Chapter 12

PORTRAIT OF GOD’S PROVIDENTIAL CARE FOR ISRAEL

THE WOMAN, THE DRAGON & WAR IN HEAVEN

A word about interpreting symbols:

If we were to take a description of a horse-mill, and insist on expounding it as a description of a mill-horse, no matter what qualifications we might bring to the task, we would find ourselves continually beset with difficulties and embarrassments, which we never could fully overcome. And just so it is with nearly all our commentaries on the Apocalypse. It is not learning, ability, research or ingenuity that is at fault, but an underlying misapprehension of the nature and intention of the record. It is a description of one thing, and they are all the while trying to make it quite another thing. It is an account of the wonders of The Lord’s Day—the day of Judgment, and they propose to explain it of man’s day—the day of the present dispensation. God gave it as The Apocalypse of Jesus Christ, and they seek to interpret it as an apocalypse of human history. This is the great trouble. Nor is it to be wondered that the skin of the lion will not fit the ass, and that the ears of the inferior animal will stick out notwithstanding the most ingenious efforts to cover them.

THREE PERSONALITIES ARE INTRODUCED:

I. The Wonderful Woman  ᵀᵠ  God’s Approach to Salvation
II. The Contested Child (or the Cherished Child)  ᵀᵠ  God’s Advocate in Salvation
III. The Devious Dragon (or the Deceptive Devil)  ᵀᵠ  God’s Adversary against Salvation
    (or the Scheming Serpent, or the Antagonistic Accuser)

REV. 12:1-12  ➤ OVERVIEW

This chapter starts the Introduction that precedes the 7 BOWLS OF WRATH which in turn represents the third and final set of 7 JUDGMENTS in the Book of Revelation. This introductory section lasts all the way to the end of chapter 15. The first and second set of judgments were the 7 SEALS and the 7 TRUMPETS, respectively.

In this passage we have the following persons described:

• The Woman clothed with the sun, the moon at her feet and a crown of 12 stars on her head.
• The Male Child born to the Woman.
• A great red dragon with 10 horns, 7 heads and 7 crowns.

and the following events represented:

• Israel’s historical travail leading to the Messiah.
• Spiritual warfare, Heavenly rebellion of angels (demons)
• Christ’s birth, authority and resurrection.
• Satan and his angels (demons) thrown out of Heaven.

1 From Seiss’ Apocalypse.

Revelation 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. Then being with child, she cried out in labor and in pain to give birth.

There have been many explanations or interpretations of the identity of this woman so it is very important to correctly identify the symbols in this passage.

**IS THE WOMAN THE VIRGIN MARY?**

Some believe her to represent the Virgin Mary, the mother of our Lord, who gave birth to Jesus, the Christ. (A Spanish artist, Bartolome Marillo, consistently portrays her clothed with the sun with the moon at her feet and twelve stars around her head in his paintings). However, this is not an adequate interpretation; it ignores the complete scriptural revelation given by Christ. If this Woman does represent the Virgin Mary then when did the events described in Revelation 12:6, 13-16 happen in her life?

These events did not happen in her life: Mary never fled to the wilderness to flee the oppression of Satan (the devil) and where she was taken care of for 1260 days or 3 ½ years nor will these things ever happen to Mary. So this is not Mary, the mother of Jesus.

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2 *sign, wonder* [4592 semeion (say-mi'-on)] A supernatural sign, wonder, mark or token. A sign of supernatural activity = a divine special effect!

3 *appeared* [3700 optomai (op-tom-ah'-hee)] 1) to look at, to behold 2) to allow oneself to be seen, to appear. a (middle voice) prolonged form of the primary (middle voice); which is used for it in certain tenses; and both as alternate of 3708; to gaze (i.e. with wide-open eyes, as at something remarkable); and thus differing from 991, which denotes simply voluntary observation; and from 1492, which expresses merely mechanical, passive or casual vision; while 2300, and still more emphatically its intensive 2334, signifies an earnest but more continued inspection; and 4648 a watching from a distance):

4 *sky or universe* [3772 ouranos (oo-ran-os)] elevated, vaulted expanse of space.

5 *woman* [1135 gune (goo-nay)] a woman of any age (virgin, married or widow), specially a wife or betrothed woman.

6 *clothed* [4016 periballo (per-e-bal'-lo)] to throw all around, i.e. invest. Array, cast about, put on.

7 *crown* [4735 stephanos (steph'-an-os)] from a primary stepho (to twine or wreathe), primarily that which surrounds in a circle; a chaplet (as an ornament of royalty, a prize in the public games or a symbol of honor generally; but more conspicuous and elaborate than the simple fillet, SN#1238). Literally or figuratively: a) a mark of royal or (in general) exalted rank; b) the wreath or garland which was given as a prize to victors in public games; c) a token of public honor and esteem for distinguished civil or military service. It was usually woven as a garland of oak, ivy, parsley, myrtle or olive leaves, sometimes an imitation of these in gold. It is the same word used for the plaited crown of thorns Jesus wore during His crucifixion. See also note on v. 3 "diadema".

8 *stars* [gaster]: round and bright objects, sometimes spread around. However, sometimes used to refer to spiritual beings, angels where see notes.

9 *being with child* [1722 en] in, by, with; [1064 gaster (gas-tare')] the belly, the womb, the stomach; [2192 echo (ekh'-o)] to have, that is, to hold; to own, to possess. Literally, holding in the womb i.e., temporary place of safety and nourishment.

