prior to the end (Mat. 24:14). "The whole world lies under the sway of the wicked one" (1Jn. 5:19). By the sorcery of Babylon, the nations were deceived (Rev. 18:23+). His first target of deception was Eve (Gen. 3:4-5; 2Cor. 11:3; 2Ti. 2:14), but he has been at work deceiving nations all through history. He is the father of lies, there is no truth in him (John 8:44). Those through whom he deceives are most effective because they themselves are deceived (2Ti. 3:13).

Educated and ignorant, king and pauper, male and female, Jew and Gentile, strong and weak, young and old, black and white—all are deceived by him. All the world's high-sounding philosophies, conceived ever so brilliantly by profound thinkers—whether pragmatism, idealism, gnosticism, determinism, hedonism, materialism, transcendentalism, existentialism, deism, or any of countless others, and regardless of the eminence of the geniuses with whose names they are associated—Aristotelianism, Platonism, Hegelianism, Marxism, Maoism, Confucianism, Buddhism, Kantianism, Freudianism—all are man-originated, man-centered, and man-honoring, rather than God-originated, God-centered, and God-honoring [Col. 2:8-9].⁶⁰

His ultimate deceiving tool at the time of the end is the False Prophet who performs great signs to deceive those who dwell on the earth (Rev. 13:13-14+), those who receive the mark of the beast and worship his image (Rev. 19:20+). See commentary on [Revelation 13:11](#). Satan empowers both the [Beast](#) and the [False Prophet](#) as two mighty deceivers. In a similar way that God gives power to the two witnesses who testify of God (Rev. 11:3+), these two are empowered by Satan as master deceivers during a time when deception will be the rule rather than the exception. The deception will be so strong that only by the power of the Holy Spirit will the regenerate avoid succumbing to the signs and lying wonders:

The coming of the *lawless one* is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness. (2Th. 2:9-12)

The [False Prophet](#) is the ultimate from among those Jesus warned of: "false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive" (Mat. 24:24a.). At the Second Coming of Christ, Satan is bound in the abyss so as to halt his deceiving ministry for the duration of the Millennium (Rev. 20:3+), but at the end he will be released to deceive the nations one final time (Rev. 20:8-10+).

Revelation 12:10

Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God and the power of His Christ have come

An equivalent statement to that which accompanied the sounding of the seventh trumpet (Rev. 11:15+), but which recognizes the removal of Satan from God's heaven as a key signal of the beginning of the end. See commentary on [Revelation 11:15](#). The seventh trumpet is yet future to our day and so the kingdom awaits and we continue to pray, "Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven" (Mat. 6:10).

How utterly idle is the discoursing of modernists and religious educationalists and social reformers about "the kingdom." Their talk is full of "the kingdom this" and "the kingdom that"; whereas our Lord Jesus has not yet taken His kingdom. It has not yet been given Him of the Father. We are not living in kingdom days, but in days when Satan is the prince of this world and the god of this age, also, when he is accusing the saints before God. Only those born again ever see the kingdom of God; and "righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost"—wholly a separate thing from human arrangements and reforms! is the only form of the kingdom of God now.⁶¹

See [The Arrival of God's Kingdom](#)

strength . . . and power

[Δύναμις](#) [Dynamis] . . . [κα](#) [ξουσία](#) [kai hē exousia], better rendered *power . . . and authority*.⁶² [Ξουσία](#) [Exousia] in this context carries the idea of “Authority, absolute power, warrant . . . authority and commission.”⁶³

His Christ

An intentional allusion to the equivalent phrase from the [OT](#): “The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD and against **His Anointed**” [emphasis added] (Ps. 2:2). See commentary on [Revelation 11:15](#).

have come

[ἔγενετο](#) [egeneto], prophetic aorist. The kingdom does not arrive until the events of Revelation 19[±]. See [The Arrival of God's Kingdom](#). In the cutting off of Satan's access to heaven, the kingdom is now so near (Rev. 12:12[±]) as to be considered an accomplished fact.

the accuser of the brethren

[κατήγορον](#) [Ho katēgōr], present tense participle, *the one presently accusing*. Prior to his casting out, Satan was continuously active bringing charges against the elect. The term is used of bringing a legal charge before a judge, as in court.⁶⁴ He goes to and fro between this world and heaven as the “accuser of our brethren” (Rev. 12:10[±]). Yet even in his missions of slander and accusation, he is strictly limited (Job 1:6-12; Zec. 3:1-5; Luke 22:31).

Satan (along with the evil angels) has actively opposed both the holy angels and God's people since his fall. In the Old Testament, demons sought to hinder the ministry of the holy angels to Israel (cf. Dan. 10:12-13). In the present age, Satan “prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour” (1Pe. 5:8), opposes the spread of the gospel (Mat. 13:19, 37-39; Acts 13:10), oppresses individuals (Luke 13:10-16; Acts 10:38), and uses sin to disrupt and pollute the church (Acts 5:1-11). Believers are to be wary of his schemes (2Cor. 2:11), give him no opportunity (Eph. 4:27), and resist him (Jas. 4:7).⁶⁵

day and night

This phrase emphasizes the ongoing nature of his activity (Rev. 4:8[±]; 7:15[±]; 14:11[±]; 20:10[±]; 21:25[±]).

