

## The Woman and the Dragon



**12** Now a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars. <sup>2</sup> Then being with child, she cried out in labor and in pain to give birth.

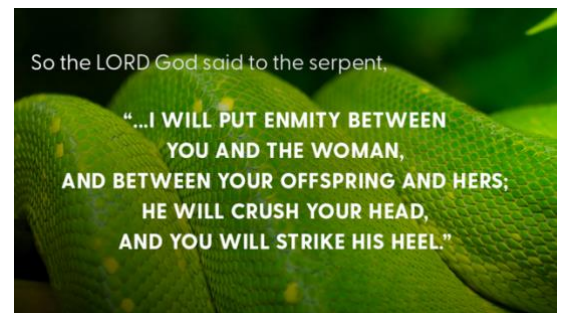
<sup>3</sup> And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten

horns, and seven diadems on his heads. <sup>4</sup> His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born. <sup>5</sup> She bore a male Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. And her Child was caught up to God and His throne. <sup>6</sup> Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days. (Revelation 12:1-6 NKJV)

This chapter is sort of an interlude in the account of destruction we've read about since we covered chapter six of Revelation. I think the best way to interpret this chapter is to see it as sort of a "Panorama of History" and God's interaction with humans. We are incapable of understanding much of what we read in Revelation and that's okay. We need to remind ourselves that God is working HIS purposes out, and the time is drawing near. As a little boy, growing up in an Episcopal school, we would sing old hymns of the Anglican faith. One of them began as follows:

God is working his purpose out,  
as year succeeds to year:  
God is working his purpose out,  
and the time is drawing near:  
nearer and nearer draws the time,  
the time that shall surely be, when the earth shall be  
filled with the glory of God,  
as the waters cover the sea.

Before we get into the text that we just read, we should remember some of the earliest words written which describe this struggle to come. "<sup>14</sup> So



*the LORD God said to the serpent:“.....<sup>15</sup> 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.” (Gen 3:14a,15, NKJV). Let’s just hang on to that conversation as we weave our way through Revelation chapter 12.*

The “serpent” would do its best to bruise the heal of the goodness and the grace that God planned for mankind. Let me preface this by saying that God and Satan are not equals. Satan is a being that was created by God. God is all-powerful. Satan is not. Our chapter this morning begins with John’s continued vision from chapter 11. He looked up into heaven and saw an ark, a temple, and worship. In this chapter, he looks and sees a woman clothed with the sun with the moon at her feet. On her head is a crown of twelve stars. This is tied to Joseph’s dreams which we find in Genesis chapter 37. His first dream was of his brothers represented as sheaves of grain bowing down to his sheaf. These brothers who already hated Joseph out of jealousy for the love their father had for him, hated him all the more. Then he had another dream as follows:



*<sup>9</sup> 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.”<sup>10</sup> 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?”<sup>11</sup> And his brothers envied him, but his father kept the matter in mind. (Genesis 37:9-11, NKJV).*

The brothers hated him all the more, but the text tells us that his father “kept the matter in mind.” Jacob knew that God had a plan for mankind. He had heard the story of how his grandfather, Abraham, had an encounter with the God who created the universe. He had heard of those covenant promises that God had made to Abraham. God had clearly told Abraham:

*“Get out of your country,  
From your family  
And from your father’s house,  
To a land that I will show you.  
<sup>2</sup> I will make you a great nation;  
I will bless you  
And make your name great;  
And you shall be a blessing.  
<sup>3</sup> I will bless those who bless you,*

*And I will curse him who curses you;  
And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.” (Genesis 12:1b-3, NKJV).*

How could it be that through Abraham (hence through Jacob), “all the families of the earth would be blessed?” A majority of biblical scholars see the “woman” in this passage today as the nation of Israel. In fact, God changed Jacob’s name to “Israel.” So the woman is Israel who was clothed with the sun, representing the radiance and glory of God. Through Israel came the moon, perhaps the Church. I’ve heard some say this week that the moon is possibly the Church which reflects the glory of God. And of course, above Israel’s head is a crown made up of the 12 tribes of Israel.