10 *pain* [928 banazizo (bas-an-id'-zo)] to torture: pain, toil, torment, turmoil, vex. (1) to test (metals) by the touchstone, which is a black siliceous stone used to test the purity of gold or silver by the color of the streak produced on it by rubbing it with either metal. (2) to vex with grievous pains (used of body or mind), to torment 3) to be harassed, to be distressed; used of those who are struggling at sea with a head wind.
NOTE: Here, we have 1260 days (v. 6) equated with a time, times and half a time (v. 14) for the period covering the GREAT TRIBULATION, the 2nd half of the last seven years. This is totally consistent with Daniel’s prophecy of the Seventieth Week.

**IS THE WOMAN THE CHURCH?**

Some believe the Woman represents the Church, who is here depicted as giving birth to Christ. But this contradictory to the revealed truth of God. God’s Word teaches it the other way around, i.e. Jesus Christ gave birth to the Church - He is the Head, we are His body (Ephesians 5:30-32). We are the ones who must be "born" (again)! "Born from above" (John 3:3) and finally Christ has seen the travails of His soul and was satisfied (see Isaiah 53:10-12).

Not only that, but the Church is not described as the Wife of the Lord (and ready to give birth), but the Church is referred to as the Bride of Christ a chaste virgin (without children) engaged to the Lord Christ Jesus (2 Corinthians 11:2). The Church is looking forward to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb! (Revelation 19:7-9).

**IS THE WOMAN A FEMALE FOUNDER OF A CULT?**

Several female founders of cults have claimed to be this woman who is clothed with the sun, the moon under her feet, with a crown of twelve stars around her head that is described in verse 1. For example, the founder of Christian Science (which in reality is neither Christian nor science), Mary Baker Eddy, said she is the woman pictured here. The male child she brought forth is Christian Science and the dragon (Satan) is the mortal mind trying to destroy her belief system! In commenting on this interpretation the late Dr. Ironside said, Richmond .. with such a theory I need not take up the time of sane people!Ω

In the early 1800s a woman by the name of Joanna Southcott said she was the woman described here and that in October, 1814, she would give birth to the man child. She never did but she did gather about 200,000 followers.

**THE BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION!**

A proper study of the Bible proves all these theories are wrong! The woman represented here is explained by scripture itself! After a careful study the woman in verse 1 is without a doubt the nation of Israel! The wonder of this woman clothed with the sun, the moon under her feet and a crown of 12 stars on her head is clearly shown to be a reference to Israel in Genesis 37:9-11 in a dream that Joseph had.

This dream contains the exact same imagery described here with the sun, moon and stars. Jacob, Joseph’s father, understands these symbols to represent his parents and brothers.

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11 Joanna Southcott; April, 1750 - December 26, 1814, was a self-described religious prophetess. She was originally a Methodist, but about 1792, becoming persuaded that she possessed supernatural gifts, she wrote and dictated prophecies in rhyme, and then announced herself as the woman spoken of in Revelation 12:1-6. Coming to London at the request of William Sharp (1749-1824), the engraver, she began to seal the 144,000 elect at a charge varying from twelve shillings to a guinea. At the age of sixty four she affirmed that she would give birth to the new Messiah, the Shiloh of Genesis 49:10, on 19 October 1814 but Shiloh failed to appear and it was given out that she remained in a trance (probably a coma). She died about two months later.
The sun is Jacob, the moon represents Jacob’s wives and the 11 stars represent Jacob’s children — Joseph’s brothers! Jacob’s other name is Israel and from him the nation of Israel was born. Notice that in Joseph’s dream only 11 stars are mentioned as bowing down. Why? Because Joseph cannot bow down to himself in his dream! But as a brother, he is counted as one of the 12 brothers which are represented in Revelation 12:1 by 12 stars around the woman’s head.

What is in view in this passage is Jesus Christ’s Advent (birth) and Ascension (resurrection & going up to Heaven). Note that any references to His life and death are conspicuous by their absence. God’s view of history revolves around His plan of redemption and that is marked by the entrance and exit of the Messiah. (Behold, the Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world ὥστε).

And God did this through the agency of the people of Israel, the Jews! They are the recipients of God’s special favor and blessing, His revelations, the prophets and apostles. But most important of all — Israel is the earthly source of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ! This is the ñmale child

So for Israel, here at the close of human history, the emphasis is on the birth and ascension into glory of their (and our) Messiah. Paul tells us in Romans 3:2 that to the Jew were committed the ñoracles of God.

God’s purpose in here is to link Israel’s past and future to the birth and resurrection of the Messiah, the Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

God is demonstrating Israel’s close connection with the Messiah just prior to the description of Israel’s greatest tribulation and suffering — the time of Jacob [Israel’s] Trouble. Israel will go through a time of suffering Satan’s attacks but will be spared and ultimately enjoy and benefit from the world rule of the Messiah. The focal point is Israel’s future restoration and glory (e.g., Romans 9:4-5; Galatians 4:4-5). God’s purpose in describing these events is to link Israel’s past and future to the Messiah, Jesus Christ!

There may also be an aspect of Israel’s travail throughout history leading up to the final revelation of the Messiah. The one first promised to Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:15), to Abraham (Genesis 12:3), and then to Isaac, Jacob, Judah and finally, David.