Revelation 12:11

they overcame

[Α το νικησαν](#) [Autoi enikēsan], *they, they overcame*. Emphasis is placed upon the redeemed who overcame Satan by God's work. They are among the true overcomers (Rev. 2:7[±], 11[±], 17[±], 26[±]; 3:5[±], 12[±], 21[±]; 17:14[±]; 21:7[±]). See [Who is the Overcomer?](#)

by the blood of the Lamb

Satan is able to accuse the brethren continually because the brethren continually sin (1Jn. 1:8). Thankfully, the one-time sacrifice of the Lamb of God justifies them eternally. Satan's accusations toward the believer are essentially made against the perfect righteousness of Christ. This is how “they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb.” In our initial appeal to Christ for salvation, His work on the cross takes into account all our sin, both past, present, *and future*. Our sin only affects our fellowship with Him, not our standing as a justified one (1Jn. 1:9). Once we come to faith, Satan now appeals to the Judge Who is also the Justifier (Rom. 8:33). Concerning *the blood*, see the commentary on [Revelation 1:5](#). Concerning *the Lamb*, see the commentary on [Revelation 5:6](#).

testimony

The rest of her offspring have the testimony of Jesus Christ (Rev. 12:17[±]).

they did not love their lives

They did not love is [ο κ αγαπησαν](#) [ouk ēgapēsan], which speaks of “love, especially of love as based on evaluation and choice, a matter of will and action.”⁶⁶ [αγαπω](#) [Agapaō] speaks not so much about altruism, but intensity. Jesus said the Pharisees *love* ([αγαπω](#) [agapaō]) the best seats in the synagogue (Luke 11:43). John wrote that men *loved* ([αγαπω](#) [agapaō]) darkness (John 3:19).⁶⁷ *Lives* is [ψυχην](#) [psychēn], also translated *souls* (see below). Among these are the ones “who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshiped the beast or his image, and had not received *his* mark on their foreheads or on their hands” (Rev. 20:4[±]). These are they “of whom the world was not worthy” (Heb. 11:38), which include the

martyrs of the fifth seal (Rev. 6:9[±]) and many coming out of the Great Tribulation who were martyred for their faith (Rev. 7:14[±]; 15:2[±]).

to the death

[ἄχρι θανάτου](#) [Achri thanatou], *until death*, the same phrase Jesus used when writing to the persecuted church at Smyrna (Rev. 2:10[±]). These overcomers followed His instructions and maintained their testimony *to the point of death* and obtained the “crown of life” (Rev. 2:10[±]). Their death was merely a gateway to the continuance of their eternal life—their souls were safe. They did not fear those who could only kill the body: “And do not fear those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul ([ψυχὴν](#) [psychēn]). But rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul ([ψυχὴν](#) [psychēn]) and body in hell” (Mat. 10:28).

Revelation 12:12

rejoice, O heavens and those who dwell in them

The inhabitants of the heavens rejoice because the accuser has been cast down and the faithful overcomers have prevailed even through death. Heaven and her peoples also rejoice over the fall of Babylon when God avenges them (Rev. 18:20[±]; 19:1-3[±]). Even the fields and woods are said to rejoice over the eventual redemption of Israel (Isa. 44:23) and the arrival of Messiah to judge the earth in righteousness (Ps. 96:11-13). *Dwell* is [σκηνοῦντες](#) [skēnountes], The same root word is used to describe how Jesus *dwelt* (tabernacled) among men in the flesh (John 1:14). The ones in heaven are no longer within reach of the [Beast](#) who blasphemes God’s [tabernacle](#) and those which *dwell* (tabernacle) in heaven (Rev. 13:6[±]). Those that *dwell* in the heavens include:

1. The elect angels.
2. The church which was “kept from the hour of testing” (Rev. 3:10[±]), having been taken in the [Rapture](#).
3. Those coming out of the Great Tribulation through death, over whom God spread his *tabernacle* (Rev. 6:9-10[±]; 7:14-15[±]).

Ultimately, God will *dwell* (tabernacle) among men (Rev. 21:3[±]). See [The Abiding Presence of God](#)

Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea

These are the [earth dwellers](#). They live in the same domain over which the mighty angel stood to declare the impending restoration of God’s dominion (Rev. 10:2[±]). Currently, it is the domain of Satan (Mat. 4:8-10; John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; 2Cor. 4:4).

having great wrath

Wrath is “[Ουμς](#) [Thymos], ‘Anger’ . . . a more turbulent word than [οργή](#) [orgē], ‘wrath.’”⁶⁸ These will live through a time of *double woe*. They will experience the woe of the final trumpet judgments of God (Rev. 8:13[±]; 9:12[±]; 11:14[±]) *combined with* this woe due to the great wrath of the devil. This is part of the testing which is to come upon those who dwell upon the earth. See commentary on [Revelation 3:20](#).

he knows that he has a short time

He knows is [εἶδώς](#) [eidōs], a perfect tense participle, *having known*. The emphasis is on the devil’s wrath at the time of being cast down which is based on his previous knowledge of limited time. *A short time* is [λίγον καιρῶν](#) [oligon kairon], denoting a *limited opportunity*. The intensity of his wrath reflects his desire to make the most of the short period which remains before he is bound and cast into the abyss (Rev. 20:1-3[±]). This corresponds to the pronouncement by the mighty angel that “there should be delay no longer, but in the days of the sounding of the seventh angel . . . the mystery of God would be finished” (Rev. 10:6-7[±]).

