

Manfred E. Kober, Th.D. 308 Second St. S.E. Bondurant, IA 50035 Tel. (515) 707-0071 MKober316@gmail.com

THE DRAGON, THE MAN-CHILD AND THE WOMAN

Revelation 12

Biblia . Wittemberg 1534 . Hans Lufft



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Revelation 12



INTRODUCTION

Revelation comprises a protracted parenthesis before the pouring out of the bowl judgments. It is necessary to reveal the true nature of the conflict which the Messiah terminates at the Second Advent. Only then can the situation itself be understood and appreciated.

Chapter 12 points to the culmination of the age-old conflict between Christ and Satan for the rulership of the world.

1A. THE WONDERS: 12:1-4

Two signs are introduced. The word "sign" (*semeion*) appears seven times in the book (12:1, 3; 13:13-14; 15:1; 16:14; 19:19) and points to an object with special meaning.

1b. The first sign: the woman 12:1-2

Three other women are mentioned in Revelation: Jezebel, 2:20; the harlot, 17:4 and the bride, 19:17.

1c. Her description:

The woman is described as possessing great splendor, reminiscent of Genesis 37:9-10, where she is arranged in great glory.

2c. Her identity:

She gives birth to a man child, an obvious reference to Christ. His human birth is predicted in Isaiah 7:14 and Micah 5:2. The man child

--will rule the nations with a rod of iron (Ps. 2:9; Rev. 2:27; 19:15)

--was caught up to heaven (v. 5).

The woman is not Mary, as Roman Catholicism maintains. Neither is she Mary Glover Baker Patterson Eddy, as Christian Science insists. The woman is Israel. The twelve stars imply the twelve tribes of Israel. Not Mary but Israel will be persecuted during the last half of the tribulation period (12:13-17).

2b. The second sign: the dragon 12:3-4a

1c. The identity: 12:3, 9

The identity of the dragon is made in verse 9. He is Satan.





- 2c. The description:
 --"red dragon" (3), murderous, blood-thirsty
 --"seven heads and ten horns"
 relate him to the beast in 13:1
 --crowns represent his kingly claims
 he threw a third of the stars to earth (*aorist*--
 thus a point action).



The stars are either a meteorite shower or a reference to Satan's original rebellion against God (Ez. 28:15). If the latter view is correct, then evil angels or demons are outnumbered by the elect angels two to one. Angelic arithmetic, based on this passage and a literal rendering of **Revelation 5:11**, would point to the fact that there were originally at least **606,000,000** angels; one-third, or **202,000,000**, rebelled with Satan against their creator-God (see page 6 for the calculations).

2A. THE WAR AGAINST CHRIST: 12:4-6

- 1b. Satan's future: 12:4-5
 Satan's efforts to destroy Christ began at His birth through Herod (Mt. 2:13), were seen in the wilderness temptation and climaxed in the events surrounding the crucifixion. Satan failed to destroy Christ at His birth and the fact that Christ ascended demonstrates that he failed to destroy Christ during His life and in His death.
- 2b. Satan's fixation: 12:6
 Satan's inability to defeat Christ enrages him even more as he turns his attention on Israel. The nation flees into the wilderness for three and a half years where God has planned her protection and preservation. The phrase "be nourished" suggests that others have been prepared to assist Israel. The helpers may be God, the angels or Gentiles. As Elijah was nourished by the ravens morning and evening with bread and meat (1 Ki. 17:6), so Israel's needs will be supplied.