This ñAnointed One would bring blessing, salvation, righteousness and judgment. He would be ñImmanuel — God with us, the one who existence has been eternal (Micah 5:2), the one who is called ñWonderful, ñCounselor (Holy Spirit), the ñMighty God, the ñEverlasting Father, the ñPrince of Peace and upon whom the government will rest (Isaiah 9:6-7). And as verse 5 says, the One who will rule with a ñrod of iron. (See also Psalms 2:9; Isaiah 30:14; Daniel 2:24; Revelation 2:27; 19:15).

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12 Oracles [3051 logion (log'-ee-on)] the diminutive of ἡλόγος a word, utterance, narrative or statement. Represents divine response or utterance.

13 See Romans 9:4-5 and Galatians 4:4-5 about the prominence of Israel in God’s future plans; ἐκ ὑμῖν to whom pertains the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the Law, the service of God and the promises. Whose are the fathers and of whom, concerning the flesh, Christ came e .."
Jeremiah 30:6-7 asks a rhetorical question and then likens the time of suffering and trouble coming in the last days for Israel as the travail of a woman going through the pains of childbirth but Israel will be saved out of it.

Ask now, and see, whether a man is ever in labor with child? So why do I see every man with his hands on his loins like a woman in travail of labor, and all faces turned pale? Alas! For that day is great, so that none is like it; and it is the time of Jacob’s trouble, but he shall be saved out of it.

Isaiah 66:7-8 tells us that Israel will bring forth a male child before her great travail (i.e., tribulation) and so she, Israel, has!

Before she was in labor, she gave birth; before her pain came, she delivered a male child. Who has heard such a thing? Who has seen such things? Shall the earth be made to give birth in one day? Or shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion was in labor, she gave birth to her children.

**REV. 12:3 ➢ THE FIERY RED DRAGON WITH 7 HEADS & 10 HORS**

[3 And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads.]

The great and fiery dragon is introduced. His description matches that of the beast out of the sea in Revelation 13:1; that is the same as the beast from the abyss (Revelation 17:7-8). He has 7 heads, 7 crowns, and 10 horns. Note that a different word for "crown", stephanos, is used of the garland of stars around the woman’s head in verse 1.

Compare Daniel 8:9-14 where the power of Satan is represented as the little horn who is the same as the beast out of the sea in Revelation 13:1-2. A horn is a symbol of power. We will talk more about this in our study of Revelation 13:1-6, but Daniel has a vision of the dominant world power during the Great Tribulation and the description given in Daniel 7:7-8; 19-28; 8:23-27 and 11:36-39, 45 is parallel to the account given here. These symbols represent not only persons, but also powers, kings and kingdoms (see Revelation 17:3-6).

We will come to see in verse 9 that the great red dragon is identified as Satan, the Devil and that ancient serpent (from the Garden of Eden: Genesis 3:1-6) the one who deceives the whole earth (Refer to 2 Corinthians 4:3-4 & 1 Thessalonians 2:8-12).

Notice that the dragon is represented as having ten heads and seven horns exactly like the beast from the sea! We will see in chapter 17 that Satan is identified with both the last

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14 diadem [1238 diadema (dee-ad’-ay-mah)] a blue band marked with white which Persian kings used to bind on the turban or tiara. The kingly head band ornament for the head.

15 dragon [1404 drakon (drak’-own)] probably from an alternate form of derkomai (to look, keen power of sight, perhaps as supposed to fascinate); a fabulous kind of large and slender mythical serpent-like creature often times represented with enormous wings and breathing fire. This might be a reference back to the pre-fallen description of the serpent, the most cunning, crafty animal in the Garden of Eden. For after he had tempted Adam and Eve into sin, God pronounced a curse on this animal that it should from henceforth crawl on its belly in the dust! Perhaps prior to this it could fly?!

16 horn [2768 keras (ker’-as)] a horn, symbol of strength and power. We get our word for the substance an animal’s horn is made out of, keratin.
world kingdom and end time king during the Great Tribulation (see Daniel references above). Three out of 10 heads were removed forcibly; these are ten kings or nations, forming a powerful confederacy. Only the heads are wearing diadems.

The dragon is described as "fiery red" the color of blood. This perhaps in regard to Satan's murderous nature: Jesus tells us that he is "a liar" and is "a murderer from the beginning" (John 8:44).

This is why one will find immoral and criminal behavior conspicuous among those who rebel against God and follow Satan. Examples of this are: (a) child abuse, (b) ritualistic killing of animals and humans, (c) cannibalism, (d) the use of mind altering drugs, (e) illicit and violent sex, and (f) a deep resentment and contempt of Christ Jesus.

The color fiery red, then, may allude to Satan's desire to not only deceive mankind, but to destroy and kill. He has a vicious and murderous character. Satan is a "thief" and as such comes to "steal, kill and destroy" (John 10:10). Hallelujah and thank God that "greater is He (Christ/Holy Spirit) who is in you (believer) than he (Satan) who is in the world" (1 John 4:4).

Since Satan is God's enemy but cannot destroy Him directly, Satan is has always sought ways to destroy the crown of creation man who is made in God's image.

"You have made him a little lower than the angels; you have crowned him with glory and honor, and set him over the works of Your hands." Hebrews 2:7

The dragon described here is the same as the "scarlet-colored beast" who is "full of names of blasphemy" found in Revelation 17:3. Upon this beast another "woman" (in stark contrast to the woman in verse 1), who represents the world's false religious worship system [i.e., Babylon's pagan religion] is sitting. The center of that worship is the ".... great city which reigns over the kings of the earth" which at the time that John wrote this was Rome.