Revelation 12:13

cast to the earth

See commentary on [Revelation 9:9](#).

he persecuted

[διώξεν](#) [Eδιōxen], which can also be rendered: “Drive away, drive out, run after, pursue.”⁶⁹

the woman who gave birth to the male child

See commentary on [Revelation 12:2](#) and [Revelation 12:5](#).

Revelation 12:14

was given

Again, we see the sovereignty of God Who provides for her. See commentary concerning God's sovereignty at [Revelation 6:2](#).

two wings of a great eagle

This phrase speaks of supernatural assistance given by God in a time of human incapability. It describes God's deliverance of Israel from Egypt by the parting of the Red Sea: "You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and *how* I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself" (Ex. 19:4). It also connotes supernatural protection and provision, patterned after the way in which an eagle, when training a youngster to fly, pushes it out of the nest but also flies with it and catches it to bear it upwards again when needed.

He found him in a desert land and in the wasteland, a howling wilderness; He encircled him, He instructed him, He kept him as the apple of His eye. As an eagle stirs up its nest, hovers over its young, spreading out its wings, taking them up, carrying them on its wings, *so* the LORD alone led him, and *there was* no foreign god with him. He made him ride in the heights of the earth, that he might eat the produce of the fields; He made him draw honey from the rock, and oil from the flinty rock. (Deu. 32:10-13)

The woman will be given supernatural assistance in her flight as well as supernatural protection and provision en route and upon arrival at her destination. Her strength shall be renewed so that she will not succumb to natural weariness (Isa. 40:31). Supernatural intervention had protected the [Church](#) from the entire "hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world" (Rev. 3:10+). Here, supernatural intervention protects the woman *in the midst of* the last half of the hour when "the LORD comes out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity" (Isa. 26:20-21 cf. Zep. 2:1-3).

Fearfulness and trembling have come upon me, and horror has overwhelmed me. So I said, "Oh, that I had wings like a dove! I would fly away and be at rest. Indeed, I would wander far off, *and* remain in the wilderness. Selah I would hasten my escape from the windy storm *and* tempest." (Ps. 55:5-8)

fly into the wilderness to her place

It is *her place*: indicating a specific location set aside for her protection. It had been previously prepared by God. She will reside there during the last half of [The 70th Week of Daniel](#).

Judean Wilderness and Lisan Peninsula

[70](#)

The Lisan Peninsula separates the two basins of the Dead Sea at its narrowest point. This peninsula is a likely route from the Judean wilderness to Jordan, the area of Bozrah and Petra which some passages point to in relation to the preservation of a believing remnant and the Second Coming. See [Sheep in Bozrah](#).

where she is nourished

She is nourished is [τρέφεται](#) [trephetai], she is being "provided with food."⁷¹ The same term describes how "your heavenly Father feeds" the wild birds (Mat. 6:26; Luke 12:24). At the Sheep and Goat Judgment, it is the sheep who *fed* Jesus' "brothers" during their time of need. The term can also describe a place of nurturing (Luke 4:16). See commentary on [Revelation 12:6](#).

for a time and times and half a time

This period is also described as "one thousand two hundred and sixty days" (Rev. 12:6+). It describes the final half of [The 70th Week of Daniel](#). See commentary on [Revelation 12:6](#). See [Prophetic Year](#).

from the presence of the serpent

Presence is [προσώπου](#) [prosōpou], she is protected from the "face, countenance"⁷² of the serpent. This denotes his inability to access her. It is used "in all kinds of more or less symbolic expressions which, in large part, represent OT usage, and in which the face is often to be taken as the seat of the faculty of seeing."⁷³ She is *hidden* from his access, and possibly even from his knowledge.

Revelation 12:15

like a flood after the woman

Flood is [ποταμόν](#) [potamon], used to describe a large quantity of water, as during a natural disaster (Mat. 7:25; Luke 6:48; 2Cor. 11:26; Rev. 8:10⁺; 16:4⁺) or in great abundance (John 7:38; Rev. 22:1⁺). Since the origin of this flood is a *sign* (the mouth of the great dragon) and the text says *like a flood*, it is best to take this as a figure of speech denoting the overwhelming military force of an adversary (Ps. 65:7; 69:2-4; 124:1-5; Isa. 8:7; 59:19; Jer. 46:7-8; Dan. 9:26; 11:21-22). The dragon's pursuit of the woman may be a continuation of the [Beast's](#) invasion of the glorious land.⁷⁴ If so, the flight of the woman does not take place until after the abomination is set up (Mat. 24:15). Then, the invasion of the [Antichrist](#) continues in his pursuit of the woman.

Many commentators interpret Daniel 11:41 with reference to the occupation of the land of Palestine by the Beast. The event that causes the Beast to move in is the invasion of Palestine from the north by the King of the North (Dan. 11:40). The covenant made by the Beast (Dan. 9:27) has evidently guaranteed Israel an inviolate right to the land. Some event must be necessary to cause the Beast to abrogate his covenant. Since the covenant is said to be broken in the middle of the week (Dan. 9:27) and the invasion from the north is seen to be the cause of the breaking of the covenant (Dan. 11:41) it may be concluded that this invasion takes place in the middle of the week.⁷⁵

carried away by the flood

Carried away is [Ποταμοφόρητον](#) [Potamophorēton], which denotes drowning.⁷⁶ Satan desires to drown her with his flood, but God has plans to regenerate her with His living water (Eze. 36:25-27; John 7:38-39).

