



# Revelation

## 2020 - Lesson

### 12

## Chapter 12:1-17

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- In our last study, we moved into the mid-Tribulation period of our study
  - Revelation Chapters 11-14 cover the events that take place in and around the 3.5 year mark of the Tribulation
    - Each chapter reveals a piece of a puzzle, a different aspect of the events that mark this important moment
    - And the number of chapters devoted to the mid-point of Tribulation makes clear how important this time will be
  - Last time we studied Chapter 11, which revealed that during the first half of Tribulation, two men were prophesying in Israel
    - They condemn the world for their sin while bringing great disasters that mirror the judgments of the first half of tribulation
    - In that way, they become the narrators for the destruction taking place because of the seal and trumpet judgments
    - And as a result the world comes to despise these men, so that when they finally are killed, the world celebrates
  - A beast was finally able to overpower them, but how did that beast gain the ability to defeat the Lord's anointed?
    - We don't get those details in Chapter 11, but they're coming
    - Meanwhile, the chapter ended with a preview of the end to come
    - And that will be a recurring feature of the mid-tribulation chapters
    - The events of mid-tribulation are the final act of God in this age, which sets in the motion the events that bring the age to an end
- Now we move to the next mid-tribulation chapter and with it a new piece of our puzzle

**Rev. 12:1 A great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars;**

**Rev. 12:2 and she was with child; and she cried out, being in labor and in pain to give birth.**

**Rev. 12:3 Then another sign appeared in heaven: and behold, a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads were seven diadems.**

**Rev. 12:4 And his tail swept away a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she gave birth he might devour her child.**

**Rev. 12:5 And she gave birth to a son, a male child, who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne.**

- The twelfth chapter opens with two signs, and these signs work together to tell a single story concerning mid-Tribulation
  - A sign is, by definition, a symbol that stands for something in the real world
    - Signs are convenient tools that teach us something about the thing they represent

- For example, as we drive on a highway and approach the outskirts of a city we may see a city limits sign
  - The sign will be labeled with the name of the city, as in our case the sign would say “San Antonio” and maybe the population
  - By what we learn on the sign, we know the city is nearby and we can anticipate how big it will be
- But that small sign is not the actual city; it’s far smaller, of course, nor does it resemble the city at all
  - We can’t live in the sign, we can’t make the sign our home, etc.
  - So though the sign pointed us to the city and taught us something about the city, it looked nothing like the city
- That may seem obvious, but often Bible students make the mistake of conflating a biblical sign for the true, physical reality it represents
  - They fail to translate the sign into its true form, and when we do that we will misinterpret the meaning
  - Imagine the mistakes we would make if we assumed that a road sign *was* the actual city?
- As we open in Chapter 12, we are given two signs, and we know they are signs because John tells us so
  - Therefore, we must translate these signs into something real, and what we choose must fit all the data we have in this chapter and in the Bible
    - The first sign is a woman with a child, but since that’s the sign we know the interpretation isn’t a literal woman or literal child
    - The woman represents something else as does the child
    - We have to keep reading to understand the meaning of these signs
  - In v.5 we’re told that the child is a son Who will rule all the nations with a rod of iron
    - The reference to ruling with a rod of iron comes from Psalm 2

**Psa. 2:7 “I will surely tell of the decree of the LORD:**

**He said to Me, ‘You are My Son,  
Today I have begotten You.**

**Psa. 2:8 ‘Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance,  
And the very ends of the earth as Your possession.**

**Psa. 2:9 ‘You shall break them with a rod of iron,  
You shall shatter them like earthenware.’”**

- So a child represents the Messiah, and of course Jesus came into the world as a child born to a woman
  - But notice this sign concludes with the child in Heaven on His throne
  - So the child doesn’t represent the baby Jesus... Jesus doesn’t sit on a throne and rule the earth as a child