Although it should be obvious, it must be noted that, the great red dragon is not the actual description of what Satan really looks like - it is a representation of his character and purpose. Paul tells us in 2 Corinthians 11:14, 15 that we should not marvel at the various manifestations of Satan because he has the power to appear as "an angel of light" but that "light is counterfeit!"

[See also notes at verse 9].

**REV. 12:4 ➤ BEGINNING OF THE DEMONIC HOST – SPIRITUAL WARFARE!**

The tail of the dragon drew down a third of the stars in Heaven and cast them to the earth. We have already seen that angels are referred to as "stars" in the book of Revelation.
{see comments on Revelation 1:20} and that is what is meant here. In verse 7 we will see Satan and his angels warring with Michael and his angels.

These probably refer to the angels who ἄρτικλο with ἀρχικό (another name for Satan) in Isaiah 14:12-17 and Ezekiel 28:12-19. See also Luke 10:18 and Jude 1:6. In Job 38:7 where angels are depicted as stars singing in heaven.

People also are sometimes referred to as ἀστερικο for example Jacob’s sons in the dream that Joseph had. Hollywood carries on this tradition by calling movie actors ἀστερικο.

As ἀρχικό the great fiery red dragon is the ἀνεμοντιαkerino or ἀνεμοντιαmorning star in direct imitation of Christ Jesus ἀ the true ἀνεμοντιαbright and morning star (Revelation 2:28; 22:16) and the ἀνεμοντιαday star (2 Peter 1:19).

As part of Satan’s original rebellion (of pride: Isaiah 14:12-17) against God in heaven, he took (ἀνεμοντιαrew) 1/3 of God’s angelic host to his side and sent them to earth to become the demons (ἀνεμοντιαdevils) that have been active in promoting false worship on the earth ever since! This false worship is characterized by lawlessness, rebellion against God, humanism and evolution.

Other angels who rebelled with Satan ἂ.... kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, God has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the Judgment of the Great Day (Jude 1:6). Perhaps it is these that will be released during the Great Tribulation and be used as part of God’s judgment upon mankind: the 5th Trumpet Judgment of Revelation 9:1-12.

Jude 1:13 describes people who rebel against God in like manner as: ἂ.... wandering stars to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness forever.

We must also remember that Satan’s ministers, the demonic angelic host (ἀνεμοντιαfallen angels), and their human counterparts, can deceptively ἂ.... transform themselves into ministers of righteousness (2 Corinthians 11:15). This is why Satan is referred to as the one who deceives the whole world in verse 9. What a sobering truth to keep us trusting the Lord for wisdom and a discerning spirit.

This is why Paul wrote Ephesians 6:10-18; to tell us that the battle Christians are in is spiritual and it must be spiritually waged. This warfare is serious and Satan and his demonic host are formidable, but we have been given the spiritual armor to fight and win!

The dragon, Satan, stands ready to devour the child, i.e., Messiah, as soon as he is born. Satan has been at war with the promised seed of the woman (Eve) ever since the
The male child, who the woman (Israel) brings forth, will ſ.... rule the nations with a rod of iron and is none other than the Messiah, Christ Jesus! (see Psalm 2:8,9; Isaiah 9:6,7; 11:1-5).

Note that Isaiah 9:6 tells us that ſ.... unto us is a child born, a son is given. Why is a child born but the son given? Because the son never really had a birth. He is the Son of God ſImmanuel (ſGod with us) who is eternal with the Father and ſ.... whose goings forth are from of old, from everlasting. (Micah 5:2).

This verse goes on to say this child (evidently a grown man at that time) was ſ....caught up21 to God and His throne. Since we have identified the child as Christ Jesus, this obviously refers to His resurrection and ascension as recorded in the Gospels and Acts 1:8-11.

REV. 12:6 ➢ THE WOMAN FLEES INTO THE WILDERNESS

The Woman, Israel, will flee into the wilderness to a place God has prepared for her. Israel, including the 144,000 Jewish witnesses, will be nourished and protected in this protective wilderness for 1260 days.

Since a Jewish month is 30 days long, 1260 days = 42 months, which is the same as the ſeast from the sea will rule (Revelation 13:5). This period is then also 3 ½ years corresponding to ſu time, times and half a time in verse 14 and Daniel 12:7 (ſimeryption= 1 year). This probably coincides with the latter half of the last ſeek or seven year period of Daniel 9:27.

21 caught up [726 harpazo (har-pad'-zo)] to seize, to grasp hastily, to catch-up by force. (Derivative of ſaireomaio= to take for one’s self). This is the same word used of believers ſcaught up to be with the Lord in the passage dealing with the Rapture of the Church; 1 Thessalonians 4:17. The next verse there says that ſ.... we should therefore comfort one another with these words. This is our promise and hope of protection, safety and deliverance!
Some believe that the place in the wilderness will be the rose-colored rock city of Petra in modern Jordan.

**REV. 12:7 ➤ Ultimate Conflict in Heaven**

There is a major war in Heaven between Michael (who is like God) the archangel and the dragon (Satan), who is Lucifer, the counterfeit son of the morning or the imitation bright morning star.

This particular archangel, Michael, has a very prominent role in the history of Israel. Note the following scriptures:

- **Daniel 10:13** @ Michael, one of the chief princes ..... i.e., of Israel.
- **Daniel 10:21** @ Michael, your prince ..... Whose prince? The prince of Daniel and his people Israel.
- **Daniel 12:1** @ Michael, shall stand up, the great prince who stands for the children of your people ..... i.e., the Jews Israel.