Revelation 12:16

the earth helped the woman

The earth itself is inanimate. This speaks of *God's help manifested through nature*, a common aspect of God's miraculous dealings with his people (Ex. 9:23-25; Jos. 10:11; Job 38:22-23; Isa. 11:15; Eze. 38:22). Perhaps the most dramatic example of the past is the parting of the Red Sea by an "unnatural" natural phenomenon: the east wind (Ex. 14:21).

the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood

Swallowed is [κατέπιεν](#) [katepien], a compound word meaning "drink down."⁷⁷ Previously, God used *the earth* to literally swallow Korah and his household. "So they and all those with them went down alive into the pit; the earth closed over them, and they perished from among the assembly" (Num. 16:33 cf. Num. 26:10; Ex. 15:12). It seems likely that something similar will occur to those who pursue the woman.

Revelation 12:17

he went to make war with the rest of her offspring who keep the commandments of God

This phrase is pregnant with anti-[Semitism](#). Although the woman now hides, representing the hidden Jewish remnant, the dragon turns to pursue *the rest of her offspring*. This should not be taken as *spiritual offspring* for the context of this chapter and the identification of the woman argue that her offspring are *physical descendants* of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This is the distinction which Paul maintains when he describes the time of Israel's spiritual restoration in preparation for the Millennial Kingdom (Rom. 11:25-26 cf. Eze. 37). It is inconsistent interpretation to make her offspring in the first portion of the chapter denote physical descendants (Jews) only and then take her offspring as spiritual descendants here. In reference to the woman's representation of Israel, some take her to be the faithful remnant within national Israel, the "Israel of God" (Gal. 6:16).⁷⁸ In this view, she represents the spiritually regenerate among the physical descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. This view encounters some difficulties:

- **Promised Redeemer** - The promise of a redeemer, so central to her identification in this chapter, was given to the physical seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. It did not depend upon a continuous line of God-believing Jews for its fulfillment, it was a *physical* development. Paul says that "the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises" were given to "my countrymen **according to the flesh**" [emphasis added] (Rom. 9:3-4). One of these promises was that national Israel would produce the Messiah, regardless of the spiritual condition of the Jews (Rom. 9:5).
- **Purpose of Persecution** - It would seem that one purpose of the time of [Jacob's Trouble](#) is found in the purging of unbelief from national Israel. If the woman represents only the faithful remnant, who among her is purged (Eze. 20:33-38; Hos. 2:14-17)?
- **Anti-Semitism** - Once we make the woman to be the faithful remnant within national Israel, it becomes difficult to explain the nature of anti-Semitism by what is revealed here. If the woman represents only faithful Jews and she is persecuted, then shouldn't faithful Jews be the main focus of anti-Semitism? Wouldn't Christian Jews be purged by the dragon while Orthodox

Jews remain relatively unscathed? Yet History reveals an even-handed persecution of the Jews, even where faith in Messiah Jesus is lacking. In some instances, such as the Crusades and the Inquisition, *lack of faith* in Messiah Jesus even brought *greater* persecution. This chapter explains the history of anti-Semitism—the persecution of Jews based on *physical descent*—better if the woman is national Israel. Even unbelieving Jews represent a dangerous potential for the dragon, for they carry forward God's promises to continue the physical nation and offer continued hope of the spiritual regeneration which Scripture promises (Jer. 31:34; Rom. 11:25-26).

This is not to say that taking the woman as national Israel is without its difficulties. For when she flees to the wilderness, not all Jews are in her midst. Here we encounter a problem similar to that of the [parables](#): they are meant to be illustrative, but if taken to a minute level of detail, they break down. Here, the woman represents the original promise to Eve of a redeemer, realized and carried forward through the nation of Israel up to the birth of Jesus by Mary. Beyond the birth and catching away, she represents national Israel in general up until the time of her flight. During the time of the end, a subset of the Jews in Judea flee to the wilderness, whereas others do not (the 144,000 of Revelation 7:4+ and Jews of the diaspora). At the point of her flight, she no longer represents all of national Israel for there will be numerous groups of Jews at the time of the end:

1. Jews protected in the wilderness, where God continues the work of purging idolatry from their midst (Hos. 2:14-17; Eze. 20:33-38).
2. The 144,000 Jews protected by God's seal, probably engaged in the work of worldwide evangelism (Rev. 7+, 14+).
3. Jews in the diaspora who come to faith during this time who are unable to reach the wilderness with the woman.
4. Jews in the diaspora who receive the [Antichrist](#) and his mark (John 5:43).