- It refers to Jesus the Messiah destined to rule as King over all the nations and seated on His throne in Heaven awaiting the Kingdom
  - That distinction is important because it keeps us from making the wrong interpretation when we get to the woman
  - Because if we forget to translate the sign into reality, our interpretation would be too simplistic (baby=baby Jesus)
  - And if we do that, then naturally the woman will be interpreted as Mary, Jesus' earthly mother
- But the woman is a sign, and as such she doesn't represent a literal woman, much less Mary
  - So what does the woman represent? The context gives us our answer
    - Notice the woman is clothed with sun, moon under her feet and has a crown of twelve stars on her head
    - Because the Catholic religion has deified Mary, they typically depict Mary according to this description
    - Once again, that's treating the sign as the reality which is a misinterpretation of the text
  - Instead, we follow our rules of interpretation for determining the meaning of a woman with sun, moon and stars
    - First, we consult the immediate context...but find nothing
    - Secondly, we consult the rest of Revelation...but there is nothing else in the book
    - So we go to the rest of the Bible looking for that symbol, and we find our answer in Genesis

**Gen. 37:5** Then Joseph had a dream, and when he told it to his brothers, they hated him even more.

**Gen. 37:6** He said to them, "Please listen to this dream which I have had;

**Gen. 37:7** for behold, we were binding sheaves in the field, and lo, my sheaf rose up and also stood erect; and behold, your sheaves gathered around and bowed down to my sheaf."

**Gen. 37:8** Then his brothers said to him, "Are you actually going to reign over us? Or are you really going to rule over us?" So they hated him even more for his dreams and for his words.

**Gen. 37:9** Now he had still another dream, and related it to his brothers, and said, "Lo, I have had still another dream; and behold, the sun and the moon and eleven stars were bowing down to me."

**Gen. 37:10** He related it to his father and to his brothers; and his father rebuked him and said to him, "What is this dream that you have had? Shall I and your mother and your brothers actually come to bow ourselves down before you to the ground?"

- Joseph was one of two men in the Bible that received revelation from God through

## dreams

- Joseph's dreams communicated through symbols and the symbols were always explained in the same context as the dream
  - In this case, the dream came in two parts, and I've provided the two parts so we can see the meaning even more clearly
  - In the first part of the dream, Joseph and his brothers are represented as sheaves of wheat
- This first part of the dream establishes the central meaning of the dream
  - Joseph's family would bow down to him in a future day
  - We know this was fulfilled when Joseph goes to Egypt
  - But when his family heard this prophecy, Joseph's brothers react in anger at the suggestion they would serve Joseph
- The second part of the dream repeats this central thought but adds additional detail
  - In the second part of the dream the symbols change from wheat to celestial bodies
  - Joseph sees the sun, moon and stars bowing down to him, and he shares that with his family
  - As he relates his dream to his family, Joseph's father, Jacob, reacts in anger because he too understands its meaning
- Jacob's response gives us the proper interpretation of the symbols
  - Jacob says the sun, moon and eleven stars represent Jacob, his wife Rachel, and the eleven sons of Israel (not counting Joseph)
    - So we now have a Biblical interpretation of what a vision of the sun, moon and stars means
    - It represents the family of Israel (Jacob), or we could say the people of Israel
  - Confirming that conclusion, we also see Scripture representing the nation of Israel as a woman

**Jer. 3:8** “And I saw that for all the adulteries of faithless Israel, I had sent her away and given her a writ of divorce, yet her treacherous sister Judah did not fear; but she went and was a harlot also.

- So our interpretation fits perfectly...
  - A woman with sun, moon and stars represents the nation of Israel, the twelve tribes that came from Jacob
- Furthermore, that interpretation fits the combination of woman giving birth to a child
  - Israel as a nation brought forth the Messiah, just as the sign of a woman giving birth to a child
  - Jesus was Jewish, born out of the family of Jacob
  - So the first sign of a woman giving birth is Israel bringing forth the Messiah into

