

Revelation 12

...a woman clothed with the sun...

...γυνή περιβεβλημένη τὸν ἥλιον...

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I. The Women, vv. 1-2

A. "...clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars..."

1. Some say that this woman is Christ, some say it's Christ's Church, still others say that it is Mary the mother of our Lord.
2. But none of these suggestions really can be substantiated with scripture and if an idea about what a passage in the Bible says can't be supported by the rest of the Bible then it is risky to rely upon that idea. It is always best to turn to scripture to find the best commentary on a particular passage that is being studied.
3. As we look through Scripture we learn that this woman can't really be anyone else but the nation of Israel.
4. At first this might seem like an odd or even foreign idea because Israel is being represented by a woman and Israel (a.k.a. Jacob from whom the twelve tribes of Israel issued forth) was a man.
5. It is true that Israel or Jacob was a man but the nation which came from him is repeatedly referred to as a woman through scripture. Here are a few examples:

a) **Isaiah 54:5-6**

"For thy Maker [is] thine husband; the LORD of hosts [is] his name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; The God of the whole earth shall he be called. For the LORD hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou wast refused, saith thy God."

b) **Jeremiah 3:6-10**

"The LORD said also unto me in the days of Josiah the king, Hast thou seen [that] which backsliding Israel hath done? she is gone up upon every high mountain and under every green tree, and there hath played the harlot. And I said after she had done all these [things], Turn thou unto me. But she returned not. And her treacherous sister Judah saw [it]. And I saw, when for all the causes whereby backsliding Israel committed adultery I had put her away, and given her a bill of divorce; yet her treacherous sister Judah feared not, but went and played the harlot also. And it came to pass through the lightness of her whoredom, that she defiled the land, and committed adultery with stones and with stocks. And yet for all this her treacherous sister Judah hath not turned unto me with her whole heart,

but feignedly, saith the LORD.”

- c) **Jeremiah 31:32**
“Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day [that] I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD:”
 - d) **Ezekiel 16:32**
“[But as] a wife that committeth adultery, [which] taketh strangers instead of her husband!”
 - e) **Hosea 2:14-16**
“Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her. And I will give her her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope: and she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt. And it shall be at that day, saith the LORD, [that] thou shalt call me Ishi; and shalt call me no more Baali.”
 - f) **Hosea 3:1**
“Then said the LORD unto me, Go yet, love a woman beloved of [her] friend, yet an adulteress, according to the love of the LORD toward the children of Israel, who look to other gods, and love flagons of wine.”
6. We can see from a scriptural standpoint that there would be no discrepancies with Israel being represented by a woman. So now what about a passage that would correlated well to and lend greater credibility to this woman in Revelation 12 being Israel? That passage is found in Genesis 37:5-11.
- a) “And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told [it] his brethren: and they hated him yet the more. And he said unto them, Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed: For, behold, we [were] binding sheaves in the field, and, lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright; and, behold, your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf. And his brethren said to him, Shalt thou indeed reign over us? or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? And they hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words. And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and, behold, **the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me. And he told [it] to his father, and to his brethren: and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What [is] this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth?** And his brethren envied him; but his father observed the saying.”

7. It is clear from the dream in the passage of Genesis 37 that the sun and moon represent the parents of the twelve men that represent the twelve tribes of Israel and the stars the twelve tribes. There is no issue with there being 11 stars in this passage in Genesis 37 instead of 12, like in Revelation 12, because it is obvious, as we can learn from the first dream Joseph had, that one of the stars would be him. He mentions 11 instead of 12 stars because he was the 12th star that all the others bowed down to.

B. "And she being with child cried, travailing in birth..."

1. One reason why this woman can't be the church of Christ is because she is found in this passage pregnant and about to give birth. When the church is presented to Christ it will be at the marriage super of the lamb and at that point she (the church) will be without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. Ephesians 5 tells us this very thing:

a) **Ephesians 5:25-27**

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

2. Paul the apostle talks even about presenting the church at corinth as a "chaste virgin."

a) **2 Corinthians 11:2**

"For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present [you as] a chaste virgin to Christ."

3. So if this woman is the church then why is she pregnant before her wedding day and by whom did she get pregnant? That this woman would represent the church just doesn't fit the picture we are given of the church through scripture.
4. Here we see she is about to give birth and she is crying in her labor pains. In a later verse of this chapter we will see clearly who she will give birth to.

II. The dragon, vv. 3-4

A. "...a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads."

1. There are like visions in Revelation. In 13:1 and in 17:3 we see the same language. When we come to revelation 17 we will look into the 7 heads and 10 horns and what they are more in depth.

