

Study Notes – Revelation 12

The third Interlude – Part 1: The invisible war

- ✚ The struggle and conflict between God and satan that has lasted throughout history since satan's fall.
- ✚ A Jewish scene shift: we are now changing gears; with careful interpretation and guidance of the Holy Spirit we can understand this.

Mother, Child, Dragon, and War

Rev 12:1 ¹A great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars.

- ✓ great sign – (semeion): “signified”; this is from the Old Testament and a symbol of something else.
- ✓ a woman – symbolic
- ✓ clothed – (periblemene): having been clothed; supreme authority.
- ✓ the sun – refers to Jacob (Israel) in Joseph's dream.
 - ⁹But then he dreamed another dream and told it to his brothers, saying, "I have just dreamed another dream. Suddenly, there was the sun and the moon and the eleven stars bowing down to me!" ¹⁰He told it to his father as well as his brothers. Then his father rebuked him and said to him, "What's this dream you dreamed? Will we really come—your mother and I with your brothers—to bow down to the ground to you?" ¹¹So his brothers were jealous of him, but his father kept the speech in mind. Genesis 37:9-11
 - The Sun is for “signs” (Old Testament) indicating a token or mark something designed as a memorial, “to bring to remembrance.” *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance*
- ✓ the moon – (selene): brightness; suggestive of derived authority.
 - Genesis 37:9-11 the moon refers to Rachel in Joseph's dream.
 - God uses the sun & moon as dual witnesses to important promises He made. He said they will be witnesses (signs) of this unconditional promise to preserve the nation of Israel. Jer 31:35-37
- ✓ on her head a crown of twelve stars – (kephale): head; sign of authority.
 - Crown (stephanos): to twine or wreath; symbol of honor.
 - 12 stars – the 12 tribes of Israel.
 - Israel referred to as a woman: Isa 54:1-6, Jer 3:20, Eze 16:8-14, Hosea 2: 19-20

12.2 ²She is pregnant crying out in birth pains, in agony to give birth.

- ✓ Pregnant – (en gastri echousa): “in the womb having”. Note: In this vision segment there is no mention of a father, very unusual in Jewish genealogy. “The book of the genealogy of Yeshua ha-Mashiach, Ben-David,” Matt 1:1. This is pointing to the virgin birth of Yeshua the Messiah.
- ✓ Pains – symbolic of Israel's “pain” before Yeshua was born. Isa 54:1, 26:17, 66:6-9, Micah 4:8-10, Hos 13:13
 - This includes over all the nation's history, as satan has tried many times to destroy Israel. If she no longer existed he would succeed in stopping the birth of Messiah.

12.3 ³Then another sign appeared in heaven: a great fiery red dragon that had seven heads and ten horns, and seven royal crowns on his heads.

- ✓ The word “dragon” is used 13 times in Revelation and 8 times in this chapter.
- ✓ John is telling us about satan's control over the nations.

12.3 ³Then another sign appeared in heaven: a great fiery red dragon that had seven heads and ten horns, and seven royal crowns on his heads. (continued)

- ✓ fiery red – (pyros): like the horse of the second seal (Rev 6:4). The color represents bloodshed and destruction.
- ✓ Great dragon – (mega drakon): symbolizes a powerful aggressive deadly foe – here it is satan. Rev 20
- ✓ seven heads – 7 = completeness. (kephale): head – sign of authority. Represents the 7 nations / kingdoms that have had dominion over Israel: Egypt, Syria, Babylon, Medes / Persia, Greece, Romans, and Antichrist (future).
- ✓ ten horns – ten (deka): the measure of human responsibility. Horns (keras): used in plural as a sign of strength, on beasts: as a sign of national potentates. Dan 7:8, 8:9
 - The 10 horns that appear in Daniel’s night vision: “As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings will arise.” Daniel 7:24 In Nebuchadnezzar’s statue dream of the 10 toes (Dan 2:23-34, 41-42), these are the same 10 horns John sees upon the dragon in this verse and upon the Beast. Rev 13:1, 17:3,7
 - The 10 horns are placed upon the 7th head: the antichrist powered by satan.
 - The 10 horns / toes are 10 kings of the Tribulation. Rev 17:12-13 Probably powerful influential persons / leaders / politicians. They have political authority (all authority will be given to the antichrist).
 - Although both the 7 heads & 10 horns are called “kings”, the term implies “sovereignty, royal power, dominion” there is a difference between the two. The 7 heads / kingdoms span a long period of time in history, while the 10 horns (toes) are contemporaries at the same time of the Tribulation.
- ✓ seven royal crowns – (diadem): of royalty, not stephanos (victories).
 - 7 diadems / 7 kings / 7 historic chronological kingdoms. The 10 horns on the 7th head also wear crowns. Rev 13:1

