

# THE REVELATION

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Chapter 11:18 – 12:3

## **The Decision in Heaven (11:18)**

*Rev 11:18 "And the nations were enraged, and Your wrath came, and the time came for the dead to be judged, and the time to reward Your bond-servants the prophets and the saints and those who fear Your name, the small and the great, and to destroy those who destroy the earth."*

Continuing on, the twenty-four elders spoke, "And the nations were enraged, and Your wrath came, and the time *came* for the dead to be judged, and *the time* to reward Your bond-servants the prophets and the saints and those who fear Your name, the small and the great, and to destroy those who destroy the earth." The wrath of the LORD had already been felt worldwide because of the two witnesses of the LORD. Time on earth, up to this point in the story, had been filled with terrible affliction because of their ministry. All the nations were thrilled when they were finally killed but were horrified when they were resurrected and ascended into heaven. They were "enraged," according to the elders, at the "wrath" that came through the ministry. The time for judgment and reward was on its way, the "dead" to their eternal destruction and the bond-servants and saints to their eternal "reward." The decision had been made in heaven, and the countdown to "destroy those who destroy the earth" would soon begin.

### **d) The Appearance in Heaven – History within Prophecy (11:19-13:8)**

John's eyes have not left heaven. He has just watched the twenty-four elders react to the announcement by the voices proclaiming that the LORD was about to begin His reign over the whole kingdom of the world. To do that, He would need to "destroy those who destroy the earth." For a clear picture of who those destroyers are, it is time for a history lesson. The purpose of the review of this history is to quickly tell the story of the world up to this point in the REVELATION, the world the LORD controlled in His righteousness and ruled over with a rod of iron. Furthermore, it is the story of the Nation of Israel, the same Israel that just accepted the LORD as Savior in the previous section. This history began on the first day of creation and will run through the ages to bring us right back to this place in the story where Israel found her salvation at the end of the ministries of the two witnesses.

#### **(1) The Ark (11:19)**

##### **(a) The Sight in Heaven (11:19a)**

*Rev 11:19a And the temple of God which is in heaven was opened; and the ark of His covenant appeared in His temple,*

Assuredly, the history of the story of the world began with God. It began with God's Covenant for His creation, signed, sealed, and delivered to the safety of the "Ark" in God's home in "His Temple." This Ark was not the one constructed by Moses and his craftsmen at the foot of Mount

Sinai! This Ark was the One measured by Moses in order to construct a replica on earth. The one constructed by Moses represented the covenant of God on earth. The One that John was seeing was the eternal Covenant of God, untainted by the world and all its ills. This Covenant contained the whole plan of God, everything from eternity past to eternity future. It was put in place on the first day of creation before the LORD hung a blue water ball out in the courtyard of His home and called it Earth.

**(b) The Reaction on Earth (11:19b)**

*Rev 11:19b and there were flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder and an earthquake and a great hailstorm.*

Just the mention of the original Ark of the Covenant in the temple of God caused a reaction on earth. A storm broke out, and an earthquake occurred. It was another quake, different from all the others.

## Chapter 12

**(2) The Woman (12:1-2)**

**(a) Clothed with a Crown of Twelve Stars (12:1)**

*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;*

John then saw the representation of a woman and child in heaven. It symbolized the actual story which had long since occurred on earth. Adam, Seth, Kenan, Mahalalel, Jared, Enosh, Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech, Noah, Shem, Apachad, Eber, Peleg, Reu, Serug, Nahor, Terah, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were the twenty-one generations of men, the son of a son of the one who came before, all an important part of the story designed in the Covenant stored in the Ark in the Temple of God in heaven. This story is foundational in the history of the world. It is the story found in the book of Genesis. Oh, each of these men listed had other sons, but God's story was not so much about them as it was about these twenty-one men. The list began with Adam – the first human created by the LORD. The others represented the godly line of men who lived over a 2,650-year period found in the pages of Genesis. The last in the list was Jacob and the LORD did something special with him; he changed his name to Israel. By the end of the book of Genesis, Jacob had twelve sons, Reuben, Levi, Simeon, Judah, Isaachar, Zebulon, Gad, Asher, Dan, Naphtali, Joseph and Benjamin. These boys were the twelve stars in the crown of Jacob whom the LORD called Israel. Thus, we have a small nucleus of a family born and soon to be known as the Nation of Israel. Her birth was recorded in the book of Genesis, her toddler years were recorded in the books of Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. It was then that she learned about her LORD and received instruction from Him as a toddler learns from a parent the important lessons of life. In the books of Joshua, Judges, and Ruth, she was a like most girls 6 to 11 years old, smart enough to know right and wrong but not quite smart enough to know why things are right or wrong. In the rest of the books of the Old Testament we see her in rebellion to God in her teenage years. In First Samuel we see her rebelling against God, rejecting God and demanding a king. She received what she wanted as she grew into a full mature woman, continuously out of God's will. Her rebellion was so bad that she needed a judicial correction

and God took virtually everything from her and sent her to spend time in the custody of another nation. She was released to return home and, for a short while, she acted as if she had changed her ways, reformed we might say, but that was not the case.