2. What will be enough for us now to know is that the dragon represents satan (Verse 9) and the heads, horns and crowns, represent earthly kingdoms and their kings under the influence of the dragon or satan.
- B. "...his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth:"
1. The stars which were drawn from heaven are no doubt those angels that followed satan in his rebellion and were, as he was, cast out from walking amongst the stones of fire in the presence of the Lord.
 2. That the angels which rebelled with satan are called stars shouldn't confuse us. We have already seen in Revelation 9:1 that angels can certainly be called stars. There it can be observed that the star which is said to have fallen from heaven is given a personage.
 - a) **Revelation 9:1**
 "And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw **a star fall from heaven** unto the earth: and **to him** was given the key of the bottomless pit."
 3. Jesus told us in Luke 10:18 that satan fell from heaven, "...I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven."
 4. This here in Revelation 12 gives us addition detail as to what went on back in Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28. These passages should be read to understand the history of satan's fall.
 - a) **Isaiah 14:12-17**
 "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! [how] art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit. They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, [and] consider thee, [saying, Is] this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms; [That] made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; [that] opened not the house of his prisoners?"
 - b) **Ezekiel 28:13-19**
 "You were in Eden, the garden of God; Every precious stone [was] your covering: The sardius, topaz, and diamond, Beryl, onyx, and jasper, Sapphire, turquoise, and emerald with gold. The workmanship of your timbrels and pipes Was prepared for you on the day you were created. "You [were] the anointed cherub who covers; I established you; You were on the holy mountain of God; You walked back and forth in the midst of

fiery stones. You [were] perfect in your ways from the day you were created, Till iniquity was found in you. "By the abundance of your trading You became filled with violence within, And you sinned; Therefore I cast you as a profane thing Out of the mountain of God; And I destroyed you, O covering cherub, From the midst of the fiery stones. "Your heart was lifted up because of your beauty; You corrupted your wisdom for the sake of your splendor; I cast you to the ground, I laid you before kings, That they might gaze at you. "You defiled your sanctuaries By the multitude of your iniquities, By the iniquity of your trading; Therefore I brought fire from your midst; It devoured you, And I turned you to ashes upon the earth In the sight of all who saw you. All who knew you among the peoples are astonished at you; You have become a horror, And [shall be] no more forever."

C. "...for to devour her child as soon as it was born."

1. This has been the battle of the ages. Satan has been forever trying to destroy the child that is born by this woman who we have seen to be Israel. Israel brought forth the messiah and it has always been satan's plan to destroy Israel to in turn destroy the messiah. These battle lines were drawn way back in Genesis 3:15.

a) **Genesis 3:15**

"And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

C.f.

b) **Galatians 3:16**

"Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ."

2. Though satan had attempted to destroy Israel before the messiah came he was unsuccessful. But satan didn't give up. When Jesus was born he stirred up Herod to try and destroy the newly born Messiah. This can be seen in Matthew 2:16-18.

3. And even today satan tries to destroy Israel because he knows that if he can do that (which he can't!) he will be able to prevent the second coming of Christ which will be the very thing that will open the eyes of the Jews who have rejected their messiah (Zechariah 12:10) and usher in His millennial kingdom and later His eternal kingdom and thus bring an end to satan and his tyrannical ways once and for ever.

4. The evil of anti semitism exists because of an evil one behind anti semitic behavior. Ephesians 2:2 tells us that people who are not followers of God are

influenced by satan himself to live in all evil and sinful ways.

D. Spiritual warfare

1. We need to understand as Christ's followers that we will face warfare with satan and his cohorts. We are if we think we won't. The Bible is clear on this matter. We are in a battle and we must be watchful and careful.
2. Peter said, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith..." (**1 Peter 5:8-9a**)
3. Paul tells us in **Ephesians 6:12** that, "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high [places]."
4. It is overboard to blame everything in our lives that go wrong on satan. But it is equally wrong to pretend like satan has no power and can do no harm to us because we are God's children. We need to be prepared for the battle so we will not fall wounded on the battlefield of life.

III. The Man Child, vv. 5-6

A. "...who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron:"

1. This is a prophecy of Jesus from Psalm 2:8-9
2. We know this is speaking of Christ because of Revelation 19:15

B. "...and her child was caught up unto God, and [to] his throne."

IV. Michael fights with the dragon, vv. 7-9

V. A loud voice is heard in heaven, vv. 10-12

VI. The women persecuted by the dragon, vv. 13-17