V. 2 This speaks of the pain that Israel has gone through to be the vessel through which the “child,” the Messiah, Jesus was born. Scripture shows Israel going through much hardship and toil before Jesus was born. Abraham’s call out of Ur was a trial of its own. Then came the call to sacrifice Isaac in a great drama reflecting the future to come when God would give up His only Son as the Redeemer of the world. In the Tanakh (the Old

Testament) we read chapter after chapter of the turmoil Israel goes through to survive. They came to Egypt to be saved from the hardship of a famine, only to find themselves enslaved by their hosts, the Egyptians. The snake (the devil) executed a plan when Moses was born. Pharaoh issued an order to kill all the Jewish male babies. You see, the snake acts through others to bring about his desires. People that are manipulated by the snake rarely even realize what is happening.

Well, the plan was thwarted, and Moses was born. But God used the whole murder scheme to bring up His man, Moses, in Pharaoh’s court. There the great lawgiver of Israel would gain his education. In time, he would hear the call of God in his heart and would have His encounter with the God of his fathers in a burning bush in the middle of nowhere. Through hardship after hardship he led Israel out of bondage. Then the story of Joshua (meaning “God saves”) teaches us of the inheritance that is ours when we personally enter a covenant relationship with God in Jesus.

V.3 John sees a scene of a great “red dragon” which is none other than the snake of old, the devil. We are finally told that in verse 9. It’s strange to think that as Moses wrote of the serpent in the garden, there was no Jewish consciousness of the fallen angel we call Lucifer, the Devil, the snake, or the dragon. The seven heads, the ten horns, and the seven crowns on his head speak of the means and ways through which the snake gains worldly influence throughout history.

V. 4 From this verse John sees the backstory of Satan taking a third of the angelic beings with him from heaven. In their great rebellion, they end up being put on the earth where they roam about “seeking whom they will destroy” (1 Peter 5:8). There is great comfort for the believer to know and understand that although they seek to pull all of mankind into their rebellion, every believer has living within them a power that is greater than ALL OF SATAN WITH ALL OF HIS MINIONS (1 John 4:4). And yet there, once again thinking he can thwart the plans of God, the snake/dragon is poised and ready to kill this man child. Verse 5 clearly identifies the baby.

V.5 This baby is none other than Jesus, who will indeed one day rule the world with a rod of iron. But, the serpent was unable to destroy the mission of the man child. So after Jesus’ work on earth was done, God took Him up into the heavenlies where He rules the heavens at the right hand of the Father.

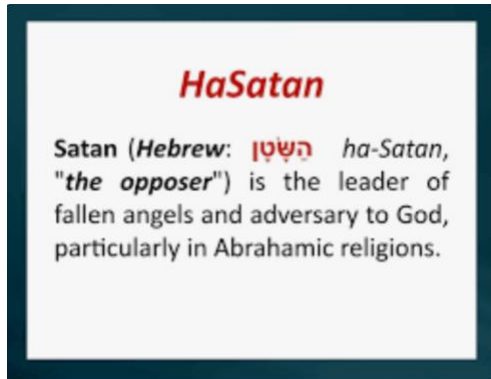
V.6 Many scholars think that the vision of the woman escaping for 1,260 days (3 ½ years) speaks of a supernatural covering that will be on the Jewish nation in the last 3 ½ years of the Great Tribulation. I don’t know how God will do it but he will give His people a place prepared by Him, and He will nourish them there. The scene that now flashes before John is a scene from another time, in another place, and it speaks of a great angelic conflict between Michael and Satan.

