

# Revelation 12 - The Summary, Reason & Details of Satan's Persecution of Israel

## IV. After These Things (Rev 4:1—22:21)

- (2) During the Tribulation (Rev 6:1—19:21)
  - (H) Israel's Flight (12:1-17)
    - (a) Satan's Two Strategies
      - (i) Past, Failed Strategy (12:1-5)
      - (ii) Present & Future Strategy (12:6-17)

### **Symbolism**

Rev 12 is the most symbolic chapter in the most symbolic book in the NT. Even though symbols are used to tell the prophetic story of Israel, the symbols are clear when interpreted by comparing Scripture with Scripture. Arnold Fruchtenbaum rightly tells us "that every symbol in the Revelation is explained either elsewhere in the Revelation itself or somewhere else in the Bible." In this passage, as well as throughout the Book of Revelation, symbols represent literal, historical persons, places or things. John MacArthur says, "The literal approach to interpreting Scripture allows for normal use of symbolic language, but understands that it points to a literal reality."

For example, in Genesis there are over a dozen dreams or visions that contain the use of symbols that project prophetic predictions. It is also significant that every dream or vision is fulfilled in the lifetime of the individual who sees the dream or vision. Therefore, since the biblical text interprets every one of these dreams or visions, we are able to see how the Bible uses prophetic symbols that provide a framework for interpreting prophetic symbolism throughout the rest of Scripture. Never in the Bible are symbols fulfilled by a repetition of the symbol seen in the original prophetic symbol or vision.

In this chapter, God gave John insight into the forces and persons behind the climax of anti-God hostility so he could understand the Bowl judgments, which the 7th Trumpet judgment contains. Essentially, it explains why the world will hate and persecute Israel during the Tribulation. It outlines the secret, behind-the-scenes maneuvers behind the visible conflict portrayed in the seven Bowl judgments. All of this is merely the outworking of a conflict between God and Satan that has lasted throughout human history, since Satan's fall.

*Let every student of this great chapter realize right here that the understanding of this chapter is the key to the understanding of many things. It is the key to correct*

*interpretation of the Book of Revelation, of the Bible, and of history. In this chapter will be found the story of the conflict of the ages. — Herman Hoyt*

## **5 Non-Chronological Parenthetical Insertions**

1. 144,000 Jewish evangelists (Rev 7:1-17)
2. Announcement of no more delay; Two Witnesses (Rev 10:1—11:14)
- 3. Israel's Flight (Rev 12); Two Beasts (Rev 13); Six Scenes of Hope (Rev 14) (Rev 12:1—14:20)**
4. Gathering of the nations to Armageddon (Rev 16:13-16)
5. Babylon's fall (Rev 17:1—19:6)

If you remember that a parenthetical insertion happens between the 6th & 7th judgments in each phase (#1, #3, #4), then just remember that another parenthetical insertion happens after the 7th Trumpet and after the 7th Bowl (#2, #5).

The announcement made in the 7th Trumpet judgment will be essentially "throwing down the gauntlet" to Satan. As he always does, he will change strategies in an attempt to thwart God's plan. Rev 12-13 is an overview of Satan's plan. It's very similar to what Saul did when God removed him from the throne of Israel and anointed David as the next king. Saul went out to destroy David to prevent him from taking the throne.

In Rev 12, Satan will attack Israel in an attempt to thwart the kingdom from coming, since he knows that the kingdom will come through Israel. In Rev 13, Satan uses two men to rule the world and attempt to eradicate Israel from the face of the earth.

In addition to revealing Satan's plans during the Tribulation, specifically for Israel, Rev 12 reveals to us the reality of the fallen angelic world. The reality is that the moment you accept Christ, you get three enemies who were not your enemies before (1 John 2:15f): the flesh (our fallen nature), the world (the systems and philosophies that are anti-God), and the devil (Satan and his fallen angels).

## **Revelation 12**

### **The Summary of Satan's Persecution of Israel**

- (H) Israel's Flight (12:1-17)
  - (a) Satan's Two Strategies
    - (i) Past, Failed Strategy (12:1-5)

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

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

1 A spectacular sign appeared in the sky: a woman dressed with the sun, who had the moon under her feet and a victor's crown of twelve stars on her head.

1 And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars:

- The passage begins with a historical review and summary in v1-5; this passage details Satan's past, failed strategy

— These verses summarize the whole life of Messiah from just before His birth to His ascension. It provides the OT background for Satan's hatred of the Jews and his war against the Jews in Revelation.

- "...sign" - *sēmeion*, a textual clue that John is communicating to us using symbolism (Cf. v3); in this case, it refers to something that signified or represented something else (v3; 13:13-14; 15:1; 16:14; 19:29).

— Rev 12 is the most symbolic chapter in the most symbolic book of the Bible. Nowhere else is symbolism used more than it is used in this chapter. Yet, there is an easy way to ascertain and understand what every symbol in this chapter means.

— John saw two signs in the heavens:

1. Israel is pictured as a "woman" (v1-2)

2. Satan is pictured as a "great red dragon" (v3)

— The fact that the sign is "great" or "spectacular" [ISV] shows that it is something remarkable and highly significant

— No "signs" appear in Rev 1-11, but at least seven signs are mentioned in Rev 12-19. Three are in heaven (12:1; 12:3; 15:1); four are on the earth (13:13-14; 16:14; 19:20); only one is a sign of good (12:1), all the others are omens of evil or judgment. The signs always explain or amplify previously presented material.

- "...in heaven" - this sign appeared in heaven, not in the earth's sky or atmosphere, but in the heavenly scene John had been viewing

— John sees a great sign in heaven portraying events that will happen on the earth

- "...woman" - much debate about who this woman is, but it's not that difficult: the woman = Israel

— The "woman" was present at the birth of Christ (v5); she was also present on earth during the 1,260 days prior to Christ's return (v6,13-17)

— She will be the object of persecution during the Tribulation (v13; Cf. v17)

— OT references of Israel as a Woman: Is 26:18; 47:7-9; 54:1-6; 66:7-8; Jer 3:20; 4:31; 31:32; Lam 1:1; Ezek 16:8-14,32; Hosea 2:16-20; Micah 4:9-10; 5:1-3

— Israel (not the Church) gives birth to the male child (v5; Cf. Rom 9:5)

— Many interpreters believe this woman is the Church. This presents a problem because the woman is giving birth to Jesus. Last I checked, Jesus was the cornerstone and founder of the Church, the Church did not give birth to Jesus (Matt 16:18).