The *rest of her offspring* speaks of all Jews who did not flee to the wilderness—both believing and unbelieving. The phrase is further restricted to the offspring *who keep the commandments of God*. This indicates that *during the final half week* unbelieving Jews are not the *primary* object of the dragon's warfare—for they, like unbelieving Gentiles, will take his mark and give him due worship (Rev. 13:15-18+ cf. John 5:43).⁷⁹ It is *believing Jews* elsewhere around the world that are now his target. This will include the 144,000 of Israel who were sealed for protection (Rev. 7:4-8+). They are described as “ones who follow the Lamb wherever He goes,” which indicates they keep the commandments of God (Rev. 14:4+). Besides the specially sealed 144,000, there will be many other Jews who come to faith by their ministry and that of the two witnesses during the time of Jacob's Trouble. “These are scattered followers of the Lamb who did not reach the appointed place in the wilderness prepared for the main body of people symbolized by the woman.”⁸⁰ These are those Jesus referred to as “My brethren,” (Mat. 25:40) which were provided for by the “sheep” (righteous Gentiles) who are afforded entry into the [Millennial Kingdom](#) to follow.⁸¹ These Jews will be involved in evangelism, because they *have the testimony of Jesus Christ*.⁸² We are not saying that Gentile believers will not undergo persecution. Far from it! The many passages concerning the activities of the [Beast](#) and [his image](#), the [False Prophet](#), and the [Harlot](#) make it painfully clear that *all believers—be they Jewish or Gentile* will undergo extreme danger and persecution during this time (Rev. 6:9+; 7:14+; 20:4+). See [#20 - Saints](#). The wrath of the dragon has been building as he is frustrated at each of his attempts:

The dragon had to redirect his anger from the Son to the woman in Rev. 12:5+ when the Son escaped his clutches. That increased his rage. He lost his place in heaven in Rev. 12:8+, 9+, 12+, angering him even more. At this point the woman has escaped to a place of refuge leaving him only the woman's remaining seed to vent his fury on. The repeated frustration of his efforts explains the furious persecution the dragon proceeds to inflict on the faithful.⁸³

But it will be doubly difficult for the Jewish believers because God has revealed the uniquely Jewish terror of this time:

At that time Michael shall stand up, the great prince who stands *watch* over the sons of your people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, *even* to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered, every one who is found written in the book. (Dan. 12:1)

Alas! For that day *is* great, so that none *is* like it; and it *is* the time of Jacob's trouble, but he shall be saved out of it. (Jer. 30:7)

In the Holocaust under Hitler, one-third of the world's Jewish population died. Under the fierce persecution of the Antichrist, controlled and energized by Satan, two-thirds of the Jewish population will die [Zec. 13:7-9]. This will be the largest and most intense persecution of the Jews ever known in history.⁸⁴

Zechariah 13:8-9 indicates that only one-third of Israel will survive the tribulation and enter the millennium. This will result in an “all saved” Israel as prophesied by Romans 11:26. At the beginning of the last decade of the twentieth century there are approximately fifteen million Jews worldwide, so, if this is a guide, it suggests that about five million Jews will enter the millennium and ten million Jews will perish in the Great Tribulation.⁸⁵

However, the dragon will not succeed in his “ultimate solution.” As in the days of the Assyrian, God will protect a believing remnant:

And it shall come to pass in that day *That* the remnant of Israel, and such as have escaped of the house of Jacob, will never again depend on him who defeated them, but will depend on the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, in truth. The remnant will return, the remnant of Jacob, to the Mighty God. For though your people, O Israel, be as the sand of the sea, **A remnant of them will return**; the destruction decreed shall overflow with righteousness. For the Lord GOD of hosts will make a determined end in the midst of all the land. (Isa. 10:20-23) [emphasis added]

The dragon fights a battle he can never win, for God has sworn that Israel will continue before Him (Jer. 31:35-37). Her continued existence is also required in order to fulfill aspects of the Abrahamic, Land, Davidic, and New Covenants which have yet to find fulfillment.⁸⁶ By the end of [Jacob's time of trouble](#), the terms *Israel* and *Israel of God* (Gal. 6:16) will be synonymous for "all Israel will be saved" (Rom. 11:26). At that time, the *only Israel* will be a *believing Israel*:

No more shall every man teach his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, 'Know the LORD,' for they all shall know Me, from the least of them to the greatest of them, says the LORD. For I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more. (Jer. 31:34)

have the testimony of Jesus Christ

They have the testimony *provided by* Jesus Christ which they witness to others *concerning* Him. See commentary on [Revelation 1:1](#) and [Revelation 1:2](#).

Notes

¹J. A. Seiss, [The Apocalypse: Lectures on the Book of Revelation](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1966), Rev. 12:1.

²Elwood McQuaid, ed., [Israel My Glory](#) (Westville, NJ: Friends of Israel Gospel Ministry, September/October 2001), 34.

³John MacArthur, [Revelation 12-22: The MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#) (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 2000), Rev. 12:1.

⁴Monty S. Mills, [Revelations: An Exegetical Study of the Revelation to John](#) (Dallas, TX: 3E Ministries, 1987), Rev. 12:1.

⁵"Medieval scholastic theologians . . . looked for excuses to find Mary, the mother of Jesus, in unsuspecting places. They saw her in Revelation 12⁺, where they envisioned her incorruptibility and bodily transfiguration. Clothed with the sun, that woman, they said, is 'the transfigured mother of Christ.'"—Mal Couch, "[How Has Revelation Been Viewed Interpretively?](#)" in Mal Couch, ed., [A Bible Handbook to Revelation](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2001), 38. "The woman cannot mean, literally, the virgin mother of Jesus, for she did not flee into the wilderness and stay there for 1260 days, while the dragon persecuted the remnant of her seed."—A. R. Fausset, "[The Revelation of St. John the Divine.](#)" in Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset, and David Brown, [A Commentary, Critical and Explanatory, on the Old and New Testaments](#) (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 1997, 1877), Rev. 12:1.