the world

- Next, we turn to the third sign of a dragon and this sign is also complex
  - By following our rules for interpretation, we find our answer quite easily this time because the interpretation is given in v.9
    - The dragon is the serpent of old – Satan – so the identity of the dragon is clear
    - Going further, the dragon has a “tail” that sweeps a third of the stars from heaven and down to earth
    - Since we know the dragon isn’t literally a dragon then the tail isn’t literal either and neither are the stars
  - So what do stars represents when they are used symbolically? They usually represent angels and the text later confirms it
    - Remember we already learned that stars that fall are symbols of demonic (or fallen) angels, as we saw in earlier chapters
    - And we know that Satan is the leader of the realm of fallen angels who fell from Heaven with him
    - And again in v.9 we find an interpretation given to us that these stars are the fallen angels that followed Satan in his rebellion
  - Therefore, logically the tail represents Satan’s corrupting influence which “swept” angels out of heaven
    - The symbology describes Satan’s fall and the rebellion of a third of the angelic realm that followed him
    - And when that sign is combined with the earlier sign, we find the chapter is telling a story about Satan’s opposition to Jesus
    - The dragon had been waiting for the Messiah intending to devour the “child” when He appeared, but Satan did not succeed
    - Jesus triumphed on the cross and was caught up to His throne
  - But Satan knows that isn’t the end of the story...so he’s continued fighting against the Messiah hoping he can find a way to win in the end
    - But since Jesus has left the earth for a time, Satan has no choice but to direct His attacks elsewhere
    - And the symbols in this chapter explain how Satan has changed his tactics since Jesus’ departure
    - And more specifically, this chapter explains how the enemy’s attacks will change at the mid-point of Tribulation
- Next, we tackle the most difficult part of the second sign: the dragon’s seven heads, seven diadems (or crowns) and ten horns
  - As good Bible students, we should immediately recognize these symbols
    - They should be familiar to us because of our previous study of Daniel 7
    - In that chapter, Daniel saw a dream of four strange beasts, and the final, dreadful beast possessed similar features

**Dan. 7:7 “After this I kept looking in the night visions, and behold, a fourth**

**beast, dreadful and terrifying and extremely strong; and it had large iron teeth. It devoured and crushed and trampled down the remainder with its feet; and it was different from all the beasts that were before it, and it had ten horns.**

**Dan. 7:8** “While I was contemplating the horns, behold, another horn, a little one, came up among them, and three of the first horns were pulled out by the roots before it; and behold, this horn possessed eyes like the eyes of a man and a mouth uttering great boasts.

**Dan. 7:23** “Thus he said: ‘The fourth beast will be a fourth kingdom on the earth, which will be different from all the other kingdoms and will devour the whole earth and tread it down and crush it.

**Dan. 7:24** ‘As for the ten horns, out of this kingdom ten kings will arise; and another will arise after them, and he will be different from the previous ones and will subdue three kings.

**Dan. 7:25** ‘He will speak out against the Most High and wear down the saints of the Highest One, and he will intend to make alterations in times and in law; and they will be given into his hand for a time, times, and half a time.

- This passage is review for us, since we studied Daniel 7 earlier in this course
  - The fourth beast in Daniel 7 represents the final Gentile kingdom that rules the world during this age
  - It began with the Roman Empire and evolved into the Imperialistic-Democratic Alliances of our world today
- Eventually at the very end of this age, the Fourth Kingdom will take the form of a ten-king ruling structure that controls the entire planet
  - These ten kings are represented as toes on the statue in Daniel 2
  - And they are represented as ten horns on the beast in Daniel 7
- Then at a later point, Daniel 7 tells us the ten horns will be reduced to seven because an eleventh ruler rises to subdue three of the ten
  - This coup results in the eleventh leader becoming the absolute authority for a period of time, times and half a time (3½ years)
  - That phrase, as you remember, means 3.5 years, and it is the telltale sign that we are in a mid-Tribulation moment
  - And it’s also the key to connecting Revelation 12 to Daniel 7
- According to Daniel 7, the world is ruled by ten kings for the first half of Tribulation but at the 3.5 year point, the eleventh takes over
  - Then that eleventh king proceeds to rule over the whole world for the final three and a half years of the age
  - We will get more detail on these events in Chapter 13 of Revelation
- So for now let’s go back to Revelation 12 and apply what we’ve learned to interpreting the meaning of the dragon’s features
  - The dragon has ten horns, and from Daniel 7 we know those horns represent the