- The woman is pregnant; if she represents the Church, something is horribly wrong because the Church is always portrayed as the virgin bride of Christ (2 Cor 11:2; Eph 5:25-27,31-32)
- Others believe the woman is the Virgin Mary...a better guess than the woman being the Church, but remember that John said he saw a *sign*; Mary was a literal person
- "...sun...moon...twelve stars" - all are common OT figures relating to Israel; the specific OT background for this sign is Joseph's dream (Gen 37:9-11; Cf. Is 26:17-18; 60:1-3,20)
- From Gen 37:9-11, the rest of John's vision can easily be interpreted:
- "...clothed with the sun" - an allusion to Gen 37:9-10 where the sun represented Jacob who stood in the lineage to inherit the blessings of the Abrahamic Covenant
- "...the moon under her feet" - represents either Leah or Rachel
  - Leah: Rachel was dead by the time of Gen 37:9-10; she in turn represents Jewish women or Jewish motherhood (Jer 31:15; Matt 2:18)
  - Rachel: Rachel was the mother of Joseph, the son who had the original dream
- "...twelve stars" - a clear reference to Jacob's 12 sons, the 12 Tribes of Israel (Cf. 7:5-8; 21:12)
- Jacob understood the meaning of Joseph's dream and said, "Shall your mother and I and your brothers indeed come to bow down to the earth before you?" (Gen 37:10)
 

[OT reference: Gen 37:9-11]

- 2 and she was pregnant and she \*cried out, being in labor and in **pain** to give birth.
- 2 and she was with child; and she \*cried out, being in labor and in pain to give birth.
- 2 She was pregnant and was crying out from her labor pains, the agony of giving birth.
- 2 And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.
- "...pain" - *basanizō*, represents Israel's pain before Jesus' appearance at His first coming
- The cause of the birth pains was the persecution of the nation, inspired by Satan in an attempt to stop the birth of the Messiah and destroy the people of God
- A number of OT passages portray Israel's national spiritual pain leading up to Christ's birth (Is 13:8; 21:3; 26:17-18; 61:7-8; 66:7ff; Jer 4:31; 13:21; 22:23; 30:4-8; Hosea 13:13; Micah 4:10; 5:2-3)
- The reference to the birth/incarnation of Jesus had already occurred when John wrote, so this was a heavenly reenactment of a past historical event

[OT reference: Is 26:17; 66:7; Micah 4:9-10]

### How Do We Know the Woman is Israel?

1. The context immediately preceding Rev 12 sets the stage for this view, as well as the larger context of Revelation. Rev 11:19 describes the Ark of the Covenant, which is never associated with the Church, always with Israel.

2. Israel is often represented as a Woman in the OT: Is 26:18; 47:7-9; 54:1-6; 66:7-8; Jer 4:31; 31:32; Lam 1:1; Ezek 16:32; Hosea 2:16; Micah 4:9-10; 5:1-3. The "Woman" (Israel) is often characterized as being unfaithful to her Husband in the OT. Here, the godly Remnant of Israel is standing true to God during the time of the Great Tribulation.
3. The reference to the sun, moon and stars in the description of the Woman relates to similar descriptions of Israel in the OT (Gen 37:9-11). The sun refers to Jacob, the moon to Rachel (or Leah), and the 12 stars refer to the sons of Jacob (Joseph being the 12th star). The OT has other passages where heavenly bodies are associated with Israel's history: Joshua 10:12-14; Judges 10:12-14; Ps 89:35-37; Jer 31:35-36.
4. And maybe most obvious, it is Israel (not the Church) that gives birth to the male Child. Paul confirms this in Rom 9:5. It is obvious the male Child refers to Christ, since He will rule the nations with a rod of iron in Rev 2:27; 19:15. John 4:22 tells us that "salvation is from the Jews," which means that redemption came through the nation Israel in the form of their Messiah—the male Child. Israel gave birth to Christ, then Christ gave birth to the Church.
5. Regarding the male Child, there is a parallelism between Rev 12 and Micah 5. Micah 5:2 records the birth of the Ruler. The rejection of this Ruler results in the setting aside of the nation ("therefore will he give them up," Micah 5:3). The nation will be in travail "until the time that she which travaileth hath brought forth" (Micah 5:3), that is, until the accomplishment of God's purpose. The same program is outlined in Rev 12.
6. A comparison of Rev 12 with Dan 12:1-7 confirms the identification of the Woman as Israel. In Rev 12, we see a Woman being persecuted by Satan, and Michael the archangel fights against him (v7-9). Likewise, in Dan 12:1 when Daniel's people are said to be in their "time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation," a time lasting 3-1/2 years, Michael "shall...stand up" and contend for Israel, Daniel's people. Thus both Rev 12 and Dan 12 show Michael contending against Satan concerning the 3-1/2 year Tribulation of Israel.
7. The Woman's flight into the wilderness (v14) is reminiscent of Israel's past wilderness experiences. As in the Exodus, Israel was carried away on eagle's wings and protected from the Egyptians (Ex 19:4), so also the Woman will be carried to a place of protection and provision. Just as the nation then was sustained by manna, so will the nation be sustained at this point in time, for 1,260 days. This is the same flight instructed by Jesus in Matt 24:15-21 (Cf. Hosea 2:14).

8. If the Woman is interpreted as Israel, it harmonizes all of the imagery in the rest of Rev 12. If the Woman refers to Mary, when did she flee into the wilderness for 3-1/2 years? If it refers to the Church or people of God (including Gentiles), when did they give birth to Jesus or flee into the wilderness while the Dragon made war with the rest of her offspring?

3 Then **another** sign appeared **in heaven**: and behold, a **great red dragon** having **sevenheads** and **tenhorns**, and on his heads were**sevencrowns**.

3 Then another sign appeared in heaven: and behold, a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads were seven diadems.

3 Then another sign appeared in the sky: a huge red dragon with seven heads, ten horns, and seven royal crowns on its heads.

3 And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads.

- "...another" - *allos*, another of the same kind (vs *hetero*, another of a different kind)
- "...in heaven" - the fact that v3 speaks of heaven (as does v1) indicates that this vision is reenacting the angelic conflict that has played out throughout history, and its relationship and impact upon Israel, especially during the Tribulation
- The past conflicts set the stage and demonstrate a trend, which is the basis for understanding the future conflict noted in v6-17
- "...great red dragon" - identified as Satan in all his fierceness (Cf. v9; 20:2)
- "red" - only used 2x: here, and Red Horse (6:5); associated with death, bloodshed (6:4)
- "dragon" - *drakon*, occurs 12x in the NT, only in Rev (12:3-4,7,9,13,17; 13:2,4,11;16:13; 20:2); every occurrence refers to Satan
- "...seven heads" - the seven consecutive world empires, all of which were birthed and controlled by Satan; the last empire (head) will be ruled by the Antichrist (Rome II)
- Parallel references (13:1; Dan 7:7-8,20,24) indicate a connect to a future world empire
- "...ten horns" - represents 10 kings (17:12); these horns belong to the last of these empires (the 7th head), the empire that will be ruled by the Antichrist
- Ten kings will rule initially under the Antichrist's authority, but when the Antichrist rises to preeminence among them, he will subdue three of them, leaving seven remaining (Dan 7:7-24; Rev 13:1)
- "...seven crowns" - not *stephanos* (victor's crown), but rather *diadema*, kingly crowns, implying rulership, authority and conquest
- These picture the political authority of the seven rulers during the Tribulation (Dan 7:7-24; Rev 13; 17)
- These diadems shift from the head of the dragon (Satan) to the horns of the beast (Antichrist) in 13:1, representing a change in power from the seven kings to 10 kings, who

will rule during the last 3-1/2 years before Christ's return

[OT reference: Is 27:1; Dan 7:7,20,24]

4 And his tail \*swept away **a third** of the **stars** of heaven and hurled them to the earth. And the dragon **stood before the woman** who was about to give birth, so that when she gave birth he might **devour her Child**.