⁶James Strong, [The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible](#) (Ontario: Woodside Bible Fellowship, 1996), H224.

⁷Concerning heaven and earth serving as witnesses: Gen. 1:1; Deu. 4:26; 30:19; 31:28; 32:1; Ps. 50:4; Isa. 1:2; Jer. 6:19; Jas. 5:12; Heb. 6:17.

⁸Note that Jacob interprets the moon as representing *Leah* rather than Rachel. Rachel was already dead. The dream was not fulfilled until much later in Egypt while Leah was presumably still alive (Gen. 44:14). Her death is not mentioned until later (Gen. 49:31). "Rachel died . . . giving birth to Benjamin . . . Leah, no doubt, raised Joseph and Benjamin. . . Clearly, [in Gen. 37:10] Jacob was referring to Leah."—McQuaid, [Israel My Glory](#), 34.

⁹Yet how fashionable it is in our day for seemingly highly educated Christian theologians to dismiss all possibility that Genesis 3:15 speaks of the promised redeemer. They denounce the *protevangelium* (first gospel), almost as if in concert with Judaism they seek to deny the unity of both NT and OT. They would do well to reconsider the words of Jesus (Luke 24:27, 44; John 5:39, 46).

¹⁰An odd phrase for an offspring in a Jewish genealogy, which hints at His virgin origin.

¹¹Arnold Fruchtenbaum discusses evidence that Eve expected the promised redeemer in Cain: "Literal translation: 'I have gotten a man: Jehovah'. The common English translation is not based on the Hebrew text but on the Greek *Septuagint* which reads 'through God.' This was followed by the *Latin Vulgate* which also reads 'through God.' The *Jerusalem Targum*, an Aramaic translation, reads 'I have gotten a man: the angel of Jehovah.' The rabbis also gave a reading here which is much closer to the original Hebrew text. The *Targum Pseudo-Jonathan* reads, 'I have gotten for a man the angel of the Lord.' Another Aramaic translation is the *Targum Onqelos* which says 'from before the Lord.' The *Midrash Rabbah* (on Gen. 22:2), the rabbinic commentary, says of Gen. 4:1 'with the

help of the Lord.' Rabbi Ishmael asked Rabbi Akiba, 'Since you have served Nahum of Gimzo for 22 years and he taught that every ach and rach is a limitation but every et and gam is an extension, tell me what is the purpose of the et here.' He replied, 'if it is said "I have gotten a man: the Lord" it would have been difficult to interpret, hence et "with the help of the Lord" is required.' The footnote on page 181 of this Midrash says 'it might imply that she had begotten the Lord.' The rabbis clearly understood the implications of the construction and so had to make the necessary adjustments in their translation."—Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, [Messianic Christology](#) (Tustin, CA: Ariel Ministries, 1998), 16.

¹²Merrill F. Unger, [Unger's Commentary on the Old Testament](#) (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 2002), Isa. 66:7-9.

¹³Jerry Falwell, Edward D. Hindson, and Michael Woodrow Kroll, eds., [KJV Bible Commentary](#) (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1997, c1994), Isa. 66:5-9.

¹⁴William R. Newell, [Revelation: Chapter by Chapter](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1994,c1935), Rev. 12:1.

¹⁵Seiss, [The Apocalypse: Lectures on the Book of Revelation](#), Rev. 12:3.

¹⁶Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, [The Footsteps of Messiah](#), rev ed (Tustin, CA: Ariel Ministries, 2003), 246-247.

¹⁷M. R. Vincent, [Vincent's Word Studies](#) (Escondido, CA: Ephesians Four Group, 2002), Rev. 12:4.

¹⁸John F. Walvoord, [The Revelation of Jesus Christ](#) (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1966), Rev. 12:3.

¹⁹Albrecht Durer (1471 - 1528). Image courtesy of the [Connecticut College Wetmore Print Collection](#). This woodcut does not accurately portray all that is taught concerning the dragon and its horns. The ten horns should all appear on only one of its head—the head representing the final kingdom. See [Beasts, Heads, and Horns](#).

²⁰Robert L. Thomas, [Revelation 8-22](#) (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1995), Rev. 12:3.

²¹Frederick William Danker and Walter Bauer, [A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature](#) (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 794.

²²Timothy Friberg, Barbara Friberg, and Neva F. Miller, [Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2000), 379.

²³"Seeking to produce a mongrel, half-human half-demon and thus unredeemable race of men, Satan sent demons ('sons of God'; the same Hebrew phrase refers to angels in Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7; Ps. 29:1; 89:6) to cohabit with human women (Gen. 6:1-4)."—MacArthur, [Revelation 12-22 : The MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#), Rev. 12:4.

²⁴Thomas, [Revelation 8-22](#), Rev. 12:4.

²⁵Danker, [A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature](#) 683.

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷Jerome Smith, [The New Treasury of Scripture Knowledge](#) (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1992), Rev. 12:5.

²⁸Danker, [A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature](#) 109.

²⁹"The flight of the woman may in part reflect the escape of the Palestinian church to Pella at the outbreak of the Jewishwar in A.D. 66 (Eusebius, *hist. Eccl.* iii.5; cf. Mark 13:14)."—Robert H. Mounce, [The Book of Revelation](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1977), Rev. 12:6.