ten kings that will rule the world as the tribulation starts

- But Daniel 7 also tells us that by the time of mid-tribulation, we have only seven kings ruling the world (plus the antichrist)
- So that means we have seven kings ruling what ten kings previously ruled...*seven* kings over *ten* kingdoms
- Looking at the dragon again, we find that symbology evident: seven heads with diadems (or crowns) with ten horns
  - At the mid point of Tribulation, the three rulers are gone leaving behind seven yet the ten kingdoms remain
  - So the seven now divide up responsibility for ruling over the ten kingdoms
- And since all these features are present on the dragon and we know the dragon is Satan, the implication is clear
  - Those seven leaders are pawns under the control of Satan, they are *his* heads
  - And the ten kingdoms these men rule belong to Satan...they are *his* horns
  - Therefore, Satan controls the kings and kingdoms, meaning Satan is the god of this world

**2Cor. 4:3 And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, 2Cor. 4:4 in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.**

- Now we can put the symbols together to tell the story John recorded
  - A woman, Israel, was created to bring forth a Messiah Who would defeat the Dragon, Satan, who controls the fallen world
    - The dragon, in his long-standing war with God, knew his adversary would come one day
    - So from the beginning, the dragon has anticipated the arrival of Messiah and sought to stop that plan
  - We know God first announced the plan of His coming Messiah to Satan while in the Garden of Eden

**Gen. 3:15 And I will put enmity  
Between you and the woman,  
And between your seed and her seed;  
He shall bruise you on the head,  
And you shall bruise him on the heel.**

- Satan isn't omniscient so he couldn't know in advance Who the Messiah would be, so he has attacked in multiple places
- Initially, Satan corrupted Cain and used Cain to kill Abel
  - The purpose was to corrupt the seed through whom God would bring the Messiah



- With Cain a murderer and Abel dead, it seemed God's plan was stopped in its tracks...and then came Seth
- Later Satan sent his demons to mate with women during the time of Noah
- He hoped to corrupt humanity and prevent the Messiah's birth, but the Lord wiped out that corruption with a flood
- The story of the Bible is a story of God working to fulfill His promises of a Messiah while the enemy worked to oppose that plan
  - So along the way, Satan has attacked everything and everyone who seems to him to be important to God's plan
  - And once God called Abraham out of Ur, the enemy had a focus for his anger and attack
- Once it became clear that the Lord intended to bring the Messiah through His people Israel, they became the #1 enemy for Satan
  - The Jews have long been the world's most persecuted people and they remain so today
    - Because the enemy understands how Israel is key to God's plan to bring a Messiah Who would destroy Satan
    - Satan tried to corrupt Israel time and time again, introducing idol worship and all manner of evil to God's people
  - When the Messiah was born, Satan used Herod to kill all the infant boys in Bethlehem hoping to stop the child
    - Later, Satan used Judas to bring Jesus to death, which Satan hoped would lead to God's defeat
    - Instead, it sealed his own fate, yet the war goes on
  - So vs.1-5 are background reminding us of Satan's ages-old effort to stop the coming of Messiah as promised in Genesis 3:15
    - The dragon attacked the woman not in one single moment (like during Herod's murder of the children) but throughout the ages
    - Satan's attacks always failed, because the god of this world is no match for the true God
  - The Messiah came as promised, completed His mission on earth, and then was caught up to His throne with the Father
    - And in the future He rules the nations with a rod of iron
    - Then the story continues...

**Rev. 12:6 Then the woman fled into the wilderness where she had a place prepared by God, so that there she would be nourished for one thousand two hundred and sixty days.**

- We know the woman is Israel, so Israel is fleeing as a nation into the wilderness to a place prepared for her for 3½ years
  - Here we have our reference to 3.5 years, which is proof that this chapter is

describing something that happens in the middle of the Tribulation

- At the midpoint of Tribulation the nation of Israel will be given shelter and nourishment for the second half of Tribulation
- We don't know the specific circumstances yet, but that comes next

**Rev. 12:7** And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. The dragon and his angels waged war,

**Rev. 12:8** and they were not strong enough, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven.

**Rev. 12:9** And the great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.

**Rev. 12:10** Then I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, "Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren has been thrown down, he who accuses them before our God day and night.

