



Αποκάλυψη

# REVELATION

12:1-6

# OUTLINE

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- 🏠 Main Point
- 🏠 The Vision
- 🏠 The Woman (v. 1)
- 🏠 The Child (v. 2)
- 🏠 The Red Dragon (v. 3)
- 🏠 Violence of the Red Dragon (v. 4)
- 🏠 Destiny of the Child (v. 5)
- 🏠 Flight of the Woman (v. 6)
- 🏠 Lessons for Us

# MAIN POINT







- 👤 We are introduced to a vision with three new actors which are important to understand for the coming passages
  - 👤 The woman is Israel in a national sense
  - 👤 The Child is Jesus
  - 👤 The red dragon is Satan
- 👤 Misidentification of the people in this passage can lead to larger errors in interpreting prophecy
  - 👤 The characters here are important and play pivotal roles in **Revelation**
  - 👤 Misuse of this passage has often been the subject of aberrant teaching and cult beliefs
  - 👤 This passage can be used as a litmus test for how people view the Scriptures and what they believe in general
  - 👤 Helps us better understand the overall hostility that the Jews have faced and why
- 👤 Keep this passage in its context
  - 👤 The time frame discussed
  - 👤 Application follows Interpretation which follows Observation
  - 👤 Need to keep ourselves grounded in the text and the larger context/point of the Scripture

# THE VISION







# THE WOMAN (V. 1)




## A sign in heaven

-  Similar stories in pagan mythology (Thomas v2, p117-8)
-  Birth of Apollo and pursuit by Python the dragon who seeks to kill the mother and child, but the mother kills the dragon four days after Apollo's birth
-  Also stories in Egyptian and Babylonian mythology
-  Unlikely what John had in mind, but it may point to a shard, corrupted original
  -  For those interested in more, read E.W. Bullinger's book, *The Witness of the Stars*
-  The most likely direct parallel for John is **Genesis 37:9-11**

## Identifiers of the Woman

-  "great sign" implies that it is not a single, literal woman, but meant to represent something more (i.e. a group/symbolic) (Thomas v2, p. 118)
-  Clothed with the sun
-  Moon under her feet
-  Garland of Twelve Stars

## Identity of the Woman

-  **Hypothesis 1:** Mary. Aligns with **Isaiah 7:10-11, 14** and **Matthew 1:18, 23**. But this would not align with a group (as required by the original text), and poses problems for v. 17. One could say that the Dragon makes war against Jesus, but the rest of her children? Not so much
-  **Hypothesis 2:** Some variant of all OT and NT believers. But that still leaves v. 17 and another group to be persecuted, and it does not follow that Believers would give birth to the Messiah. Would it not be the other way around in that interpretation?
-  **Hypothesis 3:** National Israel. Best aligns with **Genesis 37:9-11** and its God-given interpretation. Similar use in the OT of Israel as a pregnant woman about to give birth (c.f. **Isaiah 26:17-18; 66:7; Jeremiah 4:31; 13:21; Micah 4:10; 5:3**)

# THE CHILD (V. 2)

## 🗺 Identifiers of the Child (v. 5)

- 🗺 Rule all nations with a rod of iron
- 🗺 Caught up to Heaven
- 🗺 Enemy of the Red Dragon (v. 4)
- 🗺 Brought forth in pain
  - 🗺 Likely refers to satanic attempts to prevent the birth of the Child
  - 🗺 Possible reference also to persecution of the Jews
  - 🗺 But clearly aligns with OT references in the previous slide

## 🗺 Identity of the Child

- 🗺 Following the identity of the Woman, the only possible explanation is Jesus
- 🗺 Some may view the Child as the Church, but Israel did not really birth the Church *per se*
- 🗺 Nor does the Church fulfill the actions of the Child described later (except in a possible, single, mystical example)
- 🗺 It is amazing how many cults or strange beliefs center on identifying the Woman and the Child as something else
  - 🗺 My study of odd religions and cults finds this as a frequent occurrence
  - 🗺 Partly because it is easy to project into the “unknown” whatever we want
  - 🗺 Partly a method for “muddying the waters”

# THE RED DRAGON (V. 3)

## 👤 Another sign in heaven

- 👤 Several creatures in ancient mythology have been called a “dragon” (Thomas v2, p. 122)
  - 👤 Seven-headed Hydra of Babylon
  - 👤 Typhon in Egypt
  - 👤 Leviathan in Canaanite religion
  - 👤 Generally used to picture the enemies of God/Israel in the Bible (e.g., **Psalm 74:14; Isaiah 27:1, 51:34; Ezekiel 29:3**)

## 👤 Identifiers of the Red Dragon

- 👤 **Seven Heads:** Seven empires (relevant to God’s prophetic plan for the world and Israel) which were running their course at the time of John’s writing
- 👤 **Ten Horns:** Belong to the final empire in the sequence and aligned with the final 3.5 year period in Revelation (see also **Revelation 13:1**)
- 👤 **Seven Diadems:** Ten Kingdoms at the final 3.5 year period; position of the diadems indicates their “universal” reign
- 👤 How are we to understand these identifiers
  - 👤 More complete discussion when we come to **Revelation 13, 17:9-10** and **Daniel 7**