In **Jude 1:9** Michael is revealed as the archangel who contended with Satan over the body of Moses.

What this war will consist of, what weapons are used, how long it will last, we are not told; but evidently it takes place in Heaven sometime just before or during the middle of the seven year peace treaty that the anti-Christ has made on earth.

**REV. 12:8 ➤ The Dragon & His Angels Lose the War in Heaven**

Satan and his angels do not prevail in this war in Heaven and there is no place found for them any more there; i.e., from then on.

What does this mean? It means that until this future time Satan has access to Heaven and, as our adversary and accuser, seeks to do us harm before God. See for example **Job 1:6-12; 2:1-6** and **Revelation 12:10**. In the next verse we see how Satan abuses this privilege.

The spiritual battle in Heaven is only the climax of the ancient spiritual warfare all believers are engaged in right now! Paul tells us in **Ephesians 6:10-18** what this battle is and how we fight in it. God had provided for us, in Christ Jesus, the armor necessary to wage battle against Satan and his ministers. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. We have:

- @ loins girded about with Truth
- @ breastplate of Righteousness
- @ feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of Peace
- @ shield of Faith (above all)
- @ helmet of Salvation
sword of the Spirit, the Word of God
all prayer and supplication in the Spirit and watch with perseverance

This armor enables us, as believers, to stand and fight and likewise be victorious as is summarized in 2 Corinthians 10:3-5:

For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ ......

and 1 John 4:4:

You are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world.

And finally, in 1 John 5:4-5 we are told

For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world--our faith. Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

REV. 12:9 ➤ THE DRAGON & HIS ANGELS CAST OUT OF HEAVEN

After the war in Heaven which Satan and his angels lose, they are cast down to earth and they no longer will have any access there. Some people are surprised to learn that Satan and his angels (demons) ever could be in Heaven in the first place. However, note that in Job 1:6-12; 2:1-7 Satan, that old devil, is shown doing what he does best, accusing one of God's righteous saints of evil in Heaven before the LORD.

This event is prophesied in the Old Testament. The prophet Isaiah writes: How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations? {Isaiah 14:12}.

In Luke's Gospel we read: And he [Jesus] said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven {Luke 10:18}.

Contrast Jesus Christ who is Peace, Truth and the Mediator of reconciliation with God. As such, Jesus is the exact opposite of Satan in all aspects and character!

The ancient serpent of the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3:1-6) is here called by his other names or alias the devil and Satan.

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22 Devil  [1228 diabolos (dee-ab'-ol-os)] a false accuser, slanderer, especially, Satan [compare 7854]. This word literally means to throw around, e.g., an accusation.
23 Satan  [4567 Satanas (sat-an-as)] of Aramaic origin corresponding to act as an adversary, an opponent. An adversary of God and therefore of Christ and His children. From a primary word meaning attack or accuse (Heb. Satan).
It is ironic to note that the Greek word for devil, *diabolos*, has in the name the Greek word that means to throw or cast out [Gk. * ballo*] because he throws stumbling blocks in our way and slings mud at us; but he is in the end thrown or cast out Heaven! A fitting end and poetic justice.

It is Satan who deceives (present tense) the whole earth! **2 Corinthians 4:3-4** tells us another of Satan’s plans: “...in whom the god of this world has blinded the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine to them.”

Satan is also called the “prince of this world” **John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11**. He was able to offer the kingdoms of the world to Jesus on the condition of being worshipped. (Matt 4:8-9). Satan is also called the “prince of the power of the air” in **Ephesians 2:2**.

And finally, **1 Peter 5:8-9** tells us: “Be sober; be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.”

Satan is the "father of lies" and a murderer from the beginning; and he destroys and kills. **John 8:44**. His influence for evil and deception will reach its climax during the Great Tribulation.

God will send a ‘strong delusion’ among those who did not receive (love) the truth (of the gospel) and they will believe the lie, Satan's man, the beast, the ‘man of sin’ **1 Thessalonians 2:8-12**.

In **2 Corinthians 11:14-15** Satan is deceptively able to transform himself into something that appears good, an ‘angel of light’, and gives this power to those who minister on his behalf.

Someone has said: “Satan is to be dreaded as a lion, more dreaded as a serpent, and most dreaded as an angel!” Why? Because he devours and destroys like a lion, he is cunning and wise like a serpent; but he is a liar; and finally he comes to deceive as an angel of light.

Jesus had trouble with the devil, so do we! But Jesus has overcome the world and the devil and in Jesus Christ we can have the victory also! Greater is He (the Holy Spirit) in us than he (Satan) that is in the world. So when Satan comes ‘knocking at your door’ kindly ask Jesus to answer it for you. The passages below give us the truth to be victorious over Satan:

**2 Corinthians 10:3-6** tells us that our “... weapons...... have divine power to demolish strongholds.”

**Ephesians 6:10-18** tells us what we’re battling and how to fight it.

**Philippians 1:6** tells us that we can be confident because, “... he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.”
James 4:7 © tells us to "resist the devil and he will flee from you."
1 John 3:8 © tells us it was for the purpose of "destroying the works of the devil" that the Son of God came.
1 John 4:4 © Christ in us is more than sufficient match for the devil because "greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world."
Romans 8:35-39 © tells us that nothing in creation will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord and that we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us.

The spiritual battle for the hearts and souls of men and women is still raging today. But one day, Christ Jesus and His army of saints will be completely and totally victorious over Satan. There will be a new heavens and a new earth and all will be made new. (Isaiah 65:17; 66:22,23; 2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 21:1-7). All that is evil and sinful will end up residing in Hell, the Lake of Fire (Revelation 21:8; 22:11).