12:4 ⁴His tail sweeps away a third of the stars of heaven—it hurled them to the earth. Now the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that whenever she gave birth he might devour her child.

✚ John takes us back to satan’s fall into sin.

- ✓ sweeps away – “to draw, drag, haul”; is used of a net as in catching fish; to move something by force.
 - Satan was key in the heavenly rebellion. This isn’t referring to his final casting out (Rev 12:7) but his original fall in sin and corruption of 1/3 of the angels (Isa 14:12-17, Eze 28:14). This occurred early in God’s creation order, prior to Eve’s temptation in the Garden of Eden (Gen 3:1-5).
 - Job 1:6-7 tell us he still has access to Heaven.
 - Satan wants to rule and be worshipped and detests the One who is taking his Kingdom away. Exo 1:15-22, 1Sam 18:10-11, 2 Chr 22:10, Matt 2:16
- ✓ stood before – The promised birth of Messiah spoken of by the Law and the Prophets (Gen 3:5, Isa 7:14, 9:67) was about to be fulfilled (Matt 1:20, Luk 1:34).
- ✓ the woman – Israel represented by Miriam, of David’s lineage is about to give birth to Yeshua in Bethlehem, Israel.
- ✓ devour her child – Satan is waiting for his opportunity to kill the Messiah.
 - Throughout history satan has tried to destroy Israel & the Messianic promise: Cain’s murder of Abel (Gen 4:8), Pollution of the offspring of man by “Sons of God” (Gen 6:2-4), Pharaoh’s attempt to kill newborn Hebrew males (Exo 1:16, 22, Acts 7:17), Antiochus Epiphanes (Dan 8:9-14), Haman (Est 3:6), Athaliah attempt to kill royal heirs (2 Chr 22:10), Herod (Matt 2:16-18).

12.5 ⁵ And she gave birth to a son, a male child, who is to rule all the nations with an iron rod. And her child was snatched away to God and to His throne.

- ✓ gave birth to a son – **The Son born to Israel – the promised Messiah Yeshua.**
- ✓ Rule – (poimainen): herd, tend, (lead to) pasture. Matt 9:36, 25:32, 26:31, Mark 6:34, Luk 2:8, 15-20
 - Feed: Luk 17:7, John 21:16, Acts 20:28, 1 Cor 9:7, 1 Pet 5:2, Jude 1:12
 - Leading, guiding, protecting as a shepherd does his flock.
- ✓ iron rod – alludes to Psalm 2. This is during the Messianic Kingdom.
- ✓ snatched away – (harpazo): caught up, raptured as in 1 Th 4:17
 - **The physical transportation by the power of Holy Spirit.**
 - In this passage it is passive – an external agent (God the Father) caught up the child (Yeshua) away (Yeshua's ascension into Heaven). Acts 1:9-11
 - He will be seated at the right hand of the Father, until the time comes for him to rule from the throne of David on earth in Jerusalem. Dan 7:13-14, 21-22, 26-27, Matt 25:31, Rev 3:21, 20:4

12.6 ⁶ Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God so they might take care of her for 1,260 days.

- ✓ Fled – (pheugo): escape, to flee, fugitive.

✚ How soon from Yeshua's Ascension into Heaven to the time Israel must flee?