4 And his tail \*swept away a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she gave birth he might devour her child.

4 Its tail swept away one-third of the stars in the sky and knocked them down to the earth. Then the dragon stood in front of the woman who was about to give birth so that it could devour her child when it was born.

4 And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.

- What is being described here are the events in the spiritual world happening during the time of Jesus birth in the physical world

— If you read the account of Jesus' birth in Matt 2 & Luke 2, the only information you'd have is that king Herod was insecure in his throne, so he found out where the Messiah was to be born (Bethlehem) and began to kill all the newborn boys there.

— Now here in Revelation, John tells us about those same events, but does so in the spiritual realm: Satan used Herod's insecurity to kill all newborn boys in order to prevent the Messiah from coming into the world.

— This is a divine commentary on the strategy of Satan to stop the fulfillment of the first divine prophecy in Scripture (Gen 3:15)

- "...a third" - the portion of angels Satan led in rebellion against God (Cf. v8-9; 9:1; Dan 8:10; 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 6), who were cast out of heaven

— The dragon's control over one-third of the innumerable band of angels illustrates his vast power and authority

— Satan brought all of these angels (demons) to Israel for the purpose of trying to destroy the Child when He is born

- "...stars" - when used symbolically, it always refers to angels (v1 may be the only exception to this rule)

— In this passage, the "stars" represent the angels Satan led in his rebellion (v7,9; Job 38:7; Rev 9:1)

— God cast these angels, along with Satan, out of heaven, to the earth; however, today they still have access to heaven (Cf. Job 1). That access will come to an end once and for all in v7-12.

- "...stood before the woman" - the dragon's struggle at this point is focused on the Child, not necessarily the Woman, so he stands before her waiting for the birth to take place
- The initial attempt to destroy the Child was with the slaughter of the babes of Bethlehem (Matt 2:16-18), but throughout the Child's time on earth, Satan attempts to destroy Him before His proper time (Passover) and by the wrong means (stoning instead of crucifixion)
- There was a tremendous amount of demonic activity in the Gospels in contrast to the minimal demonic activity in the OT. Following the Ascension there is a comparatively minimal amount of demonic activity, as seen in the Book of Acts.
- "...devour" - *katesthiō*, the goal of Satan throughout the OT: to devour the Child (see Stratagems of Satan)
- "...her Child" - Jesus Christ

[OT reference: Dan 8:10]

### Satan's Two Strategies

1. Rev 12:1-5: Past, failed strategy
  - Satan tried to prevent the birth of Christ, but failed
2. Rev 12:6-17: Present & future strategy
  - This is what Satan is doing after he's cast out of heaven
  - Satan is trying to gobble up the woman (Israel) because she is the tool that God is using to transfer the authority of this world from Satan to God
  - Israel will accept the next (second) offer of the kingdom, which will allow for the Second Coming

All Satanic activities are carried on under the double motive of *ambition to rule and be worshipped*, and, *hatred toward the One whom God has chosen* to take the kingdom Satan has usurped.

5 And she gave birth to a **Son, a male**, who is going to **rule all the nations with a rod of iron**; and her Child was **caught up** to God and to His throne.

5 And she gave birth to a son, a male *child*, who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne.

5 She gave birth to a son, a boy, who is to rule all the nations with an iron scepter. But her child was snatched away and taken to God and to his throne.

5 And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.

- Satan and his legion of demons failed in their attempt to kill the Child
- This Child, destined to rule the nations with a rod of iron, survived until His proper time for death came. After His resurrection, He ascended into heaven and is presently seated at the right hand of God the Father.

- "...Son, a male" - the Messiah
- "...rule all nations with a rod of iron" - this rule will begin in 19:15; this "iron-handed" rule is rooted in Ps 2:9, and will be necessary due to the fact that nations will exist and the people populating them will still have their sin nature
- After the first generation, there will be unbelievers present in the Kingdom. The natural outworking of their sin nature will have to be restrained. The reign of the Messianic King will be a strict one, and the righteous and just laws emanating from Jerusalem will have to be obeyed.
- "...caught up" - *harpazō*, to seize, carry off by force; to seize on, claim for one's self eagerly; to snatch out or away
- It doesn't always carry the connotation of escape from immediate danger; it's just another way to describe being "taken up" (Cf. Acts 1:2,22; 1 Tim 3:16)
- Same Greek word is translated as "Rapture" in 1 Thess 4; here, however, here it refers to Jesus' ascension to heaven after the resurrection (Acts 1)

[OT reference: Ps 2:8-9; Is 66:7]

This passage (v1-5) is an explanation of what was happening in the spiritual realm when Jesus was born. Matt 2 gives us the story from the physical realm...Herod, jealous of his throne, seeks to kill the purported Messiah Child. If we didn't have these verses, we'd have no idea how far Satan went to stop the birth of Christ. Satan had attempted to stop Jesus' incarnation six previous times, which means that God worked seven times in history to prevent Satan from having his way so Jesus could be born. When we understand how badly Satan wanted to stop the Messiah's birth, we can understand how the birth of Christ was an absolute miracle and should not have happened except for God's direct intervention.

#### (ii) Present & Future Strategy (12:6-17)

6 Then the woman **fled** into the **wilderness** where she \*had a place prepared **by God**, so that there she **would be nourished for 1,260 days**.

6 Then the woman fled into the wilderness where she \*had a place prepared by God, so that there she would be nourished for one thousand two hundred and sixty days.

