

Chapter 12

The Woman, Man-child, and Dragon

- The 7th Trumpet, of ch.11, takes us through the Great Tribulation and Millennium, with much of the detail omitted. Beginning with ch.12, we go back to the middle of the 7-year tribulation and follow some of the events which are to take place during the last 3 1/2 years.
- 'There appeared a great wonder in heaven' (v.1). Wonder: 'sign' or 'symbol'. **Note**: John is in heaven, and what he sees is taking place in the heavens and on earth.

I. The first 'wonder': A Woman. **Note**: Many consider the 'identification' of this woman to be the most important 'key' to the understanding of the Revelation. 'To fail to properly interpret this 'sign' would be like taking the wrong road at the beginning of a journey. It would lead to a succession of errors' (G. Lindsey).

- Who is she? Lots of opinions:
 - A. Roman Catholicism, along with some evangelical leaders, have her to be the Virgin Mary. And the man-child to be Christ.
 - B. The 'Church' (All who profess to be Christians). Man-child to be the 'True Church'.
 - C. Old Testament believers. Man-child, the New Testament Church.
 - D. The 'Church of all ages'. (G. Lindsey & others)
 - E. Haley believes the 'woman' represents Israel up to v.5, and then represents the Church from v.6 onward.
 - F. Mary Baker Eddy (Founder of Christian Science), modestly conceived the idea that she was the one pictured here.
 - G. Amy McPhearson (Founder of Church of the Foursquare and a well-known lady minister of California), toyed with the idea that she might be this woman.
 - H. Joanna Southcott said she was the woman of Rev.12; and in October 1814, she would give birth to the man child. This event never took place, yet her followers numbered as many as 200,000 in the 19th century.
- The Woman is Nation of Israel. (Believed by many, including me.)
 - A. At the middle of Daniel's 70th Week (Tribulation), when the woman travails and brings forth a man child, the Church has been gone from the earth for at least 3 1/2 years. **Note**: The Bible mentions only three classes of people: Church, Jew, and Gentile (I Cor.10:32). Since the Church is gone at this time (raptured), it leaves only Jew and Gentile. Therefore, the woman could not symbolize the Gentiles, because they are the ones persecuting the woman.
 - B. The entire 70th week of Daniel (Dan. 9:24-27) has to do, primarily, with Israel and Jerusalem, as did the first 69 weeks. **Note**: The Church is not once mentioned in connection with these last-day events on earth.
 - C. Clothed with the sun, etc. These are 'identifying marks' of the woman, all of which belong to Israel, as seen in Joseph's dream (Gen.37:9,10).
 - D. 'Travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered' (v.2). A figure used in Israel. (Isa.66:7,8; Jer.30:1-11).

II. Another Wonder in Heaven - A Great Red Dragon (v.3).

- We are not left to speculate as to who this is. Verse 9 tells us this is 'That old serpent', 'the Devil', 'Satan' (the deceiver of the whole world).
 - A. 'Great' because of the vast power given him.
 - B. 'Red' - denoting bloodshed. A 'murderer' from the beginning (Jn.8:44).
 - C. 'Dragon' - the viciousness of his character.
 - D. 'Seven heads' - Symbolizes the 7 world empires that precede the kingdom of Antichrist, which is the 8th. (Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome, Revived Rome)
Note: Satan is the 'Prince of this world', and 'Prince of the powers of the air'.
 - E. 'Ten horns, Seven crowns' (13:1). **Notice:** The dragon's 10 horns are not crowned, while those of the beast of Rev.13 are crowned - this symbolizing Satan's power over these 10 kingdoms will be given to the beast (Antichrist). The dragon's 7 heads are crowned (12:3), symbolizing his rule over the 7 kingdoms preceding the Antichrist kingdom, which is the 8th (17:8-11).
 - F. Third part of stars in heaven. Angels are spoken of as 'stars' in Old Testament (Job 38:7). 'These angelic beings will be cast, with Satan, into the earth - symbolic of the third of God's angels that rebelled with Lucifer, and shows how many will be with him in the future war in the heavens under the 7th Trumpet' (Dake). 'This may refer to the original fall of Satan from heaven and the angels who fell with him' (F. Life Study Bible) (**I disagree.**)
 - G. Stood before the woman to devour her child (v.4). This is the dragon's 'first purpose', to destroy the man-child as soon as it comes into existence. **Note:** It is interesting to study the Bible record of how Satan has tried to disrupt God's Plan for saving mankind.
 - a. Satan tempted Eve to disobey God. Adam and Eve fell.
 - b. After God promised 'the seed of the woman' would one day prevail over evil, Satan tried to stop it by having Cain murder Abel, the godly seed.
 - c. In Gen.6, Satan polluted the human race by having the godly and ungodly coming together.
 - d. Satan tried to destroy the Hebrew nation in Egypt.
 - e. Satan put into the heart of wicked Haman to kill all Jews (Esther 3)
 - f. After Jesus was born, Herod gave a decree that all Jewish baby boys were to be killed.
 - g. Storm on Sea of Galilee is believed by many to have been caused by Satan in hopes it would bring an end to the life of Christ.
 - h. Several attempts to throw Christ over a cliff. And the list goes on.