**Rev. 12:11** "And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death.

**Rev. 12:12** "For this reason, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them. Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he has only a short time."

- John describes a great war in Heaven where Michael, the chief angel, wages a war with the dragon and his demons
  - This war will result in Satan being thrown down to the earth, which sounds like a description of Satan's fall at his rebellion
    - We know that event happened long ago, during the time of the Garden and Adam and Woman
    - Yet this war is happening at the 3.5 year point of Tribulation, according to our time reference in v.6
    - So this is a different war...not Satan's original fall but something that has yet to happen and won't happen until mid-Tribulation
  - As the rest of the passage explains, this is the moment Satan and the demonic realm loses access to the throne room of God
    - Since Satan's original fall, he and his demons have maintained access to God and the heavenly realm at least in some sense
    - Notice in v.10 John says that Satan is the accuser of the brethren who accuses us of our sin before God day and night
    - Other Scripture confirms that Satan has access to the Lord

**Job 1:6** Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan also came among them.

**Job 1:7** The LORD said to Satan, “From where do you come?” Then Satan answered the LORD and said, “From roaming about on the earth and walking around on it.”

- So imagine every time you sin, you give Satan something to declare before God, Who must defend His assignment of grace
- But at mid-Tribulation, all that changes, and for the first time in history, the enemy is forever barred from Heaven
  - At that point, the angel Michael and the other angels wage a war against Satan and his angels
    - The sense is that Michael initiates the war selecting the timing to fit God’s plan
    - And when the war takes place, the good guys win and Satan and his demons are kicked out of Heaven and down to the earth
  - Up to this point in history, Satan’s dominion has been the earth, but since he had access to Heaven, he hasn’t felt defeated
    - He could roam back and forth from earth to Heaven as Job 1 taught us
    - And that allowed Satan to remain self-deceived about his chances for success in his battle against God
    - He may have lost his privileged position as the covering cherub, but still he was free to access the throne room
  - But in v.10 John hears a declaration from heaven that the kingdom of Christ is now ready to appear because the rule of Satan is ending
    - That declaration, together with Satan’s expulsion from Heaven, puts Satan on alert that the end he has always feared has come
    - And the Heavens will celebrate his impending doom and the arrival of the Lord’s kingdom on Earth
  - Heaven will be glad to be rid of him, and remember, we will be in Heaven during this time too, so you will share that joy
    - We will have experienced his presence in the throne room and will watch him at work accusing the brethren
    - We will be cheering as well when we see Michael kick Satan out of Heaven
- We might ask why didn’t God do this a long time ago? Why has God been so patient (and continues to be patient even now) allowing Satan this access?
  - In a word, it’s grace to the world because to have removed Satan’s access earlier would have brought Satan’s response earlier
    - Notice in vs.11-12 Satan’s expulsion from Heaven puts him on notice that his time is running out
    - Satan understands that when God bars him from Heaven, the end of His reign on Earth is approaching
    - And that causes Satan to respond like a cornered animal fighting for his life
  - Satan’s rage and fear drive him to lash out against anyone who is aligned with

## God

- And now that Satan is confined to earth, he is limited to taking out his anger in that realm – so the Heavens declare woe on the Earth
- The Earth will suffer greatly at having an angry Satan confined there, and specifically Satan’s enemies suffer greatly
- Had the Lord sent Satan out of Heaven earlier, then Heaven would certainly have been better off, but the earth would have been much worse
  - The saints have always endured Satan’s attacks
  - But had Satan lost access to Heaven earlier, those attacks would have been much worse
- So why does God take this step now? Why subject the earth to even 3.5 years of Satan’s wrath?
  - Because the Lord wants Satan to play an important role in the events that end Tribulation
  - And in order to get Satan to play his part as planned, the Lord must confine Satan to the earth
- So God is waiting to bar Satan from Heaven until mid-Tribulation because He knows that taking that step will bring great misery to Earth
  - The effect of Satan’s expulsion will be to provoke Satan to great anger and ruthless attacks against those who are aligned with God
    - Obviously, that rage will come against those who believe in Jesus, resulting in the martyrdom of most tribulations saints
    - But not only will believers be martyred, but also those Jews who remain faithful to the God of Israel
  - And in particular, the enemy takes out his anger against Israel, and that’s why the chapter opened with the sign of the woman and dragon
    - The enemy has always opposed Israel because Israel plays a central role in God’s plan for the Messiah
    - And now at the middle point of Tribulation, the enemy’s vitriol against Israel reaches new heights
  - Which is why the Lord makes a provision for Israel to ensure that the nation isn’t wiped out by the enemy’s rampage
    - As we saw in v.6 the “woman” flees into the desert to escape the rage of the dragon for 1,260 days
    - So what is this provision of safety that Israel enjoys for the second half of Tribulation?