1. Roman destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD? Four decades after the Ascension; there is no indication in the diaspora of supernatural assistance as Revelation 12:14 explains. Note: Prophets of the Old Testament write about events which are side-by-side, often the same sentence which are separated by long periods of time. They were often shown important highlights (1 Peter 1:10-11) with the full range of history collapsed in their view, like looking through a telescope.
 2. The "Child" has been "caught up" about 1900 years and the "woman" has yet to flee.
 3. Zechariah tells us about the Shepherd being struck: "Awake, O sword, against My shepherd, against the man who is My companion! It is a declaration of ADONAI-Tzva'ot. Strike the shepherd and the sheep will be scattered! I will turn My hand against the little ones. ⁸Then it will happen —it is a declaration of ADONAI - that in the entire land two-thirds will be cut off and die, but a third will be left in it. ⁹This third I will bring through the fire. I will refine them as silver is refined, and will test them as gold is tested. They will call on My Name and I will answer them. I will say, 'They are My people,' and they will answer, 'ADONAI is my God.' Zechariah 13:7-9 During the "time of testing" (Romans 3:10) only 1/3 of Israel survives, the remnant. **At the end of the 7 years when the remnant turns to Yeshua in faith crying out "Baruch haba bas hem Adonai!"** Then "all Israel shall be saved" referring to the nation – the twelve tribes of Israel. Matt 23:39, Jer 30:5-7
 4. Expect to see great opposition by Satan to Israel. If they don't cry out Satan can continue his destructive behavior and ownership of the earth with events similar to the Crusades, the Inquisition, the Pogroms of Russia, the Holocaust and even portions of the "church" that serve the dragon. Unfortunately, the evil persecution of Israel hasn't reached its climax for Revelation reveals her darkest hours are yet to come.
- ✓ Wilderness – desert, uninhabited place, a place of desolation, safety, discipline and testing. Matt 24:15-21 "Jacob's Trouble"
 - In the Days of Jacob's Trouble (Jer 30:7-8) the latter days (Jer 30:24), prior to Israel's restoration of the Millennial Kingdom (Jer 30:9-10), God promises to give a surviving remnant grace in the wilderness (Jer 31:2). Just as the rebellious of Israel fell in the wilderness, prevented from entering the Promised Land, so too will the rebellious will perish rather than turn to Yeshua.

12.6 ⁶Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God so they might take care of her for 1,260 days. (continued)

- ✓ she has a place – (hopu echei ekei topo n): a specific location in the wilderness.
 - A possible location suggested, by several people, is Petra in Jordan. Ruins of an ancient city of Edom with very mountainous walls and a recently restored water cistern system.
 - In the middle of a passage by Isaiah describing a time of destruction coming upon the people of Moab, during which they needed Zion's favor for refuge is a reversal in the scene. "Give counsel, execute justice. Cast your shadow like night at noonday. Hide the refugees, do not betray the fugitive. ⁴ Let My refugees stay with you. Be for Moab a hiding place from the face of the destroyer. For the extortion is at an end, devastation ceases, oppressors are gone from the land. ⁵ A throne will be established in mercy, and One will sit on it in truth - in the tent of David - One who seeks justice and is ready for righteousness." Isaiah 16:3-5
 - "Send lambs to the ruler of the land from Sela in the desert to the mountain of the Daughter of Zion." Isaiah 16:1
 - Sela is the biblical name of Petra (the Rock).
 - Is it possible that the path by which the Moabites sent lambs from Petra via the wilderness to Jerusalem is to be retraced by the "sheep" of Israel who flee in the time of Jacob's Trouble? Zech 13:7-9, Isa 26:20-21
 - He will also invade the Beautiful Land. Many will be overthrown, but these will escape from his hand: Edom, Moab, and the chief of the sons of Ammon. Daniel 11:41 Daniel is prophesying that the Antichrist will enter many countries including the "Glorious Land" (Israel) but for some reason he is unable to enter Edom, Moab and Ammon (modern day Jordan) which includes Bozrah & Petra.
 - The second coming of Yeshua scriptures indicate that He is seen coming from this region, where He released the remnant and is heading to Jerusalem. Isa 42:11-13, 63:1-6, Psa 60:9-12, 108:10-13 The "Strong City" is Petra.
- ✚ "Petra is located in a basin within Mt. Seir and is totally surrounded by mountains and cliffs. The only way in and out of the city is through a narrow passageway that extends for about a mile and can only be negotiated by foot or horseback. This makes the city easy to defend and it's surrounding high cliffs give added meaning & confirmation to Isaiah 33:16: "He will dwell on the heights - his refuge will be an impregnable cliff. His bread will be provided, his water assured." The name Bozrah means "sheepfold". An ancient sheepfold had a narrow entrance so that the shepherd could count his sheep. Once inside the fold, the sheep had room to move around. Petra is shaped like a giant sheepfold... surrounded by cliffs." *The Footsteps of Messiah* by Arnold Fruchtenbaum.
- ✓ prepared by God – (hetoimasmenon): having been prepared before her flight.
- ✓ they might take care of her – other people will provide the remnants' needs.
 - Elijah was fed by a raven (unclean bird) and a Gentile widow (Luke 4:26-29)
 - "They" are the Gentiles context of the Sheep & Goats judgement in the Valley of Jehosaphat (the Valley of Decision) where the Gentiles are gathered before Yeshua to determine who enters the Millennial Kingdom based upon their provision for "His brothers" during the time of Jacob's Trouble. Matt 25:32
 - This will apply to all Gentiles wherever Yeshua's brethren are during the Time of Jacob's Trouble.