³⁰Alva J. McClain, [The Greatness Of The Kingdom](#) (Winona Lake, IN: BMH Books, 1959), 136-137.

³¹Walter Scott, [Exposition of The Revelation](#) (London, England: Pickering & Inglis, n.d.), 258.

³²Mills, [Revelations: An Exegetical Study of the Revelation to John](#) Rev. 12:6.

³³Unger, [Unger's Commentary on the Old Testament](#), Zec. 13:8.

³⁴MacArthur, [Revelation 12-22 : The MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#), Rev. 12:13.

³⁵Henry Morris, [The Revelation Record](#) (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 1983), Rev. 12:6.

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³⁷E. W. Bullinger, [Commentary On Revelation](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1984, 1935), Rev. 12:16.

³⁸They perish to join the ranks of the second resurrection who remain in Hades for the duration of the Millennial Kingdom only to be resurrected for judgment at the Great White Throne and subsequent condemnation in the Lake of Fire (Rev. 20:11-15[±]).

³⁹Thomas, [Revelation 8-22](#), Rev. 12:14.

⁴⁰Unger, [Unger's Commentary on the Old Testament](#), Isa. 15:4.

⁴¹[Ibid., Isa. 16:1.] "Selah is generally supposed to be the same as Petra, which in Greek signifies a rock, the celebrated capital of Arabia Petraea."—Smith, [The New Treasury of Scripture Knowledge](#), 2K. 14:7.

⁴²"The passage [Dan. 11:41] states that while Antichrist will conquer the whole world, there nations will escape his domination: Edom, Moab, and Ammon. All three of these ancient nations currently comprise the single modern kingdom of Jordan."—Fruchtenbaum, [The Footsteps of Messiah](#), 297.

⁴³Image courtesy of the [Perry-Castañeda Library Map Collection](#), University of Texas at Austin. [www.lib.utexas.edu/maps]

⁴⁴Ulrich Hart and HÜbner, "[Bozrah in Edom.](#)" in David Noel Freeman, ed., [The Anchor Bible Dictionary](#) (New York, NY: Doubleday, 1996, c1992), 1:774.

⁴⁵Unger, [Unger's Commentary on the Old Testament](#), Hab. 3:3-7.

⁴⁶Ibid., Ps. 60:9.

⁴⁷Fruchtenbaum, [The Footsteps of Messiah](#), 296-297.

⁴⁸Unger, [Unger's Commentary on the Old Testament](#), Mic. 2:12-13.

⁴⁹The difficulty and risk of their actions at the time of the end are a demonstration of their faith.

⁵⁰It is provocative to consider some of the parallels between the temptation of Jesus and the testing of the Jewish remnant at the time of the end: Jesus is the Son of God (Mat. 4:3), the Jewish remnant is the son of God (Hos. 11:1; Mat. 2:15). Jesus is led to the wilderness by the Holy Spirit (Mat. 4:1), the Jewish remnant is led to the wilderness by God (Hos. 2:14). Jesus is tempted to worship Satan (Mat. 4:9), the Jewish remnant is tempted to worship Satan (Rev. 13:4[±] cf. John 5:43). Jesus refuses Satan's kingdom in favor of the kingdom of God (Mat. 4:10), the Jewish remnant refuses Satan's kingdom in favor of the Millennial Kingdom (Hos. 2:18; Isa. 16:1-5). Jesus is fed by God (Mat. 4:11), the Jewish is remnant fed by God (Rev. 12:6[±]). Jesus is tempted to command that stones become bread (Mat. 4:3), in the midst of the rock city (Sela, Isa. 16:1; 42:11) the Jewish Remnant finds bread (Rev. 12:6[±]), much in the same way their fathers were fed upon fleeing Egypt (Deu. 8:16 cf. Rev. 2:17[±]). During the time of Jesus' testing, Satan brings Jesus to the pinnacle (wing) of the Temple. During the time of testing of the Jewish remnant, Satan empowers Antichrist's abomination on the wing of the Temple (Dan. 9:27). (Commentators differ as to whether "wing" (Dan. 9:27, NKJV, NASB) refers to a physical location within the Temple. Nevertheless, Jesus and Paul make plain the abomination will involve a desecrating authority over the Temple (Mat. 24:15; Mark 13:14; 2Th. 2:4).)

⁵¹"Satan knows that once Messiah returns, his freedom ends. Satan also knows that Jesus will not come back until the Jewish leaders ask Him to come back. So if Satan can succeed in destroying the Jews once and for all before they come to national repentance, then Jesus will not come back and Satan's career is eternally safe."—Fruchtenbaum, [The Footsteps of Messiah](#), 311-312.

⁵²Unger, [Unger's Commentary on the Old Testament](#), Hos. 5:15-6:2.

⁵³Friberg, [Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament](#), 321.

⁵⁴Although Scripture does not say, perhaps it was Michael who protected Daniel while in the lion's den (Dan. 6:22)?

⁵⁵Morris, [The Revelation Record](#), Rev. 12:8.

⁵⁶Albrecht Durer (1471 - 1528). Image courtesy of the [Connecticut College Wetmore Print Collection](#).

