

12:1-17, How To Make The Devil Angry / Chapters 12-14 The Actors Are Introduced by the blowing of this seventh trumpet during the Great Tribulation period.

Woman: Israel

Dragon: Satan

Man Child: The Lord Jesus

Michael: picture of holy angels

Israel: the remnant

Beast of the sea: World dictator

Beast out of the land: Religious leader - false prophet

“The theme of this chapter is the final conflict between Israel and Satan after he is cast out of heaven. The seventh trumpet brings us through the Great Tribulation and the Millennium... The prominence of the nation Israel is evident. These seven personages are representatives of persons, both natural and supernatural, physical and spiritual, rulers and nations. The identification and clarification of these are essential for a proper understanding of the Revelation.” McGee

12:1, **And there appeared a great wonder in heaven;** - και σημειον μεγα ωφθη εν τω ουρανω - “*great wonder*”/this word stresses truth not the wonder or miracle / there are six other wonders in Revelation: Rev. 12:3; 13:13-14; 15:1; 16:14; 19:20

**a woman clothed with the sun,** - γυνη περιβεβλημενη τον ηλιον - “*woman*”/ Israel - seen as a wife to Jehovah / Isa. 54:3-6; Jere. 3:6-10; 31:32; Ezek. 16:32; Hos. 2:14-16

“The important thing here is: “Who is the woman?” You are acquainted with the interpretation of the Roman church that she represents the virgin Mary. There are Protestant interpreters who have been as far wrong as that. Today most of them follow the method of Rome and interpret the woman as the church of all ages... There have been several female founders of cults who could not resist the temptation of seeing themselves pictured in this woman. Joanna Southcott said that she herself was the woman in chapter 12 and that in October, 1814, she would have the man child. She never did, but she had 200,000 followers.

The identifying marks of the woman are the sun, moon, and stars. These belong to Israel as seen in Joseph's dream: (Gen. 37:9-10). Jacob interpreted the sun, moon, and stars to mean himself, Rachel, and Joseph's brothers. And they did bow down before Joseph before things were over with (although Rachel had died by that time). The woman is a sign in heaven, although her career is here in earth. She is not a literal woman; she is a symbol. The career of the woman corresponds to that of Israel, for it is Israel that gave birth to Christ, who is the Child. Isaiah 9:6 “For unto us a child is

born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." It is quite obvious that Isaiah is speaking to the nation Israel...

**and the moon under her feet**, - και η σεληνη υποκατω των ποδων αυτης - "clothed...sun...moon"/ symbol of the Abrahamic Covenant / Gen. 37:9-11

**and upon her head a crown of twelve stars**: - και επι της κεφαλης αυτης στεφανος αστερων δωδεκα - 12 crowns = 12 sons of Jacob

12:2, **And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.** - και εν γαστρι εχουσα κραζει ωδινουσα και βασανιζομενη τεκειν - "Travailing in birth" is a figure associated with Israel: "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" (Isa. 66:7-8).

Therefore, we identify the woman as the nation Israel. No one woman who has ever lived, including the virgin Mary, fits this." McGee

"Being tormented." Certainly Israel has suffered satanic anti-Semitism from the time of the birth of Christ to the present, in fact, even since before that day, because Satan knew that Christ would come from this nation. McGee

"This woman is in labour to bear a child who is undoubtedly the Messiah, Christ, compare Rev 12:5 where He is said to be destined to rule the nations with a rod of iron. That is a quotation from Ps 2:9 and was an accepted description of the Messiah. The woman, then, is the mother of the Messiah. In the Old Testament the chosen people, the ideal Israel, the community of the people of God, is often called the Bride of God. "Your Maker is your husband" (Isa 54:5). It is Jeremiah's sad complaint that Israel has played the harlot in disloyalty to God (Jer 3:6-10). Hosea hears God say: "I will betroth you to me for ever" (Hos 2:19-20). In the Revelation itself we hear of the marriage feast of the Lamb and the Bride of the Lamb (Rev 19:7; Rev 21:9). "I betrothed you to Christ," writes Paul to the Corinthian Church, "to present you as a pure bride to her one husband" (2 Cor. 11:2)." Barclay

12:3, *And there appeared another wonder in heaven;* - και ωφθη αλλο σημειον εν τω ουρανω -

*and behold a great red dragon,* - και ιδου δρακων μεγας πυρρος -

*having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads.* - εχων κεφαλας επτα και κερατα δεκα και επι τας κεφαλας αυτου διαδηματα επτα - "Great red dragon"/ murderer - in 12:9 the dragon is both the revived Roman Empire, but also the representation of Satanic power. Seven heads and 10 horns / revived Roman Empire / the original 10 kingdoms - 3 subdued by the little horn of Dan. 7:8 / cf. Rev. 13:1

"Ten horns" suggests the final division of the Roman Empire, which is dominated by Satan and which is his final effort to rule the world. The crowns are on the horns, not on the heads, since it is delegated power from Satan. The crowns represent kingly authority and rulership.

