

REVELATION CHAPTER 12

Introduction

- Conflict in Heaven and Earth

“A *great wonder* [Greek: *sign*]. The Greek word for wonder (*teras*), contrary to expectation, does not occur in Revelation. Moreover, it never stands alone, and in its 16 occurrences in the New Testament it is always associated with the word for “sign,” *semeion*; and when thus associated they are always in the plural number (eleven times signs and wonders, five times wonders and signs.)

This is the first of the seven occurrences of *semeion*. 12:1, 3; 13:13, 14; 15:1; 15:14; 19:20. A sign is a visible and familiar token by which the thing signified may be apprehended. This sign is declared to be a *great* sign, hence it may well serve to engage careful attention.”

(taken from *A Revelation of Jesus Christ* by J.D. Smith)

1. The First Great Wonder—Rev. 12:1-2

“Most bad things that happen do so because the world is caught up in a great spiritual struggle between good and evil, which is sometimes called the Conflict of the Ages. It’s a spiritual struggle between God and Satan that will intensify on earth at the end of the age. Jesus clearly taught that it will be worse than anything that’s happened on earth before. This great spiritual struggle involves a woman (Israel), a dragon (Satan), a child (Jesus), and the remainder of the woman’s offspring (Christians).

(taken from *The Book of Revelation: The Smart Guide to the Bible Series* by Daymond R. Duck)

- The Woman is Israel
 - Her clothing is the sign—compare Gen. 37:9-10
 - Significance of description: travailing in birth: her tribulation over the years

2. The Second Wonder—Rev. 12:3-4

- The dragon is Satan—fiery red

“From the similar description given in 13:1 and the parallel reference in Daniel 7:7-8, 24, it is clear that the revived Roman Empire is in view. Satan, however, is also called the dragon later in 12:9, and it is clear that the dragon is both the empire and the representation of satanic power. The colour red may indicate his murderous characteristics. The seven heads and

ten horns refer to the original ten kingdoms of which three were subdued by the little horn of Daniel 7:8, who is to be identified with the world ruler of the great tribulation who reigns over the revived Roman Empire.”

(taken from *A Revelation of Jesus Christ* by John F. Walvoord)

- The stars—his ‘angels’ (demons) allied with him in his purpose
- Their rebellion, they too are cast out of heaven
- Directives to destroy Christ (see Daymond R. Duck p. 170-171)

3. **The Man-Child**—Rev. 12:5-6

- This is Jesus Christ
- Caught up to the throne of God: the Ascension

“He is described as destined to rule all nations with a rod of iron. This is an allusion to Psalm 2:9, where in connection with Christ’s reign over the earth, it is declared, “Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.” A similar expression is found in Revelation 19:15, where it is stated of Christ, “He shall rule them with a rod of iron.” His rule over all nations with a rod of iron is to be distinguished from His rule over Israel which is of more benevolent character (cf. Luke 1:32-33).”

(taken from *A Revelation of Jesus Christ* by John F. Walvoord)

- Mid-point of the Tribulation

4. **Satan Cast Out of Heaven by Michael the Archangel**—Rev. 12:7-9

- This section of the war is waged in heaven
- Devil and hosts cast out of heaven to earth

“The description of Satan in verse 9 is quite significant as all of his important titles are given. He is described as “the great dragon,” a term which also applies to the empire which he dominates in the end time. He is referred to as “that old serpent,” a reference to the Garden of Eden and the temptation of Eve. The title “Devil” is from the Greek *diabolos*, from the verb *diaballō*, which has the meaning of “defaming” or “slandering.” He is the master accuser of the brethren. The name Satan, from the Hebrew, has the meaning of “adversary.” This name is mentioned fourteen times in the book of Job, and occasionally elsewhere (1 Chron. 21:1; Ps. 109:6; Zech. 3:1-2). Coates observes that Satan is seen in three characterizations in opposition to Christ. As accuser of the brethren, he is in opposition to Christ as priest; as the one who brings forth the first beast, he is in opposition to Christ as king; as bringing forth the second beast, the false prophet, he is opposed to Christ as prophet.”

(taken from *A Revelation of Jesus Christ* by John F. Walvoord)

5. **Announcement of Satan's Coming Day of Wrath and the Ultimate Victory of the Saints**—Rev. 12:10-12

- The voice –probably those robed in white

“The salvation mentioned as now impending refers not to salvation from the guilt of sin but to salvation in the sense of deliverance and completion of the divine program. The reference to strength (Gr., *dynamis*) implies that now God is going to strengthen His own and manifest His own strength. The declaration that the kingdom of our God is now impending refers to the millennial kingdom when Christ will reign on the earth. Coupled with this is the power or authority (Gr., *exousia*) of Christ. The expression “his Christ,” also mentioned in 11:15, parallels “his anointed” in Psalm 2:2, against whom the kings of the earth rebel but under whose sway they are certain to come.”