**Rev. 12:13** And when the dragon saw that he was thrown down to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male child.

**Rev. 12:14** But the two wings of the great eagle were given to the woman, so that she could fly into the wilderness to her place, where she was nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent.

**Rev. 12:15** And the serpent poured water like a river out of his mouth after the

**woman, so that he might cause her to be swept away with the flood.**

**Rev. 12:16 But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and drank up the river which the dragon poured out of his mouth.**

- After the Satan's expulsion from Heaven, he goes after Israel – because he goes after anyone who he perceives as his enemy
  - As we noted earlier, this isn't a new phenomenon, since throughout history Satan has targeted the Jews
    - But at mid-Tribulation, the enemy comes against Israel in an especially vicious and concentrated way
    - And that persecution has the potential to bring an end of the believing within Israel
    - If that happened, then the remnant of Israel would be extinguished, which would be contrary to God's promises
  - And as we will learn later, the fate of the Jewish people are uniquely connected to the enemy's fate during Tribulation
    - Destroying the Jews is Satan's only hope for self-preservation
    - And we will consider this important connection later in the study
  - Meanwhile, v.14 uses new symbols to describe how the Lord protects His people during the final half of Tribulation
    - The woman receives wings of an eagle so she can fly into the wilderness to be protected for 3½ years
    - Even as she is protected, she remains in the presence of the serpent, we're told in v.14
  - The flight to protection was a response to the enemy's attacks on Israel, and the flight is made possible by an "eagle"
    - Since the woman is a sign, we understand the eagle to be a sign as well, and obviously, a nation wasn't riding an eagle
    - Furthermore, the text says is it "the great" eagle, so clearly, there is some eagle the reader is suppose to remember
- So we go look elsewhere in the Bible to find a reference to an eagle's wings carrying Israel, and we find one in Exodus

**Ex. 19:3 Moses went up to God, and the LORD called to him from the mountain, saying, "Thus you shall say to the house of Jacob and tell the sons of Israel:**

**Ex. 19:4 'You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles' wings, and brought you to Myself.**

- The last time Israel fled into a wilderness to avoid danger was the Exodus account, and in that account the Lord brought them to safety
  - The Lord described the process of escorting His people to Midian as bearing them on eagle's wings

- So the symbology is a picture of the Lord's supernatural ability to protect His people in a wilderness journey
- Here God uses the same sign in a very similar context, so we must understand that God will grant Israel a supernatural escape
  - God will provide Israel a way of moving through the desert and into a place of protection in the wilderness
  - Notice they are protected in the presence of the serpent
  - That means they are still on earth, for that is the only place Satan can be at this point in history
  - They are in the presence of Satan, yet they are also beyond his reach because God is protecting them
- Despite God's protection, the enemy does all he can to destroy them even as they flee, and at one point the dragon used water to drown Israel in a flood
  - But the Lord opens the ground to swallow the water and dry up the land
    - These details continue to draw a connection to the Exodus story, which only serves to reinforce our interpretation of "eagles' wings"
    - We remember that the Lord allowed Israel to walk through the sea but drowned the Pharaoh's army
  - When interpreting the water, we should be cautious about assuming those details are literal
    - Remember, the dragon is a sign, and like his tail, his mouth is an extension of that sign
    - So the water could stand for something else, like an army attacking Israel
- But if we allow that the water as a river is semi-literal (i.e., a rain storm brought by the enemy to drown Israel in the desert), then a picture forms...
  - And to piece it together, we need to bring in other Scripture