3A. THE WAR IN HEAVEN: 12:7-12

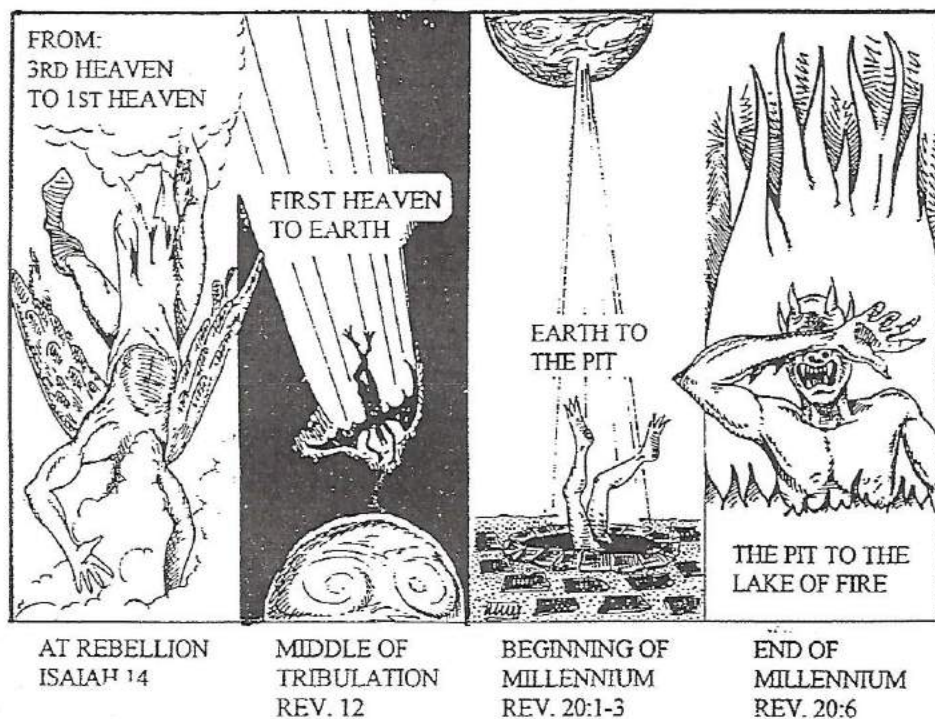
- 1b. The warfare: 12:7-9
- 1c. The development:
 The warfare inaugurated by Michael is the first step in the execution of judgment upon Satan:
- he is cast out of heaven 12:8-9a
 - he is cast to earth 12:9b
 - he is consigned to the pit 20:1-3



--he is cast into the Lake of Fire 20:10

Michael is Israel's special patron (Dan. 10:13, 21; 12:1). He defeats Satan and his demons, preventing Satan from accusing the brethren (Job 1-2; Dan. 2:35; Zech. 10:10).

THE FOUR FALLS OF SATAN



- 2c. The designations: 12:9
- great dragon: fierce and cruel in nature
 - old serpent: craftiness and subtlety (Gen. 3:4-5)
 - the devil (Greek): accuser or slanderer
 - Satan (Hebrew): adversary



The three-fold repetition of "cast down" in verse 9 stresses the ignominious defeat of Satan and his angels.

- 2b. The witness: 12:10-11

A voice from heaven, apparently joined by a chorus of tribulation martyrs, rejoices over the impending doom of the devil. His accusing of the brethren has ended. The redeemed martyrs remained faithful unto death. Ryrie has some practical suggestions based on this verse:

Notice two of Satan's activities in these verses: to deceive the world and accuse the brethren. The believer's defense against Satan is (1) to bank on the merits of the death of Christ, (2) to be active in witnessing, and (3) to be willing to make any sacrifice including death (v. 11). (*Ryrie Study Bible*, note on Rev. 12:9-11).

3b. The woe: 12:12

Ryrie's observation is much to the point:

All the inexplicable persecutions, tortures, and martyrdoms of saints in all ages are made right by this verse. The seeming defeat is ultimate victory over the enemy of our souls (*Revelation*, 1996, 92).

The heavenly voice encourages heaven to rejoice and enjoins the inhabitants of the earth and sea to beware. The apparent reason for the woe:

- Satan's sphere of activity is limited to this planet
- Satan's time is limited before he is confined to the pit and then permanently cast into the Lake of Fire

4A. THE WAR AGAINST THE WOMAN: 12:13-17

1b. Satan's efforts against Israel: 12:13

After being cast out of heaven, Satan attacks Israel.

