

THE 144,000 JEWISH EVANGELS

PART I

A FIRST-FRUIT OF THE NATION DURING THE TRIBULATION

By Arlen L. Chirwood

“And there appeared a great wonder [‘sign’] in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars.

And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.

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

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.

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.

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” (Rev. 12:1-6).

Revelation chapters eleven and twelve must be studied together. The former chapter *introduces* the latter chapter, and the latter chapter provides *additional details and commentary* for the former chapter.

Chapter Eleven, Introductory...

Chapter eleven began by calling attention to the whole of the seven-year Tribulation, divided into two equal parts, two equal periods of three and one-half years. Events during the latter half of the Tribulation were briefly mentioned first — the Gentiles treading

the city of Jerusalem under foot (v. 2). Then, a single series of events was singled out to cover the first three and one-half years — the ministry of two individuals sent from heaven to earth to bear witness to the Jewish people immediately before they entered into their darkest hour (v. 3). And part of the chapter was then given over to providing details concerning the ministry of these two witnesses (vv. 4-12).

Then chapter twelve picks up where chapter eleven left off and provides details and commentary concerning events surrounding Israel and the nations immediately before and during the time referenced in verse two of the preceding chapter — during that time when Jerusalem would be trodden under foot by the Gentiles for three and one-half years, during the last half of the Tribulation.

As well, chapter twelve itself is also integrally arranged in a similar manner. The first six verses provide the complete story, with the remainder of the chapter forming commentary. The first three verses (vv. 1-3), forming a continuation from the previous chapter, lead into and form the background for the three verses which follow (vv. 4-6). Then the commentary seen in the remainder of the chapter has to do with these latter three verses.

Verses seven through twelve provide commentary for verse four; verse thirteen provides commentary for verses four and five; verses fourteen through sixteen provide commentary for verse six; and verse seventeen somewhat covers the whole of the matter and provides commentary for all three of these preceding verses.

Then subsequent chapters, particularly chapters thirteen, fourteen, and seventeen through the first part of nineteen, continue this commentary. All of these chapters (chs. eleven through fourteen, and seventeen through the first part of nineteen) are inseparably tied together in this respect and must be studied as a unit, with any one part being incomplete when separated from the other parts.

(For additional information on the two witnesses in Rev. 11, refer to the author’s pamphlets, “The Son of Man Coming in His Kingdom” [three parts] and “Two Men At the Empty Tomb.”)

A Woman, Dragon, and Man-Child

Metaphors are used extensively throughout chapter twelve, which is something seen throughout the

Book of Revelation and throughout Scripture in general. That is to say, the “woman” is not a literal woman but is descriptive of someone or something else; and so it is with the “dragon” and the “man child.” All three have to do with things which are literal, which, in themselves, are descriptive of that which they are referencing. And that being depicted by all three metaphors is *clearly* made known in the chapter itself, through comparing Scripture with Scripture.

Metaphors are used in Scripture *in a completely consistent manner*, and man is never left to his own imagination as to that which God is depicting through the use of metaphors. The texts, contexts, and /or related Scripture elsewhere will *always* shed light on the matter, revealing how the metaphors are being used.

1) The Woman

The “woman” can easily be identified as *Israel* through a number of means.

The “woman” — in association with *the sun, the moon, and the stars* — is presented within the scope of Joseph’s second dream in Gen. 37:9. The typology and the symbolism in this verse in Genesis have to do with *Christ and Israel* (cf. v. 10) — *Christ ruling over Israel during the Messianic Era, with regality also shown relative to Israel.*

In Rev. 12:1, the woman and the symbolism have to do with *Israel and the nations* (cf. Rev. 6:12-17; 12:3) — *Israel ruling over the nations during the Messianic Era, with regality also shown relative to the nations.*

Israel in Rev. 12:1, unlike in Gen. 37:9, is seen *clothed with the sun* (symbolizing the main governing power), *the moon under her feet* (symbolizing Gentile powers subject to Israel [cf. Ps. 110:1, 2; Rev. 6:12-17]), and *a crown of twelve stars* upon her head (further showing regality through the use of “a crown” and “twelve stars” [the number of *governmental perfection*, with the *stars* also showing governing powers, regality]).

(There are two words for “crown” in the Greek text of the New Testament — *stephanos* and *diadema*. The former word [*stephanos*] would be used of an individual not actually seated on the throne and holding the sceptre, not reigning at the present time, though in a position to reign; the latter word [*diadema*] would be used of one actually seated on the throne and holding the sceptre, one presently reigning.

The word used for crown in the text of Rev. 12:1 is *stephanos*, indicating a present nonreigning position for the woman, for Israel, but also indicating that this

woman is in a position to hold the sceptre and reign at a future time [cf. Rev. 17:18]. And at that future time the “crown of twelve stars” would no longer be described through the use of the word *stephanos* but, rather, through the use of the word *diadema*.

For additional information on the two Greek words for “crown,” along with additional information on the symbolism used with the woman in Rev. 12:1, refer to Chapters VII, XXIX in this author’s book, “The Time of the End.”)

The woman is further seen *with child*, “travailing in birth,” *in pain, awaiting deliverance* (v. 2). This, of course, has to do with the woman in labor, about to give birth, about to bring forth the man-child (v. 4).

