

Rev. 12:1 And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars:

Rev. 12:2 And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.

This chapter opens with another one of those foundational visions that are meant to provide better understanding of what is to follow (similar to what is done in chapter 4). It is a summary of primary events that precede Satan being cast out of heaven. This vision will make perfect sense to the Jewish people whose hearts soften and are receptive to the teaching of God's tribulation witnesses. The key to this vision is found in the Old Testament record of a dream of Joseph.

First John sees a woman clothed with the sun, the moon is under her feet, and she is wearing a crown of 12 stars. We know that Jacob is the father of the twelve tribes of Israel, and his son, Joseph, had a dream that is recorded in Genesis that relates to these verses in Revelation.

Genesis 37:9 And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and, behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me.

The sun, moon and eleven stars are representative of Joseph's parents and brothers. The woman represents the nation of Israel, the Jews, who suffered much in preparation for the birth of the Messiah, Jesus. The prophet Isaiah uses the same analogy of the nation of Israel giving birth to a man child.

Isaiah 66:7-8 Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child. Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children.

Rev. 12:3 And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads.

Rev. 12:4 And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.

The next thing John sees is a great (big and strong) red dragon with 7 heads and 10 horns, and he is wearing a crown on each of his 7 heads. Other passages with reference to this description include Daniel 7:7, Rev. 13:1, and 17:3, 7, 12, 16.

Daniel 7:7 After this I saw in the night visions, and behold a fourth beast, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it was diverse from all the beasts that were before it; and it had **ten horns**.

The tail of the dragon sweeps away or draws with him 1/3 of the stars of heaven and casts them to the earth. I believe this is referring to 1/3 of the angels that were in heaven when he chose to rebel against God. I believe this is supported in the following verses (see verse 7). This is the only place in scripture that we are given an indication of the number of angels that rebelled with Satan.

The dragon does everything he can to prevent the birth of the child, Jesus the Messiah—such as Herod’s massacre of the infants of Bethlehem as recorded in Matthew 2—and prevent Him from accomplishing God’s plan of redemption.

Rev. 12:5 *And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.*

The woman, Israel, brought forth a man child who will rule the nations with a rod of iron and is caught up to the throne of God—Jesus. (see **Rev. 2:27, 19:15**, and the following verses)

Psalm 2:6-9 *Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a **rod of iron**; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.*

Psalm 110:1 *The LORD said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool.*

Colossians 3:1 *If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God.*

Hebrews 12:2 *Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

Rev. 12:6 *And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days.*

At this point in the vision John sees the Jewish remnant fleeing (run away, escape) into the wilderness to a special place that God has prepared for her at the time when Satan is cast out of heaven forever and wants to take out his anger to the extreme on the Jewish people. Those who flee to this special place will be fed there for 1,260 days, or 3.5 years. The word for “feed” implies “to pamper, cherish, nourish.” Notice that the place is prepared by **God**, and **they** feed her.

This brings to mind some verses in Matthew.

Matthew 24:15-16 *When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains:*

I've often heard that the place God will use is Petra, a place in current day Jordan, which is both in the wilderness and the mountains. One verse that gives support to that thought is in Isaiah.

***Isaiah 63:1**—Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.*

Why would the Lord be coming from Bozrah (in Edom; Petra was the capital of Edom) if He had not been protecting and rescuing His people there?

I also found a note in my Bible to look at Isaiah 16:1-4.

***Isaiah 16:1-4** Send ye the lamb to the ruler of the land from Sela to the wilderness, unto the mount of the daughter of Zion. For it shall be, that, as a wandering bird cast out of the nest, so the daughters of Moab shall be at the fords of Arnon. Take counsel, execute judgment; make thy shadow as the night in the midst of the noonday; hide the outcasts; bewray not him that wandereth. Let mine outcasts dwell with thee, Moab; be thou a covert to them from the face of the spoiler: for the extortioner is at an end, the spoiler ceaseth, the oppressors are consumed out of the land.*

It seems that the Moabites were being asked to provide asylum for God's people in Sela (rock city of Idumea, Petra)—"let mine outcasts dwell with thee." These two sections of Isaiah are at least suggestive.

Daniel tells us that the antichrist is not allowed to overthrow Jordan.

***Daniel 11:41** "He shall enter also into the glorious land, and many countries shall be overthrown: but these shall escape out of his hand, even Edom, and Moab, and the chief of the children of Ammon."*

Note: The lands of Edom, Moab and Ammon were located in what is today known as Jordan.

Rev. 12:7 And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels,
Rev. 12:8 And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven.
Rev. 12:9 And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

At this point there is a great war in heaven. Michael (the warrior angel associated with the protection of the nation of Israel) and his angels fight against the dragon and his angels.

***Daniel 12:1** And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book.*

Michael and his angels are victorious, and the great dragon, the old serpent, called the Devil (false accuser, slanderer), and Satan (accuser), the deceiver of the world, is defeated. He and his angels are cast out of the heavens to the earth. This verse identifies the dragon in no uncertain terms.

Rev. 12:10 And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.

Rejoicing is heard in heaven at the approach of the reign of the kingdom of God on earth. The creation will be saved/delivered, and God's strength will be made manifest. Satan is the accuser. Who is he accusing? The brethren—believers—those who trust Jesus as their Savior. He is so diligent at his task that he accuses them before God “day and night.” The word for *accuser* is interesting; it indicates “a complainant at law, especially Satan.” Satan is trying to attack us from the point of law, and God is looking at us through the blood of His Son, Jesus, and all He sees is righteousness. Satan has had access all this time to present himself before the Lord and make his accusations (e.g., **Job 1:6**), but that access has now come to an end.