III. 'And she brought forth a man child' (v.5).

- A. 'If the woman is the visible professing Church, this man-child is the invisible, or true church' (Seiss). But this can't be. The Church is raptured in Rev.4, some 3 1/2 years earlier.
- B. If the woman is the Virgin Mary, the man-child is Jesus. But this is some 2000 years after Mary and the birth of Jesus. **Note:** To understand the Revelation, we must realize that everything that follows after Rev.4:1 (which speaks of the 'rapture of the church') takes place after the church is gone.
- C. Who is this man-child?
 - a. Alford says, 'The man-child is the Lord Jesus Christ, and none else'.
 - b. Rice says, 'Verse 5 takes in, in one sweep, the birth of Christ, His life, and, His ascension into heaven'.
 - c. Larkin says, 'This man-child is Christ because he was caught up unto God, and to his throne'. He also believes the 'Church Age' (ascension of Christ until the rapture) comes between the 5th and 6th verses of this chapter.

- d. McGee says, 'Who is to shepherd (rule) all nations with a rod of iron is a clear-cut reference to Christ'.
 - e. G. Lindsey says, 'this man-child company is the 'over-comers', the 'first-fruits'. Christ is the first of the First-fruits, and may be considered the first of the Man child company, but not the whole company'.
 - f. Scofield, F. Life Study Bible, and scores of others believe the man-child to be Christ. (I disagree, whole-heartedly.)
- D. The man-child is the 144,000 sealed Jews.
- a. The 'woman' is Israel', therefore, the child is Jewish.
 - b. The woman represents a company of people - therefore the child must represent a company.
 - c. The time of the 'rapture of the man-child' proves him to be none other than the 144,000. They are seen in heaven immediately (Rev.14:1). This fits perfectly with all the other events of the book.
- Note:** If saved and ready for the rapture of the church you will not be a part of the 144,000, but will be with the Lord while all in chapter 12 is taking place. Are you ready?

War in heaven - Persecution of Israel

- Being frustrated in his attempt to destroy the man-child, the dragon turns on the woman, who brought forth the man-child, and bitterly persecutes her.

I. Woman flees into the wilderness - 1260 days.

- A. Isa.16:1-5 predicts the flight of Israel into Moab and Edom, and mentions Sela (Petra), the ancient capital of Edom as their headquarters during last half of tribulation.
- B. Isa.26:20,21 predicts the protection of Israel until the indignation (tribulation) be past.
- C. Ps.60:6-12; 108:8-13 predict that God will reserve Edom from the Antichrist, and refers to the leading of Israel unto the strong city (Sela, or Petra).
- D. Feed her there 1260 days.
 - a. Some believe this means the Gentiles of that locale will take care of the nation Israel for this 3 1/2 years. **(I disagree.)**
 - b. Others believe that God, once again, will supernaturally feed His people (manna, water, etc.) as He did during their 40 year stay in the wilderness with Moses.
 - c. This 1260 days is the last 3 1/2 years of Daniel's 70th week (Great Tribulation).