12.7 ⁷ And war broke out in heaven, Michael and his angels making war against the dragon. The dragon and his angels fought,

✚ This verse is a time mark – midpoint of the 7 years (70th week). John returns to the consecutive order of the Tribulation; now entering Jacob's Trouble.

- ✓ Michael – One of the chief princes; an archangel. Dan 10:13
 - Mentioned in Daniel, Jude, Revelation
 - Angel of the highest rank, a warrior.
 - Guardian over Israel. Dan 12:1-2, 10:13, 21
 - Michael battled with satan over the body of Moses. But when Michael the archangel, disputing with the devil, was arguing about the body of Moses, he did not dare to render a judgment against him for slander, but said, "May the Lord rebuke you!" Jude 1:9 TLV

✚ What this war will look like is hard to imagine with all the power and force angels possess!

12.8-9 ⁸ but they were not strong enough, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven. ⁹ And the great dragon was thrown down—the ancient serpent, 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.

- ✓ Deceives – (planao): to go astray, wander, to deceive by leading to error, to seduce, often the sense of deceiving oneself.
- ✓ He was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him – **forever banned, but woe to the earth! Satan's fury knows no limits.**

12.10 ¹⁰ Then I heard a loud voice in heaven saying, "Now have come the salvation and the power and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Anointed One, for the accuser of our brothers and sisters—the one who accuses them before our God, day and night—has been thrown out.

- ✓ Now have come – (egeneto): prophetic aorist.
 - The Kingdom doesn't arrive until the events of Revelation 19. In cutting off Satan's access to Heaven, the Kingdom is now so near as to be considered fulfilled.
- ✓ His Anointed One - The kings of earth set themselves up and rulers conspire together against ADONAI and against His Anointed One Psalms 2:2 TLV
- ✓ the accuser – satan
 - Satan is continuously bring charges against the elect; like bring a legal charge before a judge, as in court. 1 Peter 5:8

12.11 ¹¹ They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives even in the face of death.

- ✓ They – referring to the martyrs of the Great Tribulation. Rev 7:9-10
- ✓ the blood of the Lamb – **Yeshua's sacrifice on the cross; the shedding of His blood covers all our sin.**
 - The accuser brings before God.
 - They are justified with God.
 - Sin debt is paid in full.
 - They are made perfect before God.
- ✓ Testimony – (marturia): witness, evidence, they have faith in Yeshua and tell others the Good News of the Gospel.
- ✓ they did not love their lives – They would rather die than be unfaithful to Yeshua. They will never bow to the antichrist and satan.

12.12 ¹²Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the earth and the sea, for the devil has come down to you with great rage, knowing that his time is short.

- ✓ great rage – (thumos): hot anger, passion, rage, fierceness.
 - A double woe: the wrath of satan. The third woe – the 7th Trumpet.
- ✓ his time is short – Satan now has little opportunity and time, so he is going to go after the Jews with intensity, great passion and hatred. He must try to destroy them so they can't cry out to Yeshua.
 - This is the reason they will flee to the wilderness.