"Seven heads" suggests the perfection of wisdom which characterized the creation of Satan who was originally the "covering cherub." Ezek 28:12 speaks of how he was at his origin: ". . . full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty."

12:4, *And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven,* - και η ουρα αυτου συρει το τριτον των αστερων του ουρανου - 1/3 part of heaven - gathering of forces to place Israel under subjection / The *dragon stood* ready to attack the woman at her birth Herod was an Edomite descended from Esau, a traditional enemy of Jacob.

"The third of the stars of heaven" indicates the vast extent of the rebellion in heaven when one third of the angelic host followed Satan to their own destruction.

*and did cast them to the earth:* - και εβαλεν αυτους εις την γην -

*and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered,* - και ο δρακων εστηκεν ενωπιον της γυναικος της μελλουσης τεκειν -

*for to devour her child as soon as it was born.* - ινα οταν τεκη το τεκνον αυτης καταφαγη - The dragon hates the Man Child because it was predicted from the beginning that the child would be the undoing of Satan. "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shalt bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Gen. 3:15)." McGee

### **The true character of Satan is revealed:**

1. He is called "great" because of his vast power. He controls the nations of the world and offered them to the Lord Jesus if He would worship him (see Matt. 4:8-9). Worship of himself is Satan's ultimate goal. The kingdoms of this world are his, and he controls them today.

2. He is called "red" because of the fact that he was a murderer from the beginning (see John 8:44). He has no regard for human life.

3. He is called a "dragon" because of the viciousness of his character. He was originally created Lucifer, son of the morning (see Ezek. 28:12-19), but he is now the epitome of evil and the depth of degradation.

12:5, **And she brought forth a man child**, - και ετεκεν υιον αρρενα - The "man child" is Christ. He is easily identified here. "And she was delivered of a son, a man child." I believe this settles the identity of the woman. Israel is clearly the one from whom Christ came. While the church came from Jesus Christ, He, according to the flesh, came from Israel. Again let me quote Paul: "Who are Israelites. . . of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came ..." (Rom. 9:4-5). In Galatians we read: "*Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ*" (Gal. 3:16).

**who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron**; - ος μελλει ποιμαινειν παντα τα εθνη εν ραβδω σιδηρα - "Who is to shepherd (rule) all the nations with a rod of iron" is a clear-cut reference to Christ. "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel" (Ps. 2:9). In Acts 4 the persecuted Christians quoted Psalm 2, identifying the One to rule with a rod of iron as the Lord Jesus Christ.

Christ will put down all enmity, all opposition, all rebellion on the earth. How? He will break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. \*\* Suppose He was suddenly to appear at the capital of any nation in the world. Do you think they are prepared to surrender to Him and turn all authority over to Him? Is the United States prepared to yield to Jesus Christ? The world is in rebellion against Him.

**and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne**. - και ηρπασθη το τεκνον αυτης προς τον θεον και τον θρονον αυτου - "And her child was caught up unto God and His throne." This is a reference to the ascension of Christ. In the Gospels the emphasis is on the death of Christ. In the Epistles the emphasis is upon the resurrection of Christ. In the Book of Revelation the emphasis is upon the ascension of Christ.

The Book of Revelation is the unveiling of the ascended Christ, the glorified Christ, the Christ who is coming in glory. The Book of the Revelation rests upon the fact of the Ascension. He is the One who has been opening the seals which have brought to pass everything that has happened since then. We are told in 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.*" McGee

"The child which the woman bore was destined to rule the nations with a rod of iron. As we have seen, this quotation from Ps 2:9 indicates that the child was the Messiah.

When the child was born, he was rescued from the dragon by being snatched up to heaven, even to the throne of God. The word used here for the child being snatched up is the same as is used in 1 Thess. 4:17 to describe the Christian being caught up to meet the Lord in the air (compare 2 Cor. 12:2 where Paul uses it to tell of himself being caught up into the third heaven). The snatching up must refer to the Ascension. As the Acts says: "He was lifted up" (Ac 1:9). Barclay's Commentary

12:6, *And the woman fled into the wilderness*, - και η γυνη εφυγεν εις την ερημον - "And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of (from) God." During the intense part of the Great Tribulation period, this remnant of Israel will be protected by God...

*where she hath a place prepared of God*, - οπου εχει τοπον ητοιμασμενον απο του θεου -

*that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days*. - ινα εκει τρεφωσιν αυτην ημερας χιλιας διακοσιας εξηκοντα -

12:7, *And there was war in heaven:* - και εγενετο πολεμος εν τω ουρανω -

*Michael and his angels fought against the dragon;* - ο μιχαηλ και οι αγγελιοι αυτου επολεμησαν κατα του δρακοντος -

*and the dragon fought and his angels*, - και ο δρακων επολεμησεν και οι αγγελιοι αυτου -

Always in opposition to Christ:

- \* Accuser: As Priest
- \* First beast: as King

\* Second beast: as Prophet:

"Michael" is the archangel. We are told this in the Book of Jude: "*Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee*" (Jude 9). Evidently there are other archangels, but Michael has a peculiar ministry with the nation Israel. Daniel 10:13 tells us: "*But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia.*" Michael is "one of the chief princes." Although there are probably other archangels, Michael and Gabriel are the only ones whose names are given in Scripture.