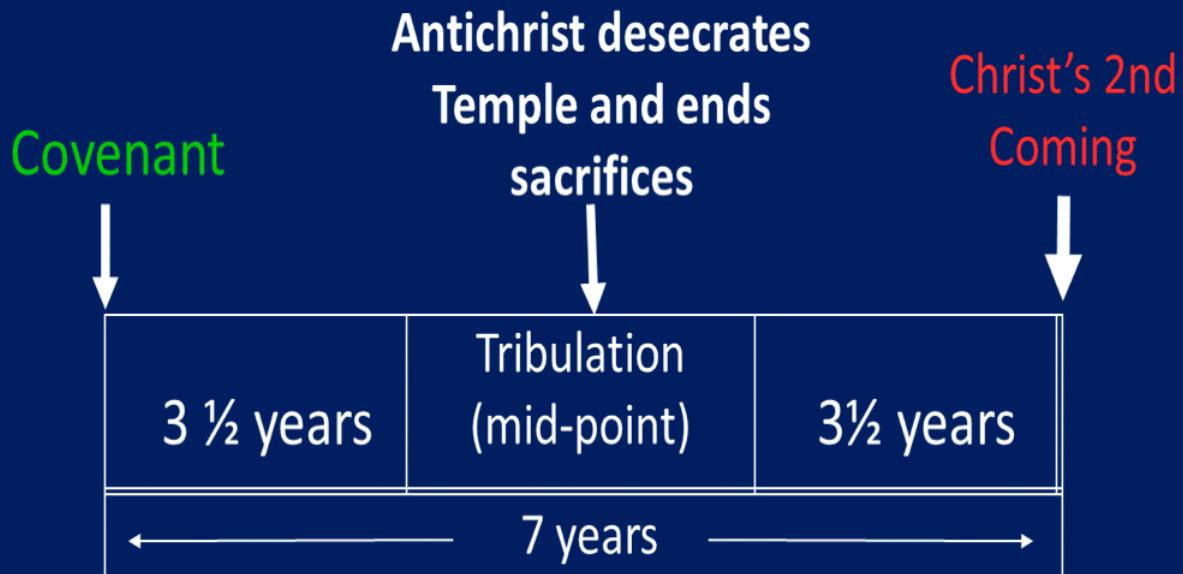
6 Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where a place had been prepared for her by God so that she might be taken care of for 1,260 days.

6 And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred *and* threescore days.

- Verse 6 describes the result of the war in heaven (v7-12); the escape of this woman (Israel) into the wilderness is further described in v13-17
- The events of v6-17 occur at the midpoint of the Tribulation period

- "...fled" - the same flight commanded by Jesus when the Jews in Jerusalem see the Abomination of Desolation by the Antichrist (Cf. Matt 24:15; Mark 13:14)
- "...wilderness" - the "Second Exodus" (Matt 24:15-22; Mark 13:14f), where God will miraculously take care of ("nourish") the Jewish Remnant in a way similar to the 40-year exodus event
  - The "wilderness" is present-day Petra, or Bozrah as it was named in Biblical times (Is 34:1-7; 63:1-6; Jer 49:13-14; Micah 2:12-13; Hab 3:3)
  - To understand this, we have to put together various pieces of the jigsaw puzzle given to us throughout Scripture; see note: **The Place of Refuge** below
  - As in Matt 24:15ff; Mark 13:14f, the Woman (Israel) is pictured in flight at the midpoint of the Tribulation. With Satan's attempt to destroy the Child thwarted, he turns against the nation that produced Him.
  - "...by God" - *Apo tou theou*, meaning "by the command of God"
  - "...would be nourished" - *trep̄hōsin*, an indefinite plural indicating that others will see to the immediate administration of her needed nourishment
    - Is 33:16 - the Remnant will be nourished miraculously with food and water for the duration of the 1,260 days
    - Is 41:17-20 - God will miraculously provide water for the fleeing Remnant in the wilderness
    - Is 65:8-16 - God will provide/nourish the Remnant, but withhold provisions from the apostate Jews. The apostates will be allowed to suffer and die, but the Remnant will be protected and nourished in order to survive the persecutions and devastations of the second half of the Tribulation.
  - "...1,260 days" - 42 months (11:2-3; 13:5) or "a time, times and half a time" (v14; Dan 7:25); the timeframe of Israel's hiding, encompassing the entire second half of the Tribulation period
  - The period of divine care for the Woman (Israel) in the wilderness will correspond with the period of the Antichrist's persecution of Israel in the last half of the Tribulation
  - Verse 5 speaks of Jesus' birth and Ascension; v6 speaks about the second half of the Tribulation. Thus, there is a near 2000-year gap between v5 and v6.
  - There are a total of 24 similar gaps/intervals implied in Scripture; see [Dispensational Gaps](#) for a complete list of similar intervals in Scripture

## DAN 9:27 OVERVIEW OF TRIBULATION PERIOD

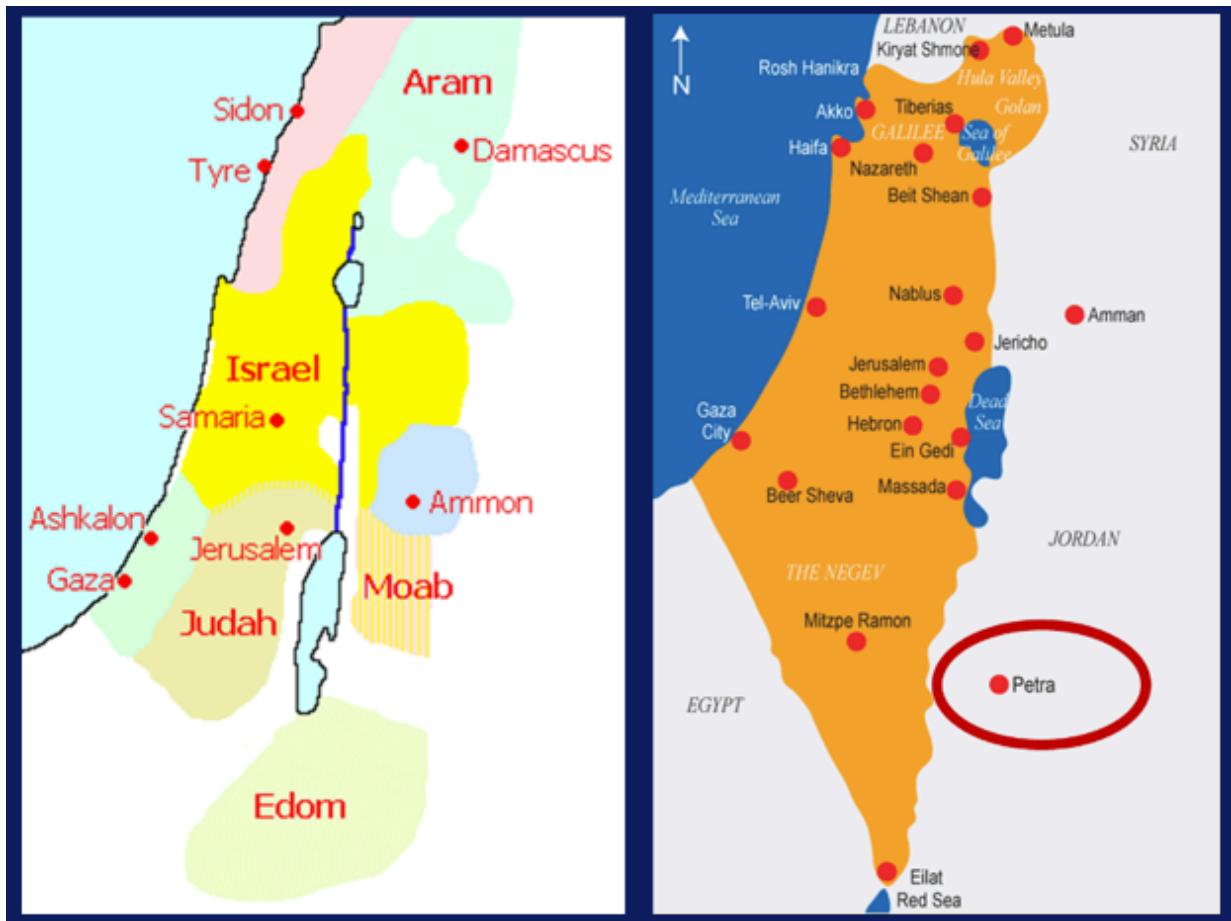


### The Place of Refuge: Petra In Mt. Seir (Jordan)

1. Prepared by God (Rev 12:6)
2. Divine provision of food and water (Is 33:16; Rev 12:6)
3. Wilderness (Rev 12:6,14)
4. Mountains (Is 33:16; Matt 24:16)
5. Defensible (Is 33:16)
6. Jordan (Dan 11:41)
7. Bozrah (Micah 2:12 [KJV])