The Christian heritage is summed up by the apostle John in 1 John 2:15-3:3 and 5:17-21. We have overcome Satan, the devil, that ancient serpent, the dragon and the world through faith in the redeeming work of the blood of Christ Jesus! (1 John 5:4,5 and Revelation 12:11).

REV. 12:10-12 ➤ THE CONSUMMATION & POWER OF CHRIST JESUS’ KINGDOM

At the end of the Great Tribulation, when Christ Jesus returns to establish His kingdom over this world, FOUR things are consummated:

1. salvation © the completed process started with the salvation of our souls by the death and resurrection of Jesus includes our resurrection: Romans 8:18-25.
2. strength © Christ Jesus, the King of kings & LORD of lords, will rule on earth with a rod of iron.
3. the Kingdom of God © the physical kingdom of God comes to earth.
4. the power of His Christ © now is fully revealed. There will be no more guessing, debate, speculation or skepticism about Jesus’ existence or authority. He returns to receive that which is His.

REV. 12:11 ➤ THE METHOD OF OVERCOMING

Believers overcome the "evil one," Satan, three ways…

1. by the blood of the Lamb © our HOPE

[See Hebrews 10:19-25; 12:22-24; 1 Peter 1:2]

There is an old Talmudic tradition among the Jews that Satan accuses the saints day and night, except on the Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur) when the high priest would normally enter the Holy of Holies and sprinkle the Ark of the Covenant with the blood of a lamb.
Covering for sin and death was first demonstrated to Adam and Eve in God making clothes of animal skin (lamb's?). The animals that died to accomplish this were sacrificial in that their blood had to be shed!

The ark that God had Noah build by pitching it inside and out is also symbol of atonement. The Passover is another dramatic example of this principal. When the blood of the sacrificial lamb was applied to the door posts, the ANGEL OF DEATH passed over those houses and the people inside were saved.

For those who have been saved through the blood of the lamb, every day is a Day of Atonement (At-one-ment)! For those who have been clothed with the righteousness of Christ Jesus there is no condemnation. When God looks at a believer He sees the blood of Christ Jesus applied to our hearts and every day becomes a day of Passover.

Because of this we have salvation and hope (Ephesians 2:13) and the gates of Hell will not prevail against us (Matthew 16:18).

(2) Ñby the word of their testimony© OUR FAITH.

Because of our blessed Hope, we are to bear witness to the character and power of God and what He has done in our lives. See 1 Peter 3:13-18; 1 John 5:4-5.

(3) Ñloved not their own lives unto the death© OUR LOVE, DEVOTION, OBEDIENCE.

This means that Christ Jesus is to be our first Love (John 12:24-26). Ñ...... he that hates his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal ......Ñ.

Paul writes about all three of these aspects of our overcoming in Philippians 1:20-21:

Ñ...... According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but with all boldness, as always, now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death. For to me to live is Christ and to die is gainÑ.

A person who has this level of Love, commitment and trust will not fear anything in this life! See also 2 Corinthians 4:7-12; 6:1-10.

A modern example of such faith and commitment is Jim Elliot, missionary to the Auca Indians in New Guinea. He died a martyr's death at the hands of cannibals, people whom he wanted to reach with the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He was bright and very well educated and some wondered why he chose the life of a missionary. Once questioned as to why he was giving up the easy life for one of hardship, his oft quoted reply was: ÑHe is no fool who gives up that which he cannot keep to gain that which he cannot loseÑ. Later, through the on-going efforts of his wife and others, those same Indians eventually believed the Gospel and were saved through the blood of the Lamb ïJesus Christ! Jim Elliot's heart for sharing the message of salvation through Jesus Christ was and is his treasure stored up in Heaven for him.
Paul's words in Romans 6:22 come to mind: 

\[ \text{But now having been freed from sin and enslaved to God, you derive your benefit, resulting in sanctification, and the outcome, eternal life.} \]

Another more recent example of such a deep and abiding trust in the Christ Jesus occurred recently in Littleton, Colorado just outside of Denver at the Columbine High School\(^{24}\). There a young lady name Cassie Bernall died a martyr's death and in so doing testified to the fact that she did not \(\text{love her own life even unto death}\). Cassie was a 17-year-old junior with long blond hair, hair she wanted to cut off and have made into wigs for cancer patients who had lost their hair through chemotherapy. She was active in her youth group at Westpool's Community Church and was known for carrying a Bible to school. Her favorite movie was \textit{Braveheart}, in which the hero dies a martyr's death.

Cassie was in the school library reading her Bible when the two young killers burst in. According to witnesses, one of the killers pointed his gun at Cassie and asked, \(\text{Do you believe in Jesus?}\)

\(\text{Yes, I believe in Jesus.}\)

\(\text{Why?}\) the gunman asked. Cassie did not have a chance to respond; the gunman had already shot her dead.