⁵⁷Scott, [Exposition of The Revelation](#), Rev. 12:7.

⁵⁸Thomas, [Revelation 8-22](#), 12:9.

⁵⁹Danker, [A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature](#) 561.

⁶⁰Morris, [The Revelation Record](#), Rev. 12:9.

⁶¹Newell, [Revelation: Chapter by Chapter](#), Rev. 12:10.

⁶²NASB.

⁶³Danker, [A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature](#) 278.

⁶⁴Ibid., 423.

⁶⁵MacArthur, [Revelation 12-22 : The MacArthur New Testament Commentary](#), Rev. 12:7.

⁶⁶Friberg, [Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament](#), 30.

⁶⁷For other negative uses of [ἄγαπᾶω](#) [agapaō], see John 12:43 and 2Pe. 2:15.

⁶⁸Vincent, [Vincent's Word Studies](#), Rev. 12:12.

⁶⁹Danker, [A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature](#) 201.

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⁷¹Ibid., 825.

⁷²Ibid., 720.

⁷³Ibid.

⁷⁴"This invasion of Israel sent by Satan was described in Daniel 11:41 as: *He shall enter also into the glorious land* This is the same invasion spoken of in Revelation 11:1-2+ by which the Antichrist will succeed in taking control of both Jerusalem and the Temple and will commit the Abomination of Desolation."—Fruchtenbaum, [The Footsteps of Messiah](#), 267.

⁷⁵J. Dwight Pentecost, [Things to Come: A Study in Biblical Eschatology](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1958), 352.

⁷⁶Danker, [A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature](#) 694.

⁷⁷Ibid., 416.

⁷⁸Morris, [The Revelation Record](#), Rev. 12:1.

⁷⁹It is unclear whether the acceptance of the mark by some Jews will guarantee their survival under the Beast. Isaiah describes a "covenant with death" which God annuls: "When the overflowing scourge passes through, then you will be trampled down by it" (Isa. 28:15-18). Perhaps the rage of the dragon will be so great against the Jews that the Beast will make an exception and exterminate even those Jews who take his mark.

⁸⁰Thomas, [Revelation 8-22](#), Rev. 12:17.

⁸¹Those who take "My brethren" as denoting the family of faith face the difficulty of explaining who the sheep are? If His brothers are both Jews and Gentiles in the faith, then how can the sheep be separate from them and yet also inherit the kingdom? The actions of the sheep and their reward of entry to the kingdom demonstrate them to be among the saved. The differentiation between Jesus' brothers and the sheep cannot be based upon spiritual regeneration, but must reflect a national Jew/Gentile distinction concerning persecution at the time of the end.

⁸²Pentecost, [Things to Come: A Study in Biblical Eschatology](#), 297.

⁸³Thomas, [Revelation 8-22](#), Rev. 12:17.

⁸⁴Fruchtenbaum, [The Footsteps of Messiah](#), 289.

⁸⁵Mills, [Revelations: An Exegetical Study of the Revelation to John](#) Rev. 12:15.

⁸⁶Pentecost, [Things to Come: A Study in Biblical Eschatology](#), 291-292.

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Revelation 12:11 - **ILLUSTRATION** of "they did not love their life even when faced with death" - THE UNDERGROUND CHURCH IN NORTH KOREA - adapted from report by Jan Vermeer

The inspired writer of the book of Hebrews says that everything was put in subjection under Jesus Christ (Hebrews 2:8). Does His supremacy actually show in this country full of idols, hunger and death camps? The North Korean Church consists of between 200-400,000 members. Fiercely persecuted, all of them hide their beliefs from the authorities. The church is truly an underground church, divided into thousands of small networks and cell groups. Most Christians hardly know other Christians outside their families. In case of an arrest, not many other Christians are in danger. The most visible proof of their faith is the possession of a Bible, which is illegal and punishable by death. Probably nowhere else in the world are so many copies of God's Word literally hidden underground. But the church is definitely growing. Many Christians keep their faith secret and are surviving. [Open Doors](#) is able to support almost 60,000 Christians with Bibles, books, training, food, clothes and medicines. Yet it is the individual tragedies that make it difficult to see with spiritual eyes that Jesus Christ is supreme even in North Korea. For example, a middle aged man was arrested after the police found a Bible in his home. He was terribly beaten in prison, as we learn from released prisoners who witnessed it. "His face is deformed. He told us he is certain he will die." How can Christ be supreme if one of his disciples is tortured so severely? "I've known this man for a long time," says a Christian friend of the prisoner. "**When he came to faith, he made the decision that one day he would die for Christ. Every Christian in North Korea has made that choice. Every Christian in my country has the spirit of martyrdom in him. If you lose that spirit for one second, you cannot carry the burden of being a follower of Jesus. My friend knew that one day he could get caught and on that day he had to be steadfast in the faith and loyal to Jesus. I am convinced he can take the suffering because he constantly reminds himself of the joy that is set before him.**" The suffering North Korean Christians reveal Christ's supremacy because they look at the reward (Heb 11:26): Jesus Christ Himself. He is our Treasure (Col 2:3). He calls us to Himself, to suffer outside the gate and bear the reproach He endured (Hebrews 13:12-14). The kingdom of dictators like Kim in North Korea is limited in size and time. The Kingdom of our Lord is eternal and will come with power and crush all kingdoms like Kims!