### ***Satan Thrown Down to Earth***

*<sup>7</sup> And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, <sup>8</sup> but they <sup>Ⓜ</sup>did not prevail, nor was a place found for <sup>Ⓜ</sup>them in heaven any longer. <sup>9</sup> So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. <sup>10</sup> Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, “Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down. <sup>11</sup> And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death. <sup>12</sup> Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time.” (Revelation 12:7-12 NKJV)*

Vv. 7-9 These verses recount an angelic conflict that takes place at some point in history. Michael, God’s archangel, leads the forces of God (Michael and his angels), and the dragon, Satan himself, leads one-third of the angels who joined in the rebellion. There no longer remained a place for them in heaven, and the text tells us that they were all thrown down to the earth. I want to add that we as believers have the benefit by this verse 9 to finally understand who the serpent is and was. As Moses wrote the

creation account, he saw or was told of the serpent, but the true identity of the serpent was unknown to the Jewish mind until the Babylonian captivity and the vision of Daniel which reveals angelic conflict (Daniel 10:10-14). It was only then that the Jews understood that there was an eternal enemy out there intent on destroying the Jewish Nation. We also know from the Jude 9 that Satan and Michael contended over the body of Moses. These are archenemies of old.



V.10 This verse clearly identifies the mission of the dragon. He is the accuser. The word "Ha Satan" in Hebrew literally means "the accuser." That is what he is, and that is what he does. The Hebrew term śāṭān (Hebrew: שָׂטָן) is a generic noun meaning "accuser" or "adversary," and is derived from a verb meaning primarily "to obstruct, oppose".<sup>1</sup> It is important for us to remember that accusations do not come from God. There is no condemnation in Christ Jesus for the believer

(Romans 8:1). Jesus was very clear about Satan's mission on earth. <sup>7</sup> *Then Jesus said to them again, "Most assuredly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep."* <sup>8</sup> *All who ever came before Me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them.* <sup>9</sup> *I am the door. If anyone enters by Me, he will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture.* <sup>10</sup> *The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.* (John 10:7-10, NKJV).

In the great courtroom of heaven, you have a prosecutor - Satan. But as a believer you also happen to have the greatest lawyer in the world. He is your advocate. That word means "He speaks for you." He is your representative. He is your spokesman. When Satan tries to accuse you or me before the Father, we have a lawyer that steps out and says: "No. Not this one. You can't touch this one because they belong to me. They were redeemed by me. All of the wrong that they ever have done was paid for by me." That's the end of the story.

V. 11 This verse clearly explains the means by which the advocacy came about. BY THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB (the Advocate Himself) and THE WORD OF YOUR AND MY TESTIMONY. You see, it takes the blood of Christ to save you, but you must accept/testify to it first. We are bought by the blood of Jesus on the cross, and that

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[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Satan#:~:text=The%20Hebrew%20term%20C5%9B%C4%81%E1%B9%AD%C4%81n%20\(Hebrew,%22to%20obstruct%2C%20oppose%22.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Satan#:~:text=The%20Hebrew%20term%20C5%9B%C4%81%E1%B9%AD%C4%81n%20(Hebrew,%22to%20obstruct%2C%20oppose%22.)



purchase is made complete with full benefits when we testify that as the only thing that can save us.

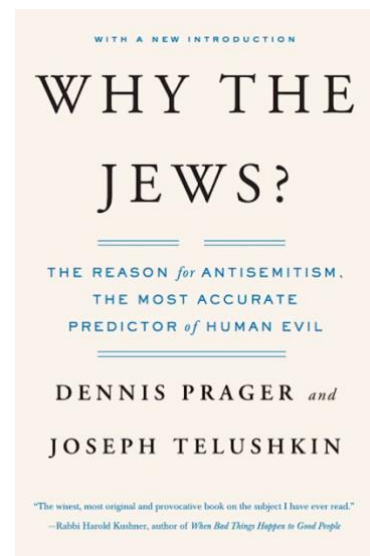
V.12 This verse just says that Satan is on a rampage of anger because he knows that he has lost. His end is just a matter of time.