**Matt. 24:15** "Therefore when you see the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION which was spoken of through Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place (let the reader understand),

**Matt. 24:16** then those who are in Judea must flee to the mountains.

**Matt. 24:17** "Whoever is on the housetop must not go down to get the things out that are in his house.

**Matt. 24:18** "Whoever is in the field must not turn back to get his cloak.

**Matt. 24:19** "But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days!

**Matt. 24:20** "But pray that your flight will not be in the winter, or on a Sabbath.

**Matt. 24:21** "For then there will be a great tribulation, such as has not occurred since the beginning of the world until now, nor ever will.

- In the Olivet Discourse, Jesus describes the events of Tribulation, and in v.15 He reaches the mid-point of Tribulation, the point we are now

- He says when you see the abomination of desolation described by Daniel, which refers to the timeline spoken of in Daniel 9:27
  - In that verse, Daniel told us that the Antichrist would desecrate the temple by placing an abomination in the holy place
  - And Jesus says that's the signal to leave Jerusalem, to flee to the desert
- That flight of Jews from Jerusalem at mid-Tribulation is the same flight being described now in Revelation 12
  - That flight will be Jews who believe in the testimony of Jesus in Mathew 24, which means they are the believing Jews, saints
  - They will flee especially quickly, with no provisions, which is exactly the way Israel fled at the Exodus
  - This flight will be a test of faith, for only those who believe in the word of God will take Jesus' advice and by doing so, save their lives
- Then notice in Matthew 24:21 Jesus says that what follows immediately afterward is a trip of tribulation that the world has never seen
  - As bad as the disasters of the first half of Tribulation were, they are nothing compared to the terror of the second half
  - But now we've learned that the terror of the second half is not caused by the Lord's judgments but by Satan's fury
  - And yet the Lord protects believers from that wrath by giving them a provision in the desert
- In the Old Testament, we have two prophets who describe this provision of protection God will make for Israel during Tribulation
  - First, we read this in Isaiah

**Is. 33:1 Woe to you, O destroyer,  
While you were not destroyed;  
And he who is treacherous, while others did not deal treacherously with him.  
As soon as you finish destroying, you will be destroyed;  
As soon as you cease to deal treacherously, others will deal treacherously with you.**

- The chapter opens with a discussion of a destroyer being destroyed and ceasing to be
  - And it goes forward from there to describe the fear the world experiences during the Tribulation
- And then we reach this comment:

**Is. 33:14 Sinners in Zion are terrified;  
Trembling has seized the godless.  
“Who among us can live with the consuming fire?  
Who among us can live with continual burning?”  
Is. 33:15 He who walks righteously and speaks with sincerity,  
He who rejects unjust gain**



**And shakes his hands so that they hold no bribe;  
 He who stops his ears from hearing about bloodshed  
 And shuts his eyes from looking upon evil;  
 Is. 33:16 He will dwell on the heights,  
 His refuge will be the impregnable rock;  
 His bread will be given him,  
 His water will be sure.**

- There will be those who are ungodly in Zion who will be terrified at what takes place in the second half of Tribulation
  - But for those who are righteous (the saints), they will be protected in refuge
  - And that refuge will be on the heights and among impregnable rock
- So the place god sends the remnant of Israel for protection in the second half of Tribulation is a place high on rocks and impregnable
  - Then Micah 2 gives us the name of the place

**Mic. 2:10 “Arise and go,  
 For this is no place of rest  
 Because of the uncleanness that brings on destruction,  
 A painful destruction.**

**Mic. 2:11 “If a man walking after wind and falsehood  
 Had told lies and said,  
 ‘I will speak out to you concerning wine and liquor,’  
 He would be spokesman to this people.**

- Like most of the minor prophets, Micah writes to Israel about the times of Tribulation
  - And in this section of Chapter 2 the prophets tells Israel that during Tribulation they will receive a command to arise and go
    - They must leave because they are not in a place of rest, rather they are in a place of painful destruction and uncleanness
    - But the Lord says He will gather the remnant of Israel as they flee
  - The term “remnant” is the way the Bible describes the believing Jews within the nation of Israel
    - There have always been believing Jews and always will be, as Paul explains in Romans 11
    - The Lord will never allow belief to cease within Israel, but Satan wants to destroy believing Israel during Tribulation
    - So for that reason the Lord must preserve it by protecting it