As her classmate Mickie Cain told Larry King on CNN, \(\text{She completely stood up for God. When the killers asked her if there was anyone who had faith in Christ, she spoke up and they shot her for it.}\)

Cassie's martyrdom was even more remarkable when you consider that just a few years ago she had dabbled in the occult, including witchcraft. She had embraced the same darkness and nihilism that drove her killers to such despicable acts. But two years prior to her death, Cassie dedicated her life to Christ, and turned her life around. Her friend, Craig Moon, called her a \(\text{light for Christ}\). According to the Boston Globe, on the night of her death, Cassie's brother Chris found a poem Cassie had written just two days prior to her death. It read:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Now I have given up on everything else} \\
\text{I have found it to be the only way} \\
\text{To really know Christ and to experience} \\
\text{The mighty power that brought} \\
\text{Him back to life again, and to find} \\
\text{Out what it means to suffer and to} \\
\text{Die with him. So, whatever it takes} \\
\text{I will be one who lives in the fresh}
\end{align*}
\]

\(^{24}\) Columbine High School, Littleton, Colorado; April 20, 1999. There, two gun wielding students killed twelve fellow students and one teacher of which, according to some accounts, eight were Christians i four Evangelicals and four Catholics. Their attempts to blow up the school with propane tanks failed. The two students ended their murderous rampage by committing suicide.
Newness of life of those who are
Alive from the dead.

The best way all of us can honor Cassie's memory is to embrace that same courageous commitment to our faith especially in raising our children!
Here, the words of our dear Lord and Savior, Jesus, come to mind: “Well done, good and faithful servant. Now enter into the joy of your Lord” (Matthew 25:23).

Never underestimate the blood of the Lamb. For by it the way is secured for Satan's defeat. The word of their testimony is based on faith. Note what John tells us in 1 John 5:4-5 that it is our faith that overcomes the world and Satan is the "ruler of the present age". John also speaks of the testimony EACH believer has in Jesus Christ (1 John 5:9-13). This testimony is based on the gospel of the Jesus' shed blood for the forgiveness of sins: Revelation 1:2,9.

REV. 12:12 ➤ THE WRATH OF THE DEVIL: TWO SPIRITUAL CONDITIONS

Here, in verse 12, we see again the two aspects or viewpoints of God's judgment representative of two different spiritual conditions:

2. Woe on earth among those who worship Satan.

Note that one cannot serve two masters a person is either for Jesus or he/she is automatically against Him! See for example Matthew 6:24; 12:30: He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad.

See also Deuteronomy 30:15-20; Jeremiah 17:5-8; 21:8-10; John 3:16-21 and 1 John 5:9-13.

Note also that Christians will either be a savor of death or a savor of life to those around them {2 Corinthians 2:14-17}.

When Satan is cast out of Heaven (i.e., thrown out!) he comes to earth seeking vengeance and has great wrath. The Greek here refers to great passion (as when breathing hard), great fierceness or great indignation. We would say hot headed.

Satan knows he has only a short time left a maximum of 42 months (1260 days = 3 ½ years) to accomplish his work of lawlessness and evil. This will lead to Revelation 13 where the 1st beast (out of the sea) is revealed with all the power and attributes of Satan (7 heads, 10 horns and 10 crowns).

REV. 12:13-14 ➤ GOD’S SUPERNATURAL INTERVENTION

25 wrath [2372 thumos (thoo-mos')] passion (as if breathing hard): fierceness, indignation, wrath, angry, heat, anger boiling up and soon subsiding again; wine of passion, inflaming wine (which either drives the drinker insane or kills him with its strength). We derive our English word thermal and thermos from this
The dragon (Satan) now realizing he has been relegated (thrown down) to earth and denied any access to Heaven, seeks an outlet for his hot anger—he pursues\(^{26}\) the "woman" (Israel: the 144,000 Jewish witnesses or all believing Israel?) to destroy her with a vengeance. The Jewish remnant becomes the focus of Satan's attempts to "get even" for his failure and defeat in Heaven. Satan pursues (persecutes) Israel. Why? Because it was through Israel that the Messiah (Savior, Redeemer), Jesus, came *the male child* of verse 5.

Note that Jesus came *to seek and save that which was lost* (Luke 19:10; see also Matthew 18:11; Luke 9:56; and John 3:17). But Jesus also came *to destroy the works of the devil* (1 John 3:8). Jesus and Satan are enemies and diametrically opposed and opposites to one another. This Jesus, the Messiah, came from the womb of Israel, so Satan seeks to destroy her.

But God supernaturally intervenes by making it possible for the woman (Israel) to escape. God preserves the Jewish remnant by giving them safe passage (with two wings of an eagle) and brings them to a place of sanctuary in the wilderness\(^{27}\), reserved specially for them. For how long? God's Word tells us for a "time, times and half a time" (3 \(\equiv\) years).

There, in that *wilderness*, the LORD Himself will nourish\(^{28}\) or care for them. And there the Jewish remnant, believing Israel, will remain until the end of the Great Tribulation, safe from the attacks of Satan (*from the face or presence of the serpent*). This is the period of time prophesied by Jesus in Matthew 24:15-21 when He said:

*Therefore when you see the ‘abomination of desolation,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place* (whoever reads, let him understand), "then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains. Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house. And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes. But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath. For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.*

As we shall see, in the next chapter, the *abomination of desolation* refers to the *beast from the sea* having 7 heads and 10 horns. This one is none other than *the man of sin*, *the lawless one*, and the *little horn*—the *anti-Christ* or *instead of Jesus*.

What is this *abomination of desolation*? It probably occurs when the anti-Christ enters the temple and there defiles it by claiming to God and be worshipped. See 2 Thessalonians 2:3-4.

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\(^{26}\) *persecuted* [1377 \*\*dioko\*\* (dee-o'-ko)] to pursue (in a hostile manner); to run after, to put to flight, harass or trouble, By implication, to persecute: to press upon.