"Michael your prince" -- since the Lord is talking to Daniel, this refers to Daniel's people, the nation Israel. This is made clear in 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.*" At that time, we are told, there will be a time of trouble, the Great Tribulation. Michael will again step out and drive Satan out of heaven, because he happens to be the prince who watches over the nation Israel.

There will be a fierce struggle, a war. Satan is not going to retire easily, but Michael and his angels will prevail, and Satan and his angels will be thrown out of heaven. The Lord Jesus referred to this in Luke 10:18, "And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven."

12:8, *And prevailed not;* - και ουκ ισχυσαν - *neither was their place found any more in heaven.* - ουτε τοπος ευρεθη αυτων επι εν τω ουρανω -

12:9, *And the great dragon was cast out,* - και εβληθη ο δρακων ο μεγας -

*that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan,* - ο οφιος ο αρχαιος ο καλουμενος διαβολος και ο σατανας - "Devil"/ slanderer, defaming, accuser / "Satan"/ adversary 14X in Job

*which deceiveth the whole world:* - ο πλανων την οικουμενην ολην -

*he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.* - εβληθη εις την γην και οι αγγελοι αυτου μετ αυτου εβληθησαν -

There is no mistaking this creature who is called the great dragon. His fingerprints are put down here in the Revelation. Notice how he is identified here:

1. He is called "the old serpent." This takes us back to the Garden of Eden. Our Lord said, ". . . He was a murderer from the beginning ..." (John 8:44).

2. He is called "Devil," a name which comes from the Greek *diabolos*, meaning "slanderer or accuser." He is so labeled in verse 10: "*the accuser of our brethren.*" The Devil is a slanderer; he is a liar from the beginning. He is the origin of all lies today.

3. He is also called "Satan," which means "adversary." He is the awful adversary of God and of every one of God's children. We are told: "*Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour*" (1 Pet. 5:8)..

4. Finally, he is called "*he that deceiveth* the whole (inhabited) world." During the Great Tribulation, Satan will be able to totally deceive men.

Satan deceives men relative to God and the Word of God (see Gen. 3:1-4).

Satan deceives man relative to man (see Gen. 3:5).

Satan deceives man relative to the world, the flesh, and the Devil. (2 Cor. 4:4).

*"Someone has said, 'Satan is to be dreaded as a lion; more to be dreaded as a serpent; and most to be dreaded as an angel.'" That is where he traps the multitude today.*  
McGee

*12:10-12, 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. 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. 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.*

#### Salvation, deliverance, completion of the program

Three important facts in overcoming the Devil

\*Blood of the Lamb

\*Word of Their testimony

\*loved not their lives unto death

Victory for the accused saints comes through three avenues which are mentioned to us in this section:

1. "*The blood of the Lamb.*"
2. "*The word of their testimony*"



3. *"They loved not their life even unto death."* This is an exalted plane to come to, where you and I make the Lord Jesus the first love in our life.

There are two radical reactions to the casting out of Satan from heaven. There is rejoicing in heaven, for this awesome, treacherous, dangerous, and deadly serpent is out forever. Then there is woe on the earth. This is the third woe that extends through the pouring out of the seven bowls of wrath. The only consolation for the earth is that Satan's sojourn on earth is brief -- forty two months. There is an intensification of tribulation during this period." McGee

*12:13-14, And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child. 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.*

Satan hates Israel because Christ came from this nation. This is the Time of Jacob's Trouble.

"Two wings of a great eagle" is not something that is unusual or peculiar to the people of Israel, but it is reminiscent of the grace of God in His past deliverance of Israel from Egypt. He said to them: *"Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself"* (Exod. 19:4).

*"Into the wilderness, into her place."* Scripture does not say that city of Petra will be that place. Some say that it is the wilderness of the peoples of the world; that is, that there will be another worldwide scattering of Israel. Since Christ said, ". . . flee into the mountains" (Matt. 24:16), we believe it to be a literal wilderness, possibly that same one in which Israel spent forty years under Moses. This time it will be forty-two months, for that is the meaning of "a time, and times, and half a time." The important thing is not the place but the fact that God will protect them by His grace.

*"Where she is nourished"* reminds us that in the past God sustained them with manna from heaven and water from the rock.

*12:15-16, 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. 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.*

In view of the fact that the wilderness is literal, the water also could be literal. God had delivered Israel out of the water, both at the beginning of the wilderness march at the Red Sea and then again at the end of the wilderness march at the Jordan River. However, the floods of water could be armies flowing like a river upon them. This figure of speech has been used by Isaiah (see Isa. 8:7-8).

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.*

"*The rest of her seed*" may refer to the remnant who is God's witness in this period -- the 144,000 who have been sealed. They are evidently witnessing throughout the world. These "keep the commandments of God," which places them back under the Law.