Petra is located in a basin with Mount 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 by horseback. This means the city is easy to defend. Petra is shaped like a giant sheepfold, with its narrow passage opening up to a spacious circle surrounded by cliffs. The city of Bozrah in Mount Seir is located in ancient Edom or southern Jordan. Since this area will escape the domination of the Antichrist, it is logical for the Jews to flee to this place. Thus, God will provide a city of refuge outside the Antichrist's domain for the fleeing Remnant.

Dan 11:41 indicates that the Antichrist's rule will be worldwide, but the tiny nation of Jordan will escape his authority and domination. This is where the modern day city of Petra sits.



*Another suggestion [for possible locations for the remnant to hide] is the city now known as Petral..this author prefers the identification with Petra. Petra is located in a basin within Mount 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 by horseback. This makes the city easy to defend, and its surrounding high cliffs give added meaning and confirmation to Isaiah 33:16. Only a few abreast can enter through this passage at any one time, giving this city even greater defensibility.*

*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 more room to move around. Petra is shaped like a giant sheepfold, with its narrow passage opening up to a spacious circle surrounded by cliffs. This is not true of the town of Buseira. Furthermore, by modern Petra is a site known as Butzeira, which retains the Hebrew Botzrah.... It will be a very defensible city located in Mount Seir.... Furthermore, as they flee and while they are*

*living there, food and water will be miraculously provided.* [Fruchtenbaum, Footsteps of the Messiah, 296-97.]

7 And there was war in heaven, **Michael** and his angels waging war with the dragon. The dragon and his angels waged war,

7 And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. The dragon and his angels waged war,

7 Then a war broke out in heaven. Michael and his angels fought with the dragon, and the dragon and its angels fought back.

7 And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels,

- Verses 7-12 are parenthetical, providing the reasons for Israel's flight into the wilderness (v6); v13 will pick up the narrative from v6

- The historic conflict between Christ and Satan reaches a climax here, in heaven; Michael and the elect angels war against Satan and his fallen angels, and they are cast out of heaven permanently (v8)

— Satan's defeat is first implemented in heaven by Michael and his angels in preparation for the final defeat of the dragon on earth three and a half years later at the Second Coming (20:1-3)

— "...Michael" - one of the chief princes (Dan 10:13); an archangel, the only one so-called in Scripture (Jude 9; 1 Thess 4:16); he is the leader of God's angelic army

— Dan 12:1 says that Michael will "stand guard" over Israel in the last days, and there will be "a time of distress such as never occurred since there was a nation until that time

— He is also seen as Israel's special patron/protective angel (Dan 10:21; 12:1); he fought in the "Wars of the Lord" (Zech 14:3; Num 21:14)

— The fact that Israel will survive at all during the Tribulation is due to the ministry of the Archangel and Chief Prince, Michael

— This is Michael's second battle with Satan; the other was for Moses' body (Jude 9)

— Hopefully you're Biblically sophisticated enough that you don't believe Satan runs around hell with a long tail and a pitchfork

[OT reference: Dan 10:13,21; 12:1]

8 and **they did not prevail**, and there was **no longer a place found** for **them** in heaven.

8 and they were not strong enough, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven.

8 But it was not strong enough, and there was no longer any place for them in heaven.

8 And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven.

— "...they...them" - the dragon (Satan) and his angels

- "...did not prevail" - Satan and his demons lost the battle
- Satan's force proved weaker, and God threw them out of heaven (Cf. Dan 2:25; Zech 10:10; Luke 10:18; John 12:31; 16:11; Rev 20:11)
- As a result of this battle, Satan will no longer have access to heaven from this point. God will no longer tolerate Satan's accusations against believers.
- Some scholars believe this passage refers to Satan's initial ejection from heaven, along with one-third of the demons that rebelled with him. However, that event was covered in v4. The normal chronological sequence in the passage would render this event sometime in the future.
- "...no longer a place found for them" - *topos heurethē autōn*, means absolute and complete exclusion (Cf. Dan 2:35; Zech 10:10; Rev 20:11)
- "no longer" - *eti*, shows that God currently, until Satan is removed from heaven, continues to hear the accusations of the dragon. After Satan is removed, God no longer must entertain his claims.

9 And the great dragon **wasthrown down**, the **serpent of old** who is called the **devil** and **Satan, who deceives the whole world**; he was **thrown down** to the earth, and his angels were **thowndown** with him.

9 And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is 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.

9 The huge dragon was hurled down. That ancient serpent, called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world, was hurled down to the earth, along with its angels.

9 And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

- To avoid any confusion or misinterpretation of the identity of the "great dragon," this verse identifies him in five ways:

- "...the great dragon" - repeating his title from v3; his title emphasizes his remorseless cruelty
- "...serpent of old" - stresses his crafty and subtle character (Cf. 20:2; Gen 3:1-5; Luke 10:18-19; Rom 16:20; 2 Cor 11:3)
- "...devil" - *diaballō*, "I defame, slander, accuse falsely" or "I separate, act as an adversary"
  - His mission is to arraign men before the bar of divine justice. When Satan is not actively accusing believers, he roams the earth collecting evidence for his next prosecution.