## 👤 Identity of the Red Dragon

- 👤 Clearly identified as Satan in v. 9
- 👤 Attempts to identify it with Rome in a spiritual sense fail because they do not follow the obvious interpretation in the text
  - 👤 Attempts to reconcile **Revelation 12:3, 13:1** and **Daniel 7:7-8, 24** for the identification here as surface-level
  - 👤 While there are some similarities, there are plenty of differences beyond the explicit interpretation provided

# VIOLENCE OF THE RED DRAGON (V. 4)

## 👤 Tail draws a third of the stars of heaven

- 👤 More than a generic statement of Satan's power as we are given specifics of his actions
- 👤 Most likely refers to the angels that fell with Satan in his rebellion (c.f. **Daniel 8:10**)
- 👤 Angels pictured as stars in **Revelation 9:1** and **Job 38:7**

## 👤 Stars thrown to the Earth (clearly pictured in the past)

- 👤 But we know Satan and his followers still have access to Heaven (c.f. **Job 1:6**; **1 Kings 22:22-23**; **2 Chronicles 18:22-21**)
- 👤 We will see a second heavenly war in v. 7-9
  - 👤 Note that these are separate events; one has happened, but the other is yet future

## 👤 Ready to devour the Child

- 👤 The real enemy of the dragon is the Child
- 👤 The problems of the woman are real, but a vector of attack against Satan's real enemy
  - 👤 Started in **Genesis 3:14**, then progressed with Cain and Abel (**Genesis 4:8**)
  - 👤 Corruption of the Earth (**Genesis 6:1-12**)
  - 👤 Attempted rape of Sarah (**Genesis 12:10-20**); same with Rebekah (**Genesis 26:1-18**)
  - 👤 Enmity between Jacob and Esau (**Genesis 27**)
  - 👤 Murder of male children in Egypt (**Exodus 1:15-22**)
  - 👤 Attempted murder against David (**1 Samuel 18:10-11**)
  - 👤 Queen Athaliah and her attempt to remove the royal seed (**2 Chronicles 22:10**)
  - 👤 Haman (**Esther 3-9**)
  - 👤 Israel sacrificing their own children (**2 Kings 16:3**; **2 Chronicles 28:3**; **Psalm 106:37-38**; **Ezekiel 16:20**)
  - 👤 Herod and the death of the male children (**Matthew 2:16**)

# DESTINY OF THE CHILD (V. 5)

## 👤 Rule all nations (v. 2)

- 👤 This is where everything is eventually going
- 👤 The whole point of **Revelation**
- 👤 Telling us, in more detail, how this will happen
- 👤 Been a consistent theme of prophecy from the start

## 👤 Rules with an iron rod (v. 2)

- 👤 Jesus will rule as a dictator
- 👤 May not like the sound of that, but it is true
- 👤 He will rule in a holy, righteous, and perfect way and will not tolerate anything or anyone that goes against that

## 👤 Goes up to Heaven

- 👤 Clear reference to the Ascension of Christ
- 👤 Some views have this either as the crucifixion or the birth of Christ, but this does not seem to be the context of the passage here
- 👤 Some have seen in this passage a mystical reference to the Church
  - 👤 If the Church is the body of Christ (e.g. **Colossians 1:18**)
  - 👤 And Christ (bodily) is taken to Heaven)
  - 👤 Then it follows that the Church will also be taken up
  - 👤 This has some validity in a broad sense, but it is not the plain, literal meaning or point of the passage

# FLIGHT OF THE WOMAN (V. 6)

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## 📍 Must flee to the wilderness

- 📍 Comes chronologically after **Revelation 12:7-12**, but is given to us here to show what happens to this character
- 📍 Further details in **Revelation 12:13-17**

## 📍 Wilderness prepared by God

- 📍 Some see this as the flight of the Jews to Pella in 66 A.D. after the Roman conquest of Jerusalem
  - 📍 But this would have no meaning to John's readers
  - 📍 Would picture this verse in the past, not the future
- 📍 Clearly points to a future period of time
  - 📍 May be topologically similar to other Jewish flights, but is distinct from them
  - 📍 Spoken of in **Daniel 9:27** and **Matthew 24:15-28** and **Mark 13:14-22**

## 📍 Time of her flight

- 📍 Aligns with the second half of the Tribulation period
- 📍 Seems to follow the defeat of Satan and his followers by Michael (discussed in later verses)

# LESSONS FOR US

## 📍 Understanding the timing and persons of this prophecy

- 📍 Many issues with prophetic interpretation have come because people falsely assume a given passage set in the Tribulation is happening before the Tribulation
- 📍 Understanding the people introduced here will be critical to the rest of the chapter and **Revelation** as a whole
- 📍 Your interpretation of this passage hangs more on your view of the Church than it does on eschatology

## 📍 Understand the goals and workings of Satan

- 📍 Told not to be ignorant of this (2 Corinthians 2:11)
- 📍 We are not immune to targeting, deception, etc.
- 📍 Make sure to ground everything in the Word, in its context, and with a proper application

## 📍 Understand the historical attitudes of people towards the Jews

- 📍 Why this is
- 📍 The spiritual aspect
- 📍 Understand that the Church has been just as guilty as anyone else
  - 📍 To many Jews, “Christian” is synonymous with persecution
- 📍 Further reading: *From Time Immemorial* by Joan Peters