II. War in heaven (heavenlies). Michael and his angels versus Dragon and his angels.

- A. Michael, according to Jewish teaching, is one of 7 Archangels, and the chief of the seven (Seiss). He is called the Archangel in Jude 9 - having angels under his command. **Note:** There is no record in the Bible of there being 7 Archangels, but is mentioned in the Apocrypha.
- B. Dragon (Satan - v.9), with his angels, goes to war.
 - a. Satan has been successful in the past, both in heaven (with angels) and on earth (with the human race). Here, his daring is so unbounded he doesn't hesitate to believe he can break the decree of Almighty God. So, he gives it a try. But He Fails!!
 - b. He is cast out of heaven (v.9).

- This is not speaking of the time Satan was cast out of heaven mentioned in Isa.14:12-20, but refers to a time during the tribulation when he is cast out of the atmospheric heavens, no longer to be the 'Prince of the powers of the air'.
 - 'For some reason Satan is allowed to approach God to accuse Christians as he did in the case of Job (Job1:6-12; 2:1-8)' (Rice).
 - Eph.6:12 says, 'For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places (in the heavenlies). But, remember: The accuser of the saints will never be in the heavenlies again to war against God's people. Amen!
- c. Rejoicing in heaven (v.10). 'Full salvation does not come so long as Satan's accusations are not disposed of. Verily, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth, for it is the dislodgment of Satan from that heart. And when this great victory is achieved, and Satan and his angels are forever cast out of the atmospheric heavens, all heaven breaks forth in jubilation and singing' (Seiss).
- d. Woe to inhabitants of earth (v.12). The devil is come down to you. 'This is the 'Third Woe', which extends through the pouring out of the 'Seven Bowls of Wrath'. And the only consolation for those on earth is: Satan's sojourn on earth is brief - 42 months.

III. Persecution of Woman (vs.13-16). 'The Dragon sees he has failed to destroy the man-child (144,000), he will turn on the woman (Israel), who has produced the man-child' (Dake).

- A. Woman given wings of eagle to fly (v.14).
- a. 'Ye have seen what I did to the Egyptians, how I bore you on eagle's wings, and brought you to myself' (Exo.19:4). **Note:** When Israel came out of Egypt God marvelously strengthened every muscle and invigorated every weakness. There was not one feeble person amidst their tribes' (Seiss).
 - b. Some have suggested that these 'wings of an eagle' speak of America helping the Jewish people in their dark hour by an 'air lift'. (I disagree.) This is the special and direct help of God.
- B. Into the wilderness, unto her place' (v.14). There is a great possibility that this wilderness is the same wilderness in which Israel spent 40 long years (1491-1451BC).
- a. The locality to which Moses fled for security from wrath of Pharaoh.
 - b. Where Israel fled from tyranny and rage of Egyptians.
 - c. Where Elijah fled for refuge from wrath of Jezebel.
 - d. Where faithful Jews retired from persecutions of Syrian kings in Maccabean times.
 - 'Having served as the place of shelter for God's faithful ones in so many instances. and on such marked occasions, it may well be called 'her place' - the one locality on earth prepared and consecrated as the desert asylum of God's persecuted people' (Seiss).
 - e. It is Israel's 'City of Refuge'.
- C. 'The serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman' (v.15). This could mean 'literal water' since God had delivered Israel at the beginning of their wilderness march (at Red Sea), and at the end of their march (at Jordan River)' (McGee). (I disagree.) This flood of waters likely symbolizes the armies of the Antichrist pursuing Israel. **Note:** There are many references in Scripture where armies are referred to as 'floods of waters'.

- D. Earth swallowed up the flood (v.16). God takes care of His own. In this same wilderness, the earth opened its mouth and swallowed Korah and his company (Num.16:29-35). Evidently, the earth will do the same to the armies of Antichrist.

- E. Satan wars against the Jewish remnant (v.17). These are those who do not flee from Judea (or were unable to flee) into the wilderness when the main body of the nation flees. **Note:** The word 'remnant' is never used of the Church or of Gentiles in the Bible.