- "...Satan" - *Satanas*, in Hebrew means "adversary"; a superhuman adversary who inspired David's census, accused Job, and accused Joshua the high priest
  - Satan's malevolent work of accusing believers before God will cease. However, he will continue to persecute the living brethren of the martyrs still on earth even though he can no longer accuse them in heaven.
- "...who deceives the whole world" - he is the master of deception with an uncanny ability to mislead people
  - He tricked Judas into betraying Jesus (John 13:2) and tried to undercut the faith of Peter (Luke 22:31). His cunning in luring people to ruin (Cf. 2 Cor 2:11; 11:3; 1 Tim 2:14; 2 John 7; Rev 2:20; 13:14; 18:23; 19:20; 20:3,8,10) combines with his adversarial role in accusing them once they have fallen.
  - He was able to deceive a full one-third of an innumerable cohort of angels, who stood in the presence of God Himself, in heaven, and saw His glory
  - He was able to deceive Adam and Eve when they weren't in a sinful condition yet...they did not have a sin nature, and he was able to fool them with his lies
    - If he was able to deceive one-third of angels who were in God's presence, and Adam and Eve without their sin nature, what do you think he is capable of with us?
  - This is why the foundational piece of armor for the believer is the Belt of Truth (Eph 6:14)
- "...thrown down" [3x] - *ballō*, means to throw out or let go, not caring where he falls; this is the 4th (out of 6) stage of the progressive defeat of Satan. See [Satan](#) and [Satan's Strategies Throughout Scripture](#).
  - The three-fold repetition stresses the disgraceful fate of Satan and his demons
  - To some extent, this describes Satan's initial eviction from heaven, but there is also a futuristic component: today, even in his fallen state, Satan retains access to heaven. He's no longer there to worship and serve as he once did as a high ranking angel, but instead to communicate and accuse (Job 1:6; 2:7; Zech 3:1; Luke 22:31; Cf. v10).
  - The privilege of access that Satan has had for ~6,000 years, to accuse every believer before God beginning with Job (Cf. Job 1:6; 2:7), has been terminated, and Satan is not a happy camper (Cf. v12)
  - 1,260 days into the Tribulation period, at the exact midpoint of the seven years, Satan will be evicted from heaven for good
  - He now knows that he has three-and-a-half years to prevent the kingdom from coming to the earth, and his chosen route to do this is to eradicate the Jewish race. At this point in history, Anti-Semitism will be at its height and Jews will require divine protection in order to survive.

— With the same intensity that Satan possessed Herod to kill the newborns in Bethlehem during the time of Jesus' birth, Satan well possess the Antichrist to kill every Jew before they cry out and accept Jesus as their Messiah, which will inaugurate the Second Coming. [OT reference: Gen 3:1; Job 1:6; 2:1; Zech 3:1]

### Satan's Progressive Defeat

1. Initial eviction from heaven (Is 14:12-15; Ezek 28:12-17)
2. Eden (Gen 3:15)
3. Pre-diluvian world (1 Peter 3:19-20)
4. Cross (John 12:31; 16:11; Col 2:15; Heb 2:14; 1 John 3:8)
5. **Midpoint of the Tribulation (Rev 12:9)**
6. Beginning of the Millennium (Rev 20:2-3)
7. End of the Millennium (Rev 20:10)

### The Song of the Martyrs

Satan's eviction from heaven elicits another spontaneous outburst of praise in heaven (Cf. 4:8,11; 5:9-10,12,13; 7:10,12; 11:15,17-18; 15:3-4; 19:1-2,4,6-8). This song falls into three stanzas:

- Arrival of God's kingdom and Christ's authority (v10)
- Earthly victory of the saints who identify with Christ in His witness and death (v11)
- Celebration at the expulsion of the dragon and a warning to the earth (v12)

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

10 Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, he who accuses them before our God day and night.

10 Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say, "Now the salvation, the power, the kingdom of our God, and the authority of his Messiah have come. For the one who accuses our brothers, who accuses them day and night in the presence of our God, has been thrown out.

10 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.

- This song is sung by the martyrs in heaven, in praise to God for evicting Satan from heaven permanently...

— Satan accuses believers "day and night" (constantly). This work of Satan will come to an end with this expulsion, but he will continue to persecute the living believers on the earth,

even though he can no longer accuse them in heaven

- "...salvation" - the salvation of the earth, currently bound and in a state of groaning and travail because of sin (Cf Rom 8:19-23)

- "...the kingdom of our God" - the same kingdom celebrated in 11:15, which includes the future temporal kingdom on the earth (20:1-10) and the eternal phase (21:1—22:5)

- "...our brothers *and sisters*" - seems to describe the believers who remain on the earth, including the Jewish Remnant

— The song of praise seems to come from the Tribulation martyrs (6:10)

- "...day and night" - Satan accuses believers before God "day and night"

[OT reference: Job 1:9-11; 2:4-5; Zech 3:1]

11 And **they overcame** him because of the **blood of the Lamb** and because of the **word of their testimony**, and **they did not love their life even when faced with death**.

11 And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death.

11 Our brothers conquered him by the blood of the lamb and by the word of their testimony, for they did not cling to their lives even in the face of death.

11 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.

- This is the second stanza of the martyr's praise...

- "...they overcame" - *enikēsan*, prophetic past tense (proleptic) in same sense as 7:9 where the redeemed multitude see the victory as having already been won

— "they" = the Tribulation martyrs in heaven

- "...blood of the Lamb" - the basis for their salvation: the imputed righteousness of Christ (Phil 3:9)

— The only way to overcome Satan's accusations is to have a righteousness higher than our own; if we're relying on good works to make yourself acceptable to God, that will get you nowhere because our self-righteousness is worth nothing.

— Remember it's not just the Church that is saved by the blood of the Lamb, but all believers since creation

— The Tribulation Saints' faith in His work on the cross will assure them of eternal life. Their faith in Christ's sacrifice means that Satan and the Antichrist will not be able to defeat them.

- "...word of their testimony" - their bold verbal witness as followers of Christ

— This is a secondary key to their success, along with the blood of the Lamb

- "...they did not love their life even when faced with death" - they willingly give up their lives, if necessary. This does not mean that all Tribulation Saints are martyrs; some may die of natural causes or plagues, since they are not said to be exempt from God's judgments.

- They did not overcome because they were interested in their own personal ambitions, goals or accomplishments, but because they were interested in living for Jesus Christ. They will maintain their witness for Christ even if it means martyrdom (6:9; 12:17; 18:24; 20:4).
- They would consent to die rather than prove unfaithful to Christ

12 For this reason, rejoice, you heavens and you who dwell in them. **Woe** to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you with **great wrath, knowing that he has only a short time.**"

12 For this reason, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them. Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he has *only a short time.*"

12 So be glad, heavens, and those who live in them! How terrible it is for the earth and the sea, because the Devil has come down to you, filled with rage, knowing that his time is short!"

12 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.

- This is the third and final stanza of the martyr's praise...
- It instructs the people in heaven to rejoice that the devil has been expelled from heaven, but woe to those on Earth because the devil is about to indwell the Antichrist
- Satan has been permanently evicted from heaven and his access to God has been revoked; he is now relegated to the only domain he has left: the earth
- This explains his desperation during this short three-and-a-half year period...
- "...Woe" - not the 3rd "woe" in the series of three in 8:13 because it is not from God and its object are not the rebellious earth dwellers
- The third "woe" is the 7th Trumpet, which contains the seven Bowl judgments
- This pronouncement concerns Satan's hostility to the people of God, not the calamities sent on the non-Christian world
- "...great wrath" - *thymos*, a more turbulent word than *orgē*, which typically describes God's wrath; *thymos* is more of an emotional response than it is a rational one.
- Many people interpret this as the beginning of God's wrath on the earth (three-quarter Rapture theory)
- We need to understand that God can use His enemies, even Satan, to unleash His wrath...He has done this throughout Scripture (Nebuchadnezzar, et al)
- "...knowing that he has *only* a short time" - upon his expulsion from heaven, at the midpoint of the Tribulation, Satan will know he only has 3-1/2 years (1,260 days to be exact). This is the reason for his "great wrath".

