

Revelation 12 (NASB)

The Woman, Israel

*12:1 A great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars;2 and she was with child; and she *cried out, being in labor and in pain to give birth.*

John will record 7 signs that he tells us about. This is translated as 'mega semeion' which means "A symbol that points beyond the actual sign. This sign points to *real events*. Though the Catholic church teaches that the woman is Mary, the rest of Scripture clearly shows that the woman is Israel (Isaiah 9:6 for example. Isaiah 9:6 is prophecy for the birth of the Messiah and says:

"For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us; And the government will rest on His shoulders; And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Eternal Father, Prince of Peace."

The woman is persecuted in verse 12:13. Scripture does NOT show Mary being sent back to earth to be persecuted and she was NOT persecuted while on Earth. So the woman is clearly Israel. If the mother is Israel, then the child must be Jesus. (Revelation 12:5).

The Red Dragon, Satan

*12:3 Then another sign appeared in heaven: and behold, a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads were seven diadems. 4 And his tail *swept away a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she gave birth he might devour her child.*

The dragon is Satan, the devil, Beelzebub. . . see Revelation 12:9. Most scholars think this refers to the kingdoms in Daniel 7:7-8 and that the little horn from that vision represents the Roman Empire. The phrase "a third of the stars" refers to the angels following Satan. See Revelation 12:9. So far, these events are future. Verse 4 is history referring to the past. Matthew 2:16 tells us about Herod slaughtering the babies. It says *"Then when Herod saw that he had been tricked by the magi, he became very enraged, and sent and slew all the male children who were in Bethlehem and all its vicinity, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had determined from the magi."*

The Male Child, Christ

*12:5 And she gave birth to a son, a male child, who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne. 6 Then the woman fled into the wilderness where she *had a place prepared by God, so that there she would be nourished for one thousand two hundred and sixty days.*

Verse 5 shows that the child can not be the church as some suggest. The church will not rule with a rod of iron. This can only refer to the Christ. Verse 5 gives us the span of Christ's ministry. The word "caught up" is 'harpazo'. The same word is used in 1 Thessalonians 4:17 and refers to the Rapture of the church.

1 Thessalonians 4:7 says *"Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord."* The same phrase is used in 2 Corinthians 12:2 and 4. Paul is "caught up" to heaven/paradise. The Greek word 'harpazo' is translated as snatched in Acts 8:39 but still means caught up. (NLT or NASB use the correct translation of the word). This child is caught up to the throne of God.

Verse 6 takes place 1260 days or 3.5 years after verse 5. Once again, Mary was never shown to flee in to the wilderness so this obviously refers to Israel. This is the last part of the 7 year period we call the Tribulation. The entire history of the church is absent from this vision.

The Angel, Michael

12:7 And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. The dragon and his angels waged war, 8 and they were not strong enough, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven.

Besides being the archangel, Michael is called a "prince" in Daniel 10:13 and a protector of Israel in Daniel 10:20-21. Can we be certain? Yes, Daniel 12:1 clearly states that Michael is the "Great Protector". This event in Revelation is a future prophecy. This massive battle takes place in Heaven. This event takes place midway through the seven year Tribulation period. Daniel 12:1 says "Now at that time Michael, the great prince who stands guard over the sons of your people, will arise. And there will be a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time; and at that time your people, everyone who is found written in the book, will be rescued."

Satan is still allowed in heaven today. Job 1:6-7 says that when asked by God where he had come from, Satan replied "From roaming about on the earth and walking around on it."

12:9 And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.

Satan and his followers lose this cosmic battle. Some argue that we can't know if this is the same serpent that deceived Adam and Eve. We can be sure of this because the Bible tells us. Ezekiel 28:13 refers to Satan and Revelation 20:2 calls him the ancient serpent, 2 Corinthians 11:3 call him the deceiver. He is called both Satan and the Devil. Satan means "adversary" and Devil means "accuser". Demon means "slanderer". Jesus is describing this event. He said "I saw Satan fall . . ." in Luke 10:18. In Ezekiel 28:14-16 Jesus is called the son of man. This verse shows the hierarchy that exists in the spirit world. Ephesians 6:12 tells us "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. Satan and Christ are NOT equal Satan was created by God and Jesus was not created. John 1:1 tells us that "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Jesus is the Word.