*13 Now when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male Child. 14 But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent. 15 So the serpent spewed water out of his mouth like a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood. 16 But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth. 17 And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus <sup>the</sup> Christ. (Revelation 12:13-17 NKJV)*

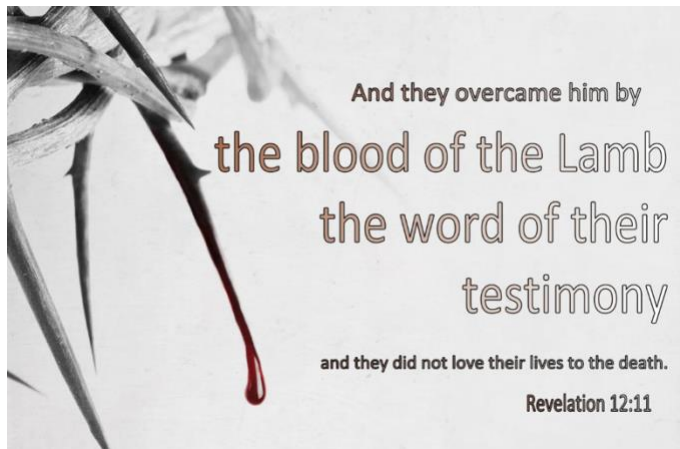


V.13 John then sees that when Satan was banished to the earth he set his sights on the nation of Israel. He hates Israel and He hates any thought of God's love toward Israel or the Jewish people. Just last week, we looked at the Arch of Titus which chronicles the Roman destruction of Jerusalem including the Temple of God.

Have you ever wondered why Israel and the Jewish people have been hunted down, exiled, murdered, and put in prison camps to die? Why is so much evil energy directed toward a tiny place and an insignificant number of the earth's inhabitants? It's enough to make you know and understand how special they are in the eyes of God. Remember those promise words we read at the beginning of this sermon? *"3 / will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."* (Genesis 12:3, NKJV). God is a promise keeper. Many of the world's empires have done their best to wipe out the Jewish people, but guess what? Those nations are now in the dustbin of history, and Israel is a thriving, prosperous nation. I think one reason the USA has been so blessed is because of our stand for Israel. When a rag-tag group of Jews declared their



independence as a nation in 1948, President Truman was the first to recognize Israel as a new nation. His mother, who was a faithful believer and Christ-follower, had told him that he was born to do just that thing.



Vv. 14-17 These verses speak of yet another deliverance for God's people. He will protect them in a "wilderness" (whatever that may mean), and He will make supernatural provision for them. This will go on during the last 3 1/2 years of the Tribulation. That is what is meant by a "time, and times, and half a time." That's one year, two more years, and a half of a year. The verses tell us that once again Satan

will throw all that he has against Israel to have her swallowed up by a flood. So, what might be that flood? Some think it will literally be some sort of water event. Often in scripture, a flood speaks of multitudes of people. In the end, perhaps a multitude of people will come against Israel, but once again ISRAEL'S PERSECUTORS WILL NOT PROSPER. You see, God never forgets His own. God never forsakes His own. The text tells us that failing to destroy Israel, the dragon will turn his wickedness against "her offspring." Many believe that this is talking not only about the Jews in general, but about all of the saints who will become believers during the Tribulation. Their blood will be spilt. And what will save them in the end? **THE BLOOD OF THE LAMB AND THE WORD OF THEIR TESTIMONY.**

**GOD INDEED IS WORKING HIS PURPOSE OUT AND THE TIME IS DRAWING NEAR!**

Let us pray.

Union Grove is one of the oldest Baptist communities of faith in the State of Texas dating back to 1844. Pastor Faber McMullen may be reached by email at uniongrove362@gmail.com or by snail mail at: 15301 FM 362, Navasota, Texas 77868. Tel: 936-825-1227 (Edited and proofed by Amanda Neese- Webster, Texas.) All financial gifts to this ministry are tax-deductible as a 501 (c) (3) Corporation.