- The return of Christ, after 3-1/2 more years, to bind him and assign him to the abyss for 1000 years is what makes Satan's time short
- Does Satan know God's plan for the end times? You better believe it...he knows exactly what his destiny is, and he has a plan to execute in an attempt to thwart it.
- Satan knows the Bible much more than most Christians, and even some pastors today. The error in his thinking is that he thinks he can stop it from happening...because of his deluded, Godless mind. But you can't stop it from happening unless you know what "it" is, and the only place where "it" is described is in the Bible.
- This is the reason the time of the Rapture is unknown. Nearly every other time period in God's plan, we can find out through diligent study...but not the Rapture.
- Rom 11:25 gives us the time of the Rapture: "...until the fullness of the Gentiles come in." This implies there is a number that the Father knows, that fills the Church...when that number is hit, He tells Jesus "go get 'em"

### **The Dragon's Vengeance on the Woman**

Satan attacks Israel in the middle of the Tribulation, just after the Abomination of Desolation, and attempts to wipe her out because he knows he only has a short while to obstruct God's plan, and now his only hope is to prevent the Second Coming of Christ. How can he do that? He believes he can accomplish this by destroying the Jews, since the Second Coming will occur when the Jewish Remnant wakes up and puts their faith and trust in the sacrifice of Christ on the cross as their Messiah, then calls upon Him to rescue them from Armageddon.

**13** And when the dragon saw that he was thrown down to the earth, he **persecuted** the woman who gave birth to the male *Child*.

**13** And when the dragon saw that he was thrown down to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male *child*.

**13** When the dragon saw that it had been thrown down to the earth, it pursued the woman who had given birth to the boy.

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

- This verse resumes where v6 left off, and provides further explanation of Satan's targeted persecution of Israel and Israel's flight into the wilderness

- "...persecuted" - *diōkō*, to make flee, to drive away; to pursue (in a hostile manner). The same Greek word is used in Matt 5:11 to describe how the world system persecutes believers.

— Just like in the movies, when the bad guys cannot defeat the superhero himself they go after his wife and children. Since Satan cannot defeat God in direct combat, when he is

cast down to the earth he attacks His children. In this case he goes after the Jewish Remnant.

- This will result in the greatest time of persecution against the Jews in history, since Satan will be present on planet earth directing it himself
- Satan has always had a special antagonism against the Jews (Zech 3:1). He will concentrate his vengeance on them during the second half of the Tribulation, under God's sovereign control, since he can no longer antagonize or harm Christ or the Church any longer.
- Why would Satan persecute Israel after he's cast out and knowing his time is short? Because he knows the prerequisite condition to the Second Coming (Hosea 5:15). See [Basis of the Second Coming](#) for a list of the prerequisite conditions for the Second Coming.

14 But the **two wings of the great eagle were given** to the woman, so that she could fly into the **wilderness to her place**, where she \*was **nourished for a time, times, and half a time**, away from the presence of the **serpent**.

14 But the two wings of the great eagle were given to the woman, so that she could fly into the wilderness to her place, where she \*was nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent.

14 However, the woman was given the two wings of a large eagle so that she could fly away from the serpent to her place in the wilderness, where she could be taken care of for a time, times, and half a time.

14 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.

- Focus = Israel, particularly the faithful Remnant (Jer 30:7; Matt 24:15-22)
- This describes God's protection and provision for the Jewish Remnant as they flee Judea immediately following the Abomination of Desolation (Matt 24:15-20)
- Satan launches an effort to track down the Jewish people, but God's protection overcomes his efforts
- "...two wings of the great eagle" - a metaphor for successful flight or escape from pursuit, due to divine assistance. This is not, as many prophecy interpreters teach, the USA coming to Israel's rescue with a military airlift.
- The whole process of Israel coming out of 400 years of Egyptian bondage, passing through the Red Sea, being sustained in the wilderness, taken care of even while in rebellion for 40 years, until they finally entered the Promised Land under Joshua...that whole process is analogized in Ex 19:4 as being "carried on eagles' wings." Deut 32:10-12 speaks of a similar miraculous provision at the exodus from Egypt.

- Just like Pharaoh pursued the Israelites after their release in order to destroy them, likewise Satan will pursue Israel to Petra in order to eradicate them from the earth
- "...were given" - *edothēsan*, God gave "two wings of the great eagle" to Israel, in order to expedite their flight from Jerusalem to Petra
- In this verse, the same entity that gave the woman the "wings" also gave her the nourishment
- "...wilderness" - from Jer 49:13-14, we learn that God's place of protection is Bozrah, a region in southwest Jordan where the ancient city of Petra is located (Cf. v6)
- "...to her place" - where is this located geographically? The OT gives some clues:
  - Is 33:13-16 - the means by which protection for the Remnant will be accomplished is given in v16. First, it is stated that it will be *on high*, that is, in the mountains (similar to the Matthew passage). Second, the place of defense will be the *munitions of rocks*, that is, the very nature of the geography of the place will make it easy to defend.
  - Micah 2:12 pinpoints the place exactly as Bozrah (present day Petra, located in a basin within Mt Seir, completely surrounded by mountains and cliffs). The Remnant is gathered together as *the sheep of Bozrah*. Israel is the flock of God, and He will gather and protect His sheep in Bozrah during the last 3-1/2 years of the Tribulation.
  - This area (Edom, Moab, Ammon—Southern Jordan) will escape the rule of the Antichrist (Dan 11:41)
  - See note: **The Place of Refuge** above and also in Matt 24:16
- "...nourished" - *trepħō*, a passive verb meaning "she" (Israel) is receiving the action (nourishment)
- In the middle of this conflict, when all hell is breaking loose, Israel is receiving sustenance (food and water) for three-and-a-half years
- God may rain manna from heaven to sustain (nourish) them; He may also use angels (Cf. Matt 4:11; Heb 1:14); Michael the archangel is the protector of Israel (Cf. Dan 12:1)
- God often uses intermediaries to provide for our needs: the ravens brought food to Elijah (1 Kings 17:2-7); the widow who baked bread for Elijah (1 Kings 17:8-15); it's also possible (likely?) that God will use believing Gentiles, of which there will be many, to provide sustenance for the Jews. This is the whole basis for the Sheep & Goat Judgment (Matt 25:31-46).
- No one will be able to buy or sell during the Tribulation without the mark of the beast (13:17), so God's provision will be miraculous
- Food will be provided (Is 33:16; 41:17-20); water will be provided (Is 33:16; 65:8-16)
- "...a time and times and half a time" - 3-1/2 years, 42 months (13:5), 1,260 days (v6), the same time period given for Israel's hiding in the wilderness
- Identifies this activity as taking place during the second half of the Tribulation period (Dan 7:25; 12:7; Cf. Rev 11:2; 12:6; 13:5), after Satan was evicted from heaven

- "...away from the presence of the serpent" - God is shielding and protecting Israel from Satan's pursuit and destruction

[OT reference: Ex 19:4; Deut 32:11; Is 40:31; Dan 7:25; 12:7; Hosea 2:14-15]

15 And the serpent hurled water like a river out of his mouth after the woman, so that he might cause her to be swept away with the **flood**.