Job 1:6-7 Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them. And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it.....which leads to.....

1Peter 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

Rev. 12:11 And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.

The men and women of faith defeated the attacks of the enemy through the covering of the blood of Jesus, through the boldness of their testimony (their declaration of the power of God in their lives by the way they lived), and through complete trust in the provision of the Savior—so much so that they were willing to die for their faith. They were confident of the hope within them.

Philippians 1:20 According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death.

Rev. 12:12 Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.

Those in heaven are encouraged to rejoice because the fulfillment of God's promise to His Son is at hand. Grief is expressed for those on earth and in the

sea. Why? Because the devil/Satan is come down unto you with great wrath (passion, fierceness/indignation). Why is he so intense? Because he knows that he only has a short time left as the god of this world. I often wonder if he actually thinks he has a chance in this war against God. Maybe this is the first time he will actually understand that he is beaten, and he is determined to do as much damage as he can before it's over.

Rev. 12:13 And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man *child*.

Once Satan is banished to earth, he begins a major persecution of the Jews, the nation that birthed the Christ.

Rev. 12:14 And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.

A remnant of the Jewish nation will be nourished / cherished / pampered for 3.5 years in the place prepared by God (**Rev. 12:6**). I have heard it taught that the eagle is a possible reference to the United States, but I don't buy it. God's protection of the Jewish nation is often compared to an eagle.

Exodus 19:4 Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself.

Deuteronomy 32:9-12 For the LORD'S portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye. As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: So the LORD alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him.

I think verse 14 is a reference to action taken regarding the warning given in Matthew and those who escape become part of the refined remnant of the Jewish people about which Zechariah prophesied.

Matthew 24:15-16 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:) Then let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains.

Zechariah 13:9 And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The LORD is my God.

Rev. 12:15 And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood.

John continues to call Satan by the various names identified with him in verse 9. This time he is a serpent who is trying to prevent the Jews from reaching their

haven in the wilderness safely. Maybe he is able to cause an actual flood by diverting the waters of some river, or breaking a dam or something. Then again I am reminded that he has been given temporary ability to perform miracles and has already proven his ability to manipulate the forces of nature (e.g., regarding Job).

Rev. 12:16 And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.

Whatever he uses, he will be prevented by something miraculous that happens with nature or through the assistance of the people of the land to where the Jews are fleeing. The word for “earth” includes the inhabitants as well as the land.

There is an interesting Psalm for meditation with possible prophetic reference to this verse.

***Psalm 124:1-8** If it had not been the LORD who was on our side, now may Israel say; If it had not been the LORD who was on our side, when men rose up against us: Then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us: Then the waters had overwhelmed us, the stream had gone over our soul: Then the proud waters had gone over our soul. Blessed be the LORD, who hath not given us as a prey to their teeth. Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowlers: the snare is broken, and we are escaped. Our help is in the name of the LORD, who made heaven and earth.*

Rev. 12:17 And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Satan is really angry when he fails to prevent the safe escape of the Jews. Now he turns to the remnant of her seed who keep the commandments of God. Note that they are keeping the commandments and declaring the testimony / witness / truth of Jesus Christ—just as we should be doing today. For some reason we seem to think we can ignore the commandments of God and just embrace the message of love and grace of Jesus. Those who operate with this outlook are ignoring a good portion of God’s word. I believe that the Word teaches that our actions prove our faith.

***John 14:15** If ye love me, keep my commandments.*

***John 15:10** If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father’s commandments, and abide in his love.*

***James 2: 14-17** - What good is it, my brothers, if a man claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save him? Suppose a brother or sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to him, ‘Go, I wish you well; keep warm and well fed,’ but does nothing about his physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead.*

***Matthew 7:17-21** - Every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. Every tree that*

does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them. Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven.

It's also interesting that God is always preserving a remnant of His people until the time they turn to Him in repentance and recognition of the Messiah. This is important in fulfilling His promise to Abraham.

Genesis 17:7-8 – *And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.*

2Kings 19:30 *And the **remnant** that is escaped of the house of Judah shall yet again take root downward, and bear fruit upward.*

Isaiah 1:9 *Except the LORD of hosts had left unto us a very small **remnant**, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah.*

Isaiah 10:21 *The **remnant** shall return, even the **remnant** of Jacob, unto the mighty God.*

Isaiah 11:11 *And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall set his hand again the second time to recover the **remnant** of his people, which shall be left, from Assyria, and from Egypt, and from Pathros, and from Cush, and from Elam, and from Shinar, and from Hamath, and from the islands of the sea.*

Isaiah 65:9 *And I will bring forth a seed out of Jacob, and out of Judah an inheritor of my mountains: and mine elect shall inherit it, and my servants shall dwell there.*

Jeremiah 23:3 *And I will gather the **remnant** of my flock out of all countries whither I have driven them, and will bring them again to their folds; and they shall be fruitful and increase.*

Zechariah 8:12 *For the seed shall be prosperous; the vine shall give her fruit, and the ground shall give her increase, and the heavens shall give their dew; and I will cause the **remnant** of this people to possess all these things.*

Romans 11:5 *Even so then at this present time also there is a **remnant** according to the election of grace.*