**Mic. 2:12 I will surely assemble all of you, Jacob,  
 I will surely gather the remnant of Israel.  
 I will put them together like sheep in the fold;  
 Like a flock in the midst of its pasture**



**They will be noisy with men.**

**Mic. 2:13 “The breaker goes up before them;**

**They break out, pass through the gate and go out by it.**

**So their king goes on before them,**

**And the LORD at their head.”**

- Micah says this remnant will be together like sheep in a fold
  - The phrase translated “sheep in a fold” is literally the Hebrew word for a sheep pen
    - The Hebrew word for pen or fold is *botzrah*
    - And as it turns out, there is a place in the wilderness not far from Jerusalem called Botzrah, or sheep pen
  - The confirmation of that place fits perfectly the Biblical description of a place of impregnable rock and high cliffs
    - So where is this place? It goes by another name you’ve probably heard...Petra
    - Petra also has places where fast moving rivers of water can form suddenly, threatening anyone walking in that area
  - The area is filled with wadis, which are deep canyons running down the sides of mountains
    - It is prone to flash floods from rainstorms, and when the rain is channeled down the wadis they form dangerous floods
    - Apparently, the enemy brings a flood of rain into one of these wadis, but the Lord supernaturally swallows it to save Israel
    - I’m sure that scene will remind everyone of the Lord’s command over the Red Sea at the approach of the Pharaoh’s army
- So in summary, at mid-Tribulation the enemy is forced out of Heaven in preparation for the events of the end of Tribulation
  - The reason he is forced out isn’t revealed until Chapter 13, but the effect of his fall is explained in Chapter 12
    - Knowing he has a short time, Satan turns his wrath on the Jewish people
    - And God responds by protecting the remnant of Israel by supernaturally escorting them out of Jerusalem and into Petra
  - The Lord allows the remnant to remain in this impregnable place for the duration of Tribulation
    - And he prohibits the enemy from hurting the remnant of Israel
    - No matter how bad things get on earth over the next 3.5 years, the believing Jews wait it out in safety
    - They are said to be in the presence of the dragon, because they remain on earth and earth is Satan’s dominion
  - But not all Jews are in this place...only the remnant lies outside Satan’s reach

**Rev. 12:17 So the dragon was enraged with the woman, and went off to make**

**war with the rest of her children, who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus.**

- The dragon soon realizes that he cannot touch the remnant held in protection, so he must turn his attacks elsewhere
  - And John says he goes off to make war against the rest of “her” children
    - Her refers to the woman, which is Israel
    - And Israel’s children would logically be the Jewish people, so in this case that would be unbelieving Jews
  - If a Jew was believing, that is a part of the remnant, Micah says they will be held in protection in Petra
    - So those who are outside Petra are the unbelieving Jews, which means they hold to the Law and the traditions of Judaism
    - But they haven’t received Jesus as their Messiah
    - This is the group who keep the commandments of God, which is a reference to the Law of Moses
  - Because these Jews are still associated with God, they are a target of the enemy and he will go after them in his rage
    - But notice that John also mentions those who hold to the testimony of Jesus
    - Clearly, that is a reference to believers, and yet if a Jew was believing they would be part of the remnant
    - And if they are part of the remnant, they will be in safety in Petra
  - So that means we’re looking at two different groups who are children of Israel
    - The first group were unbelieving Jews, and this second group are believing Gentiles
    - They are not being targeted by Satan for being a Jew
    - They are being targeted for holding to the testimony of Jesus
- So in the second half of Tribulation, Satan goes on an all-out war against any Jew or believing Gentile he can get his hands on
  - They will be persecuted, and most of them will be martyred as we will see later
    - This all-out war on Jews and believers is one of the major consequences of the mid-Tribulation period
    - And it comes as a result of Satan’s expulsion from Heaven