2b. Israel's escape to the wilderness: 12:14

1c. Geographical aspects:

With great speed, as with eagles' wings (Ex. 19:4; Deut. 32:11-12) Israel escapes into a prepared place of protection.

2c. Chronological aspects:

Israel will be safe and secure for the 3 ½ years, a period to be taken literally with parallel references as

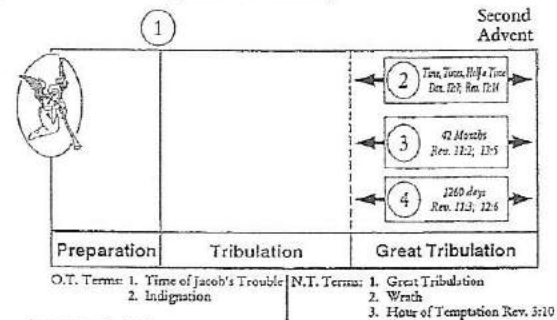
- "1,200 three score days" (12:6)
- "a time, times and half a time" (12:14)
- "forty and two months" (13:5)

3b. Satan's attempts against Israel: 12:15

Satan is able to produce a flash flood in an effort to drown Israel.

4b. God's protection of His people: 12:16

God causes the earth to open up, perhaps through an earthquake, in order to swallow the deluge and save the people.



Angelic Arithmetic

Myriad: 10,000

Chilia: 1,000

Myriads: at least 20,000

Chilias: at least 2000

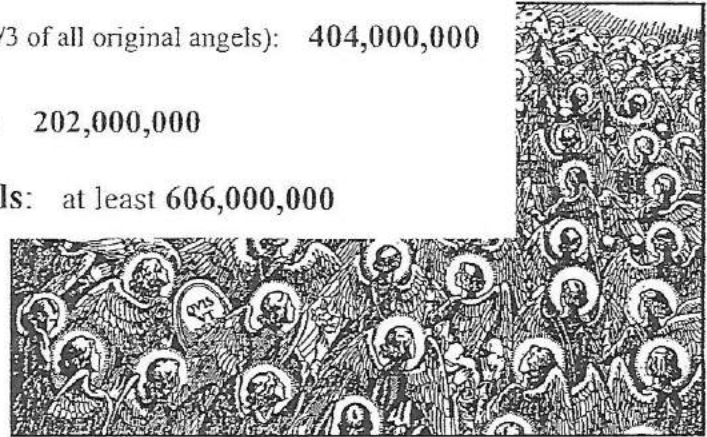
$20,000 \times 20,000 = 400,000,000$

$2000 \times 2000 = 4,000,000$

Total number of **holy angels** (2/3 of all original angels): 404,000,000

Total number of **fallen angels**: 202,000,000

Total number of **original angels**: at least 606,000,000



The Spirit World

Angelic Arithmetic



HOLY ANGELS

Elect Angels

1 Tim. 5:21

REVELATION 5

11 And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; .

Mt. 25:41

Evil Angels

REVELATION 12

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.



IMPORTANT RAMIFICATIONS OF THE WAR AGAINST THE WOMAN

FEATURE	IMPORTANCE
Prophetical	These prophetic details have never been fulfilled
	God is preparing the world for His Son's Return
	The refuge appears to be the mountain range East of the Dead Sea
	The whole world will be affected
	The time is clearly the second half of the Tribulation
	Satan and his minions are ever opposing God and His people
	The ultimate outcome is the glory of God as He demonstrates His sovereignty



The Dragon Cast to Earth, Rev. 12



WAR IN HEAVEN

G. DORE. ARTIST

"That old serpent, called the devil, and Satan, . . . was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him." Rev. 12:9.