12.13 ¹³Now when the dragon saw that he had been thrown to the earth, he stalked the woman who had given birth to the male child.

- ✓ Stalked – (dioko): to put to flight, drive away, run after, pursue.
 - ¹⁵"So when you see 'the abomination of desolation,' which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the Holy Place (let the reader understand), ¹⁶then those in Judea must flee to the mountains. ¹⁷The one on the roof must not go down to take what is in his house, ¹⁸and the one in the field must not turn back to get his coat. ¹⁹Woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! ²⁰Pray that your escape will not happen in winter, or on Shabbat. ²¹For then there will be great trouble, such as has not happened since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will. ²²And unless those days were cut short, no one would be delivered. But for the sake of the chosen, those days will be cut short. Matt 24:15-22

12.14 ⁴But the woman was given two wings of the great eagle, so that she might fly away from the presence of the serpent into the wilderness, to the place where she is taken care of - for a time, times, and half a time.

- ✓ Wings – (pterux): used symbolically in Rev 12:14, suggesting the definiteness of the action, the "wings" indicating rapidity and protection. What they use to leave is unknown.
- ✓ to the place – Note: The Lisan Peninsula separates the two basins of the Dead Sea at its' narrowest point. This peninsula is a likely route from the Judean wilderness to Jordan, the area of Bozrah and Petra. *BiblePlaces.com*



12.14 ⁴ But the woman was given two wings of the great eagle, so that she might fly away from the presence of the serpent into the wilderness, to the place where she is taken care of - for a time, times, and half a time.
(continued)

- ✓ taken care of – (trepho): of God’s care for Israel against its enemies in Rev 12:14. To provide food; same term describes how the heavenly Father “feeds” the wild birds. Matt 6:26, Luke 12:24
 - At the Sheep & Goat judgement it’s the sheep who fed and cared for Yeshua’s brothers, the Jews in their time of greatest need.
- ✓ for a time, times, and half a time – the last half of Daniel’s 70th week. Dan 7:25, 12:7

12.15 ¹⁵ And from out of his mouth, the serpent spewed water like a river after the woman, in order to sweep her away with a flood.

- ✓ his mouth – (stoma): of the Devil speaking as a dragon or serpent.
- ✓ like a river – (potamus): symbolically “flood” in Rev 12:15
 - flood (potamos): a river, stream, torrent
- ✚ Note: “Used to describe a natural disaster; or great abundance. Since the origin of this flood is a sign (the mouth of the great dragon) and the text says “like” a river / flood, it’s best to take this as a figure of speech denoting the overwhelming military force of an adversary.” *Vines Expository Dictionary*
- ✚ Remember the antichrist breaks the “false peace treaty” that he arranged (white horse) in the middle of the 70th week. Dan 9:27 Satan uses the man who becomes the antichrist to murder Israel. And those who do not follow God will follow the devil who has a passionate hatred for Israel because they are God’s people.

12.16 ¹⁶ But the earth came to the aid of the woman. The earth opened its mouth and swallowed the river that the dragon had spewed from his mouth.

- ✚ But the earth came to the aid – This is God helping her escape through nature. A common aspect of God’s miraculous protection of His people. Exo 9:23-25, 14:21, Jos 10:11, Job 38: 22-23, Isa 11:15, Ezk 38:22
 - God used the earth “to swallow” literally Korah and his household (Num 16:33, 26:10, Exo 15:12). It seems likely that God will do something similar to those who are pursuing the “woman” when she has to flee.
- ✚ Take confidence in this: God has no limitations.
 - El Elyon (the Most High God) he is truly above all others. Gen 14:19
 - Elohim (the All-Powerful One) there is nothing that exists that can control Him or overpower Him.
 - Jehovah Sabbaoth (the Lord of Hosts). 1 Sam 1:3

12.17 ¹⁷ So the dragon became enraged at the woman and went off to make war with the rest of her offspring - those who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Yeshua.

- ✚ Oy! For that day is monumental. There will be none like it - a time of trouble for Jacob! Yet out of it he will be saved. Jeremiah 30:7

12.18 ¹⁸ And he stood on the shore of the sea.