

## Revelation 12 & 13

### 12: The Woman, the Dragon, the Child, and the Angel

The Heavenly Battle: Isaiah 14.12-15; Ezekiel 28.11-19

'Signs' – Matthew 24

#### 12.1-2: Sign 1 - The Woman

Genesis 3.15-16; In OT, the ideal Zion is described as the mother of God's people – Isa. 54.1-3; 66.7-9; and the Church - Galatians 4.26-27; Ephes.5.31-32

A radiant woman reflecting the sun, moon, and stars (1.16, 20) (Joseph's dream in Genesis 37.9); also *Song of Solomon* 6.4-10 and Isaiah 60.19-20; the medieval church connected this woman to the Virgin Mary.

12 stars – like 12 tribes, 12 apostles (Rev. 21.12-14); crowns (2.10; 3.11; 4.4, 10; 14.14)

Israel as Pregnant woman – Isaiah 26.17-18; 51.2; 66.7-9; Jeremiah 4.31; birth pangs represent the pain of the Church before the return of Christ;

#### 12.3-6: Sign 2 - The *Megas* Dragon

Looks similar to Tiamat, a Babylonian god-like mythological monster

Used of Pharaoh/Egypt (Ps. 74.13-14; Ezek. 29.3; 32.2-3; also Job 26.12-13; 41.1-34)

The Devil – 12.9; 20.2 – the ultimate force opposed to goodness and God; seven heads represent complete and comprehensive evil

4 stars hurled from the sky – Daniel 8.10; mass carnage wreaked by the devil, perhaps looking back at the ruin of Israel and Judah and the 1C persecution of the Church

**5-6 The Child is Born** – Song of Simeon (Luke 2.34-35; Psalm 2.9)

Snatched/caught up into heaven – the Ascension of Christ (Acts 1.2-22);

Foreshadows the victory of God and the defeat of the Dragon/Devil

1260 days, 11.2-3; 13.5 – established as a period of tribulation (Daniel 7, 9, 12)

#### 12.7-9: Sign 3 - War in Heaven

Describes the defeat of the devil and his angels by Michael and the angels of God

Daniel 7.21; 10.13-21; 12.1f; *1 Enoch*, *4 Ezra*, *2 Baruch*; In *Assumption of Moses* 10, Michael defeats Satan at the end time.

Can read this as both a supernatural battle and a battle between the wicked and the saints of God on earth.

## **12.10-12: A Song of Praise from the Saints**

### **12.13-18: Sign 4 – War on Earth**

The Dragon/devil zealously pursues the woman/Church, but God protects her with eagles' wings into the wilderness. Consider the Exodus (Deut. 1.30-31; Ps. 78.51-52) and the 1C Church

Daniel 7.25 – 'for a time, times, and half a time' – 42 months, the length of the rule of Antiochus Epiphanes

15-16 the overflowing river/flood – literal and figurative (Ps. 18.4; 29.3-4; Isa. 50.2; 51.10). What might the flood waters flowing from the Dragon's mouth represent? (Matt. 24.24; Luke 22.31; John 13.2)

How does God provide for the Woman/Church in the wilderness?

### **13.1-10: Sign 5 – The Beast from the Sea**

Daniel 7.1-7

Blasphemous titles – akin to *dominus et deus* – 'lord and god'; and '*divus*' ('divine') on Roman coinage

God alone must be worshipped – Exodus 20.2-7; Deut. 6.13

The Antichrist – why is this Beast traditionally called by the name?

Daniel 8.10-13 – the desecration of the sanctuary of YHWH

What will this Beast do? How will people respond?

Lamb's Book of Life – Exodus 32.32-33; Psalm 69.27-28; Philipp. 4.3; Election and Foreknowledge

10 Jeremiah 15.2; 43.11

### **13.11-18: Sign 6 – The Beast from the Earth – the False Prophet**

Leading others astray – Deut. 13.1-2; Mark 13.21-23

Perhaps indicative of pagan/Roman priesthood; also akin to ideologies which work to undermine YHWH

'great signs' – prophesied to lead people astray (Deut. 13.1-2; Mark 13.21-23; 2 Thess. 2.9-10)

'image of the beast' – recalls the sculpture erected by Nebuchadrazzar of Babylon (Daniel 3.3-6)

The Brand and the Number – '6' is just short of '7', the symbolic perfect number; perhaps connected with Jewish phylacteries (Deut. 6.6-9)

Emperor Nero was referred to as the 'beast' in 1C Judea