12:10 Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying,

"Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, he who accuses them before our God day and night.11 And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death. 12 For this reason, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them. Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he has only a short time."

The voice is human. The "loud voice" heard by John shows that there were a great number people in it. They refer to Satan as the "accuser of our brethren". Satan never accuses God. He knows his time is short. The following verses tell us what happens to the saved person as Satan accuses us before God. Hebrews 7:25 and 1 John 2:1 says Jesus stands in for us as our intercessor. The first thing that defeats Satan is the blood of Jesus (see Ephesians 1:7, Colossians 1:14 and Hebrews 9:14.

"First, you are to regard Satan this day as being already literally and truly overcome through the death of the Lord Jesus. Satan is already a vanquished enemy. By faith grasp your Lord's victory as your own, since he triumphed in your nature and on your behalf ... Come, my soul, thou hast conquered Satan by thy Lord's victory. Wilt thou not be brave enough to fight a vanquished foe, and trample down the enemy whom thy Lord has already thrust down? Thou needest not be afraid, but say, 'Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. III (Spurgeon)

The second thing that defeats Satan is the testimony of believers. Their testimony is that Jesus died and rose again. The phrase "they did not love their lives even unto death" means that they fear God. Matthew 10:28 says "*Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.*" The scene in Heaven is opposite the scene on Earth. In Heaven is a celebration but on Earth there is no joy. Satan is so enraged because he knows his time is short. He only has 3.5 years. He has to destroy the Jewish nation to stop God. He knows it is an impossible task.

*12:13 And when the dragon saw that he was thrown down to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male child. 14 But the two wings of the great eagle were given to the woman, so that she could fly into the wilderness to her place, where she *was nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent. 15 And the serpent poured water like a river out of his mouth after the woman, so that he might cause her to be swept away with the flood. 16 But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and drank up the river which the dragon poured out of his mouth. 17 So the dragon was enraged with the woman, and went off to make war with the rest of her children, who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus.*

The male child is Jesus. We know that the woman isn't the church AND Israel because Revelation 12:17 tells us that the church are her offspring and the Woman is all believers (Israel). We know that the rest of her offspring refers to the church and that non-Jews will be saved from the following verses:

Genesis 22:18. Refers to all believers
Genesis 26:4 Says all nations
Romans 1:16 Everyone who believers
Acts 28:28 Says Gentiles
Titus 2:11 Says all people
Revelation 7:9 All nations, all tribes, all tongues and a multitude.

Romans tells us that salvation was offered to the Gentiles to make the Jews jealous. Romans 11:11 says "*They were disobedient, so God made salvation available to the Gentiles. But he wanted his own people to become jealous and claim it for themselves.*"

So if the woman is Israel, the Dragon determined to destroy that nation because everything has to be in place to fulfill Scripture. (See Matthew 23:39) If they destroy everything then Jesus cannot fulfill Scripture. Verse 14 refers back to the Exodus from Egypt in that God bore them on eagles wings. (See Exodus 19:4 and Deuteronomy 32:11-12. The following verses explain how God may provide for His people.

- A. 1 Kings 17:2-6 Sent ravens with food and brook with water for Elijah
- B. Exodus 16:12-15 Quail and manna for the Hebrew nation

- C. Exodus 15:22-25 Water for the Hebrew nation
- D. Exodus 23:20 An angel for protection
- E. John 18:6 Scared out of mind – chance for salvation

Times, time, and half a time is 3.5 years (Satan has free reign). See Daniel 12:7 and Daniel 7:25. This flood was prophesied in Daniel 9:26 and Isaiah 59:19. The woman is Israel and believers are her offspring.