15 And the serpent poured water like a river out of his mouth after the woman, so that he might cause her to be swept away with the flood.

15 From its mouth the serpent spewed water like a river behind the woman in order to sweep her away with the flood.

15 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.

- "...flood" - may describe an actual flood of water that Satan uses to kill the fleeing Jews, or it could be analogous of a "flood" of armies like the world has never seen who flow through Israel in pursuit of the Jews

— A "flood" is also prophesied in Dan 9:26: "...and its end will come with a flood" where the "flood" is analogized to the armies of Titus Vespasian of Rome who invaded and completely destroyed Jerusalem in 70 AD

— This invasion of Israel sent by Satan is described in Dan 11:41 as "He shall enter also into the glorious land"; it will cause the State of Israel to collapse at the midpoint of the Tribulation

— There are many parallels between Israel's exodus from Egypt and subsequent preservation in the wilderness (including the rescue from water, the Red Sea), and this future flight to safety)

[OT reference: Hosea 5:10]

16 But **the earth** helped the woman, and **the earth opened its mouth** and drank up the river which the dragon had hurled out of his mouth.

16 But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and drank up the river which the dragon poured out of his mouth.

16 But the earth helped the woman by opening its mouth and swallowing the river that the dragon had spewed from its mouth.

16 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.

- "...the earth" [2x] - ge, the ground; evidently the "earth" will assist the Israelites to escape from the invading armies

- "...opened its mouth" - the opening of the earth is a symbol of divine intervention

- In the past, the ground (water) swallowed the Egyptians (Ex 15:12) and later the ground swallowed Korah and his followers (Num 16:28-33; 26:10; Deut 11:6; Ps 106:17; Micah 7:5)
- Perhaps God will perform similar miracles to preserve these fleeing Jews

17 So the dragon was **enraged** with the woman, and went off to make war with the **rest of her children**, who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus.

17 So the dragon was enraged with the woman, and went off to make war with the rest of her children, who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus.

17 The dragon became angry with the woman and went away to do battle against the rest of her children, the ones who keep God's commandments and hold on to the testimony about Jesus.

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.

- This verse summarizes the Satanic hatred for Israel...

- "...enraged" - *orgizō*, a sexual term referring to unrestrained passion; here the word is not being used in the sexual sense, but in the anger sense; unrestrained anger and fury

— After his eviction from heaven, the dragon was cast down with "great wrath" (v12). Now he endures a series of losses that enrage him even more:

- First he had to redirect his anger from the Son to the Woman (v5) when the Son escaped his clutches. That increased his rage.
- Then he was evicted from heaven permanently (v8,9,12) angering him even further
- Then the military "flood" fails in its attempt to "sweep away" the Woman (v15-16)
- After the Woman is successful in her attempt to escape to the place of refuge, the dragon is left with only one option to vent his fury: the Woman's remaining seed.

— The repeated frustration of his efforts explains the furious persecution the dragon proceeds to inflict on the faithful.

— After the invasion of Israel fails to exterminate the Jews, Satan will inaugurate a long term program to destroy the Jews. This program will encompass the entire second half of the Tribulation and culminate in Armageddon. He will be successful to a point as two-thirds of the Jewish population will be killed (Cf. Zech 13:8-9).

— Ps 124 is a psalm that may highlight the relief of the Remnant as they flee into the wilderness, with God's help

- "...rest of her children" - the remaining Jews who did not flee to the wilderness (Peta) and the 144,000 Jewish evangelists (Cf. 7:1-8). Evidence leans toward identifying these believers as the 144,000. Reasons for this identification are:

- They are "her" (the woman's) seed, meaning they must be Jews; they "keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus" which means they must be saved.

- The 144,000 will be active witnesses throughout the world during the last half of the Tribulation, an opportunity not granted to the Remnant who will be hidden, protected, and nourished in the wilderness (Petra).
- The extended section (12:1–14:5) is a connected sequence from this point on with the mention of the dragon's animosity toward "the rest of" her seed here, his stationing of himself on the sands of the sea in 12:18/13:1, the appearance of the earthly agents he will use to inflict his damage in 13:1,11, and the proleptic scene of the victorious victims of his persecution after the conflict is over (14:1–5). This sequence says rather plainly that "the rest of her seed" is none other than the 144,000 [Thomas].

[OT reference: Gen 3:15]

**12:18 / 13:1** [NASB20] And **the dragon** stood on the sand of the seashore.

- As he now plots his war against "the rest of her seed" the dragon stands on the beach as he prepares to call out his wicked cohorts into action

### **Two Cycles of Satanic Persecution**

Twice in this chapter, God supernaturally steps in and protects Israel, in the same way He protected the Messianic line that eventually led to Christ. He's doing the same thing in these verses (protecting Israel), so that the kingdom can come to the earth.

God will actually use Satan's wrath against the Jewish people to purge off two-thirds of their population (the unbelievers, Zech 13:8–9), and purify the one-third, which is the Remnant. God must fulfill His covenants to Israel through Israel, specifically to this believing Remnant.

This transfer of authority is invoking spiritual warfare:

1. "pursues the woman" = persecution of Israel (12:13–14)
2. "flood from his mouth" = tries to destroy Israel (12:15–16)

Through this process, He is allowing two-thirds of the Jewish people (unbelievers) to be cut off...this is who Satan is killing. God is using Satan's wrath against Israel to purge off the two-third of Jews who are unbelievers, and preserve the one-third (Remnant) of believers.

### **Four Groups of Jews During the Tribulation**

1. Apostate Jews - these are "the many" of Dan 9:27 who will enter into the seven-year covenant that will begin the Tribulation. They will comprise about two-thirds of the nation and will die in the worldwide persecution in the Tribulation.

2. The 144,000 - these are the Jews who will be saved and sealed sometime after the Rapture of the Church and be evangelists during the first half of the Tribulation, conducting a worldwide revival. Most, if not all, will likely be martyred during the second half of the Tribulation.
3. Other Hebrew Christians - these are Jews who will receive the Messiah via the preaching of the 144,000, the Two Witnesses, or some other means.
4. Faithful Remnant - all individual Jewish believers during the Tribulation will be part of the Remnant of Israel. These include both the 144,000 Jews and those Jews of Jerusalem who become believers at the midpoint of the Tribulation or afterward (11:13). It includes all individual Jews who become believers as a result of the preaching of the 144,000 or the Two Witnesses. It includes the Remnant of 12:17, whom Satan will attack in a particular way.