(taken from *A Revelation of Jesus Christ* by John F. Walvoord)

- The victory of the Believers

“The victory of the saints in that hour is revealed in verse 11, where it is declared that they overcame Satan by the blood of the Lamb, by the word of their testimony, and by the fact that they loved not their lives unto death. The accusations of Satan are nullified by the blood of the Lamb which renders the believer pure and makes possible his spiritual victory. The word of the saints’ testimony opposes the deceiving work of Satan in that the preaching of the gospel is the power of God unto salvation. The saints’ dedication to their task in which many of them die as martyrs is recognized by the statement “They loved not their lives unto the death.” The word for “loved” is the word for profound love (Gr., *agapaō*). Though they do not foolishly seek a martyr’s death, they do not regard their own lives (literally “souls”; Gr., *psychē*) as precious. They follow the instruction given to the church in Smyrna (2:10) of being faithful unto death as well as the example of the Saviour who laid down His life for the sheep”

(taken from *A Revelation of Jesus Christ* by John F. Walvoord)

- Heaven rejoices
- Devil is coming down in wrath—he knows his time is short—the rest of the tribulation before his being bound during the millennium

6. **The Persecution of Israel During the Great Tribulation**—Rev. 12:13-16

- Persecution of Israel—compare Matt. 24:15-22

“The immediate aftermath of Satan’s being cast out of heaven is his persecution of the woman which brought forth the man-child. This apparently is the beginning of the great tribulation of which Christ warned Israel in Matthew 24:15-22. This had its foreshadowing in Herod’s slaughter of the infants following

the birth of Christ (Matt. 2:16). It seems here to refer specifically to the great tribulation which is yet future. The persecution of Israel is a part of the satanic program to thwart and hinder the work of God. As far as Israel is concerned this had its beginning in the delay in the birth of Isaac which was overcome by the miraculous intervention of God. This hindrance continued in the delay in the birth of Jacob and in countless means used thereafter to persecute the descendants of Jacob, including the effort in the time of Esther to blot them out completely. Israel is hated by Satan not because of any of its own characteristics but because she is the chosen of God and essential to the overall purpose of God for time and eternity.”

(taken from *A Revelation of Jesus Christ* by John F. Walvoord)

- Some supernatural care of Israel during this time
 - See Deut. 32:11, 12; Exodus 19:4
- The flight of Israel will be from Judea—Matt. 24:16
- v. 15—the serpent’s flood

“The flood may refer to literal waters. From Zechariah 14:5 one may note the reference to the flight of Israel in latter days as the context shows. The valley of Azal “reaches up to the city gates, so as to enable the fleeing citizens to betake themselves immediately to it on leaving the city.” It is possible that Satan will release a flood of waters from the huge city reservoir in Mt. Zion in order to overwhelm the fleeing Israelites and that they will be preserved miraculously by the opening of the earth at the divine command.”

(taken from *A Revelation of Jesus Christ* by J.D. Smith)

- or the flood may be an expeditionary force commissioned by the mouth of Satan to destroy the fugitives from Israel
- v. 16—the earth helped

“It should be added, however, that the preceding verse might be intended to be taken more literally. For instance, in these days of reservoirs and artificial lakes, it would be possible, while Israel passing through some valley, for the dragon to release a flood of water from some elevated spot upon the fleeing Israelites and then, instead of the earth swallowing a regiment of men, she would open to engulf the river in order to prevent the waters from sweeping the fugitives to destruction.”

(taken from *A Revelation of Jesus Christ* by J.D. Smith)

“Where will they go? The woman (Israel) will flee into the desert to a place prepared for her by God. Most prophecy experts believe the Jews will flee to a mountainous area in the Jordan desert called Petra. It is an abandoned city that was carved into the rocks of the mountains centuries ago. It has only one entrance, so the Jews will be able to hide in those

caves and barricade themselves in for protection. They will hide there for 1,260 days (three and one-half years), the last half of the Tribulation Period.”

(taken from *The Book of Revelation: The Smart Guide to the Bible Series* by Daymond R. Duck)

7. **Persecution of the Godly Remnant**—Rev. 12:17

- Rest of her offspring—Jewish believers of the period and those of faith in all the world