

We live in the Northwoods, and all winter we wait for spring. Finally, after months of waiting, a small green shoot breaks through the soil

But the moment that new life appears, bear and deer come out of the woods, insects arrive, and frost threatens

The weeds begin pushing in around it. It seems like every destructive thing shows up right when life begins to grow

That is the picture in **Revelation 12:3-4**. The dragon is not passive; he stands ready to devour the Child as soon as He is born, because satan sees what God is bringing forth, and he moves to destroy it

And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads Revelation 12:3 NKJV

His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born Revelation 12:4 NKJV

Here is the reality that still happens today. When **God begins doing something** in a **life**, a **family**, a **Church**, or a **young believer**, opposition often rises quickly

But here is the encouragement: the presence of opposition **does not mean God is absent**

Sometimes opposition means the enemy recognizes that life is breaking through the soil

The dragon may wait to devour, but he cannot stop what God has foreordained

She **bore** a male Child who was to **rule** all nations with a rod of iron. And her Child was **caught up** to God and His throne Revelation 12:5 NKJV

There are **three specific stages** in this verse

1. **His birth** = the First Coming **"She bore a male Child"** The birth of the Christ child foretold

The **Virgin Birth**: **Isaiah 7:14**, the **Ruler from Bethlehem**: **Micah 5:2** His **Divine Nature**: **Isaiah 9:6** described the child as **"Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace"**

2. **His promised rule** = which is fulfilled fully at the Second Coming **"He will rule all nations with a rod of iron"**

This brings perfect **unity to the paradox of the Christ** as both servant and ruler, the lion and the lamb

The Lamb will rule with a “rod of iron” but also as a servant who preserves His people **verse 6**

This is the **future fulfillment** of **Psalm 2**

Ask of Me, and I will give You The nations for Your inheritance, And the ends of the earth for Your possession Psalm 2:8 NKJV

You shall break them with a rod of iron; You shall dash them to pieces like a potter’s vessel Psalm 2:9 NKJV

The “rod of iron” represents Christ’s **absolute, righteous, and irresistible authority** over all the nations

Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. Revelation 19:15 NKJV

3. His ascension = following His death and resurrection- “He was caught up to God and His throne”

Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight Acts 1:9 NKJV

The first time Christ came was **to wear a crown of thorns**

He came humbly, died for sin, rose from the grave, and ascended to the Father

For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost Luke 19:10 NKJV

The second time He comes He will be wearing the crown of the King

At His second coming, **He comes to reign**

“The Child is caught up to God and His throne”, means **satan has failed!**

But remember this: **Every attempt to thwart God’s purposes and plan has failed**

He could not stop Christ’s **birth**, His **obedience**, His **death**, His **resurrection**, His **ascension**, or His **future reign**

Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name Philippians 2:9 NKJV

And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS Revelation 19:16 NKJV

This is why the Church must keep Christ at the center

Christ must remain central in **teaching, worship, discipleship, counseling, missions, children's ministry, youth ministry, leadership**, and daily obedience

Because Satan actively seeks to tempt, deceive, divide, and discourage God's people, the next verse reminds us that his attacks never cancel God's protection or His plan

Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days Revelation 12:6 NKJV

Later, John says it again with a lot more detail

But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent. Revelation 12:14 NKJV

In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. John 14:2 NKJV

And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also John 14:3 NKJV

Remember, the woman **represents Israel**, but more specifically, **a preserved remnant**

But when she flees into the wilderness in **Revelation 12:6** and **12:14**, the focus narrows

It is not necessarily every Jewish person worldwide, **but the remnant of Israel** that God protects from satan's intensified persecution

That idea of a faithful remnant is common in Scripture

The remnant will return, the remnant of Jacob, To the Mighty God Isaiah 10:21 NKJV

Even so then, at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace Romans 11:5 NKJV

So, these people are likely Jewish people living during the Tribulation period who are protected by God because of His covenant promises to Israel

They are people satan persecutes **after failing to stop Christ**

That means satan's hatred **shifts from the Messiah to the people** through whom the Messiah came. **Since he cannot destroy Christ, he persecutes Israel**

Now when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male Child Revelation 12:13 NKJV

Very carefully stated, the people in the wilderness are likely a Jewish remnant in Judea who flee during the final period of tribulation and are supernaturally preserved by God

They are distinct from “the rest of her offspring” in Revelation 12:17

And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ Revelation 12:17 NKJV

This seems to show two related groups

The woman in the wilderness - the protected remnant of Israel

The rest of her offspring in verse 17, are believers “who keep God’s commandments and have the testimony of Jesus Christ”

That **second group** may include **tribulation believers**, Jews and Gentiles who follow Jesus during that time

The wilderness people are feed and protected for 1,260 days

That equals three and a half years, the same as “time and times and half a time”

where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent Revelation 12:14b NKJV

This connects with Daniel’s prophecy concerning a period of intense trouble and persecution in Daniel 12:7 NKJV written 530 years before the birth of Christ and accurately conveys the coming and work of the Messiah

This also connects with Jesus’ warning to flee in Matthew 24 that connects to Daniel 12:7

Jesus warned those in Judea to flee when they see the abomination of desolation

Therefore when you see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place — whoever reads, let him understand Matthew 24:15 NKJV

Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains Matthew 24:16 NKJV

Why does God send them into the wilderness?

The wilderness is not just a hiding place **It is a prepared place**

You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings and brought you to Myself Exodus 19:4 NKJV

The wilderness is not a place of abandonment; it is a place of **divine protection, provision, preparation, and dependence**

The woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God Revelation 12:6a NKJV

Notice that **the wilderness was prepared by God**. The dragon wanted to **destroy her**, but God used the wilderness to **preserve her**. What looked like isolation was actually protection

Moses spent forty years in the wilderness before leading Israel. **David** spent years in the wilderness before becoming king. **Elijah** was sustained in the wilderness. **John the Baptist** was prepared there. **Jesus entered the wilderness** before beginning His public ministry

The wilderness is often God's training ground. It develops **endurance, humility, discernment, obedience, and spiritual strength**

God is always doing something in us before He does something through us

And the greatest example of that truth is Jesus. **Before the crown came the cross. Before the victory came the suffering**. Before our salvation was secured, the Messiah stepped into our wilderness, carried our sin, and gave His life in our place

So as we sing, let us remember that the One who meets us in the wilderness is the One who came to rescue us—Jesus, Messiah, Lord of all