\(^{27}\) *wilderness* [2048 \*\*eremos\*\* (er'-ay-mos)] waste land, uninhabited, lonely regions, desolate, solitary place. Examples are: Joshua Tree National Forest, Calif., Mojave Desert, Calif., Bonneville Salt Flats Utah; Negev desert in southern Israel.

\(^{28}\) *nourished* [5142 \*\*trepho\*\* (tref'-o)] a primary verb (properly, threpho; but perhaps strength.); properly, to stiffen, i.e. fatten (by implication, to cherish [with food, etc.], pamper, rear): bring up, feed, nourish, to give suck.
The "travail" of Israel (Jacob) was often prophesied in the Old Testament. See for example Isaiah 26:16-21 and Jeremiah 30:4-9. This is the "time of Jacob's (Israel's) trouble.

Jeremiah 30:7 says: "Alas! For that day is great, so that none is like it; and it is the time of Jacob's trouble, but he shall be saved out of it."

Also note that Jesus mentions that one does not want this day to be on the Sabbath because it will be a terrible time of suffering and anguish (see Matthew 24:20 above). That has meaning primarily to the Jewish remnant who gather for worship on Saturday, not the Church! This is reminiscent of God's divine grace and power in sustaining Israel in the wilderness during their 40 years of wandering, in exile from the Promised Land where they were fed and their clothes did not wear out nor did their feet swell! (Deut. 8:4).

One application here to the followers of Christ Jesus is to remain faithful in the face of difficult times and a reminder that: "No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, that you may be able to endure it." 1 Corinthians 10:13. AMEN!

Note the use of the imagery of the "wings of an eagle" in this verse. It is not new to the Jews: "... you have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagle's wings and brought you to myself." (Exodus 19:4).

"... As an eagle stirs on her nest, flutters over her young, spreads abroad her wings, takes them and bears them on her wings, so the LORD alone did lead him and there was no strange god with him." (Deuteronomy 32:11-12).

The Bible paints a beautiful picture of God's love, grace and protection towards Israel during their wilderness experience. Revelation 12:14 reveals the consistency of God's protection for Israel. In the days of her deepest travail and sorrow, God will support and protect Israel again during the "time of Jacob's trouble" when all the nations gather together against her. See Jeremiah 30:4-9 and Zechariah 14:1-3.

There is a similar promise, having to do with eagle's wings, to all those who put their trust in the LORD (Christ Jesus) in Isaiah 40:28-31:

"Have you not known? Have you not heard? The everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, neither faints nor is weary. His understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the weak, and to those who have no might He increases strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall, But those who wait on the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint."
NOTE: If God cannot be counted on to keep His promises with Israel — how can He trusted by us to keep His promises in Christ Jesus?! God has been in control, is still in control and will always be in control!

**REV. 12:15-16 ➢ God’s Supernatural Power to Save Those He Loves**

In verse 14 we see that Satan tries to prevent Israel from escaping. The serpent (Satan) casts out a ἱλοῦδ (or river of water from his mouth to drown the woman (Israel) and destroy her.

I believe the ἱλοῦd here represents an army or armies that will gather together against Israel. (i.e., Zechariah 12:9). The Old Testament is full of references to armies of people being called a ἱλοῦd. See for example Isaiah 8:7-8; 59:19-21; Jeremiah 46:7-10; 47:1-3. Satan essentially tries to do here what the LORD did to the Egyptians in Exodus 15:4-13.

But the earth ἔνοπεσεν ἡ γλώττα and swallows up the flood waters. This may refer to a strategically located earthquake which opens a fissure into which the army falls. Or, as others believe, it may refer to an extensive sand storm in the desert that destroys the army by literally ἔσβλωσεν it up. This is reminiscent of President Carter sending Marine helicopters into Tehran, Iran, to rescue American hostages only to have the engines succumb to desert sand!

During the Jewish Exodus, God used water to do the ἔσβλωσεν of the Egyptian army of Pharaoh. During the time of Jacob’s trouble, the Great Tribulation, it appears that God will use the earth to ἔσβλωσεν the armies that come against Israel!

**REV. 12:17 ➢ Satan’s Rage & Fury**

Now the dragon (Satan) is enraged at the Woman, Israel, but he cannot destroy her. The 144,000 Jewish ἡ ἐναποίστευτο (Revelation 14:3-4) will be protected and preserved in the wilderness for the later half of the seventieth week of Daniel. That is, during the Great Tribulation period.

So Satan does the next best thing and he redirects his rage and fury. He makes war with the remnant of the woman (Israel) seed, ἡ ἐναποίστευτο, the rest of her offspring, i.e., all those who have believed in the Lord Jesus, Christ, through her testimony. Those who have the ἡ ἐναποίστευτο testimony of Jesus Christ. These individuals would include both Gentiles and Jews for there is no Jewish distinction made among them.

This group of believers comprise those who are referred to as ἔσσαι in Revelation 13:7 upon which the 1st beast (from the sea) makes war and eventually overcomes. Jesus calls them the ὑλεκτοί in Matthew 24:21, 22, 31.

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29 enraged, angry [3710 orgizo (or-gid'-zo) ] to provoke or enrage, to arouse to anger, to be angry, to be wrathful; (passively) become exasperated. This word also came to be used for inflamed passion, i.e., ἔσβλωσεν
NOTE: The preservation of the 144,000 Jewish evangelists and the subsequent rage of Satan on their offspring set the stage for the next chapter, Revelation 13.