Then the woman, following the birth of the man-child (v. 5), is seen fleeing into the wilderness where she has “a place prepared of God”; and she would be divinely cared for and protected in this place during the last three and one-half years of the tribulation (vv. 6, 14). This has its parallel in Matt. 24:16-22; Mark 13:15-19; Luke 21:21-24, which, as well, has to do with Israel during the last half of the Tribulation.

Thus, in complete keeping with what this part of the Book of Revelation is about — *Israel and the nations, as Satan continues his rule through the nations* — the identity of the woman is seen at every turn.

2) The Dragon

The identity of the “dragon” in verses three and four is seen in the subsequent commentary part of the text itself. The “dragon” is identified as *the Devil, Satan* (v. 9). He is the one seen back in verse three, ruling through the nations in the kingdom of the Beast when this man rises to power as world ruler near the middle of the Tribulation.

In Revelation chapter six the Beast is seen riding forth on a white horse, going forth “conquering, and to conqueror.” In this opening part of the Tribulation, he is seen wearing a “crown,” described through the use of the word *stephanos*. This man’s aspirations at the time are *worldwide dominion*. But achieving his goal and wearing a crown described by the word *diadema* awaits a future date. It awaits *conquest after conquest*.

Then, in chapter twelve, this man is brought to the forefront again and is now seen wearing *the diadem which he had sought*. Note in verse three that all seven heads of the Beast are crowned (cf. Rev.

17:9-12), and the word used for “crown” in the Greek text is *diadema*, not *stephanos* as used relative to Israel in verse one. Further, the “ten horns,” depicting this man’s ten-kingdom federation, are seen crowned with *diadems* in the opening verse of the next chapter.

Thus, the man previously seen riding forth when the first seal of the seven-sealed scroll was broken, wearing a crown depicted by the word *stephanos*, will now have achieved the power which he had sought three and one-half years earlier — *worldwide dominion*.

In Rev. 12:3, this man’s kingdom is seen so closely aligned with Satan that the dragon himself is depicted as having the seven crowned heads and ten crowned horns. This is how inseparable Satan, the one ruling through the nations during Man’s Day, is seen aligned with the final form of Gentile world power at the end of Man’s Day. And Satan will give to this man who controls the final form of Gentile world power “*his power, and his seat [‘throne’], and great authority*” (Rev. 13:2).

3) The Man-Child

Most commentators and Bible teachers dealing with chapter twelve identify the “man child” as *Christ*, also brought forth by Israel. This is done mainly on the basis of two things said about the man-child in verse five. The man-child is destined “to rule all nations with a rod of iron”; and, following his birth, the man-child is “caught up unto God, and to his throne.” Both would appear to identify the man-child as *Christ*. Christ, brought forth by Israel (as the man-child was brought forth by Israel), is destined to rule the nations as described in the text (Ps. 2:6-9); and Christ, as well, ascended to the same place described in the text (Ps. 110:1; Acts 1:9; 7:56).

Then again, co-heirs with Christ have a similar connection with Israel, are given the same promise relative to ruling the nations, and will be caught up into heaven as well (Gal. 3:29; I Thess. 4:16, 17; Rev. 2:26, 27). And this has led some commentators and Bible students to associate the man-child with Christians being removed in what they would see as a selective rapture of Christians (though this would be completely out of place, for all Christians will have previously been removed from the earth; and, aside from this fact, selective rapture is not taught in Scripture anyway).

But, after all is said and done, bear something in mind. The “woman” and the “dragon” *are identified in the chapter*. And the same could only be expected concerning the identity of the man-child as well, *which is*

exactly what can be found. The man-child is *unquestionably identified* later in the chapter, and a proper identification will open parts of chapters seven, eleven, and fourteen to one’s understanding (plus verses in the Olivet Discourse accounts, along with parts of the O.T.), which would otherwise remain closed.

With that in mind, note what the text and context have to say and teach about the matter.

The reference to a “man child,” used as a metaphor, must be *in complete keeping* with how both the “woman” and the “dragon” are used as metaphors in the chapter. And doing this would automatically discount any teaching that the man-child is a reference to *Christ*. If Christ is being referenced, then the expression is not really being used as a metaphor in the same sense that the other two are being used, for Christ was brought forth by Israel as both a “male” and a “child,” or a “son” (literal rendering from the Greek text in v. 5 is “a son, a male,” with the Greek word for “child” also used in the text and context [vv. 4, 5]).

But the preceding, contextually, is really inconsequential. Any thought that the man-child is a reference to Christ is nullified by the context on both sides of the text. Note *the timing* of the birth of the man-child in verse five. The man-child’s birth occurs *after* Satan and his angels have been cast out of their abode in the heavens, which places this birth *just before or in the middle of the Tribulation* (v. 4); and it occurs immediately before Israel flees into the wilderness at the full end of the 1,260 days covering the first half of the Tribulation (v. 6). Also, the birth of the man-child will occur *either very near or at the time when the two witnesses in chapter eleven are slain*, which is also at the full end of the first 1,260 days of the Tribulation.

But how is the man-child identified in Revelation chapter twelve? The man-child is seen following the woman fleeing “into the wilderness” (v. 14) as “the remnant of her [the woman’s] seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ” (v. 17 [seen also in v. 13 of the previous chapter]). And that stated about “the remnant” in 12:17 would also identify them with the 144,000 in chapters seven and fourteen.

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