Surely you have noticed in this story that encompasses the whole of the Old Testament and the beginning of the New that we have referred to the Nation of Israel with feminine pronouns – she and her. In the passage John said, “and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars.” He, too, used feminine pronouns and this language was not without purpose. However, in the original language of Hebrew for the Old Testament, the Nation of Israel is always *masculine* and it is always *singular*, meaning the nation as a whole is treated as if it was one entity even though it consists of many people.

To confuse the subject even more, the original Hebrew Old Testament addresses the Nation of Israel in feminine terms. What is the difference between the Nation of Israel being *masculine* and the Nation of Israel being *feminine*? The answer is simple. Are you addressing the people of Jewish blood called the Nation of Israel or are you addressing the physical country named the Nation of Israel? Simply speaking, if the text is speaking of a group of people, the *masculine pronoun* is used; if the text is speaking about the country that the people live in, the *feminine pronoun* is used. The same applies to people of Israel, Babylon, Egypt, Syria or any other group bound by a national name. The *masculine* is to be used. The same applies to the physical boundaries of Israel, Babylon, Egypt, Syria or any other land mass with a national name. The *feminine* is to be used.

Was John correct when he calls this woman with twelve stars *her*? Absolutely! It just so happened that when the Nation of Israel (*masculine*) conquered the Promised Land, the land mass acquired the same name as the people, the Nation of Israel (*feminine*). From the taking of the Promised Land in 1464 BC until Nebuchadnezzar became its ruler in 606 BC, the term, the Nation of Israel was a truthful name for the land and the people. However, when Nebuchadnezzar became *her* ruler, as a Gentile power, the Nation of Israel was only a group of landless people until 1948 AD when *he* finally took control of the Promised Land again and owned *her* own country again.

John is correct in this passage because the two main purposes of the REVELATION focus on first, the salvation of the people of the Nation of Israel (*masculine*), whose political and religious capitals are housed in the country called the Nation of Israel (*feminine*), and second, the battle for that country in order for it to become the earthly home and throne of the LORD when He arrives to make the whole world His kingdom. In the context of this passage, John is speaking about the country and the people.

#### (b) With Child in the Pain of Birth (12:2)

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

The Nation of Israel ultimately came to a point where she needed a Savior to save her from herself. She was living on her Promised Land, but the Romans owned it. She was just a tenant. As the Nation of Israel, she was trying to have a child that could rule over the nation, she was laboring and in pain for a Savior. God sent her a Savior in the form of a baby, sent from heaven. He was not just any baby; He was the Baby - God in the form of a Baby.

## (3) The Great Red Dragon (12:3-4)

## (a) His Look (12:3)

*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.*

Then John saw the “great red dragon.” In verse 12:9, John will tell us that this dragon is “the devil and Satan.” It is by no mistake that the *child of the woman of Israel* was born at a specific time in history. This description of the dragon is specific to Satan’s activity in the world through the ages. John was not imagining the appearance of this devil. He was actually seeing seven heads with ten horns and seven diadems; however, even though Satan is portrayed this way in the REVELATION, the three descriptions of him tell his history and the affliction he inflicted on the Nation of Israel through the years.

## (i) His Seven Heads (12:3)

The seven heads represent the seven empires that Satan has controlled – Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome and the final government we will call the Revived Roman Empire. Satan’s first control of the Nation of Israel began in Egypt when she was but a child. In her young adult life, she was divided into two nations, the Northern and Southern Kingdoms. Assyria controlled the north with *his* devilish ways until *she* was finally stolen from her land. The remaining Southern Kingdom held out for a while but finally followed the devilish ways of the north and was removed from her land and taken to Babylon. Just seventy years later, the Medo-Persian Empire took over the Babylonian Empire and acquired the Nation of Israel by default. About two-hundred years later, Alexander the Great conquered the Medo-Persian Empire and began to rule the Nation of Israel. After his death, four of Alexander’s generals divided the Empire into four quadrants and each took a part to rule. They were referred to in the Bible as the kings of the North (Syria), South (Egypt), East (Babylon), and West (Roman) but they were all Greek by heritage. As time progressed, marriages and wars among the families of the four generals and their successors through the years caused a melding of the four into one – the Roman Empire. It was this empire that was in power when Jesus was born, all of them Gentile empires, all of them ruled by Satan and the ways of his world.

With six empires clearly defined in a prophecy to Daniel found in the interpretation of Nebuchadnezzar’s dream, the LORD revealed that the Roman Empire would be divided into two sections, called two legs – the east and west. We also discover that the two empires, the Western Empire and the Eastern Empire, would both be conquered and the conquerors would divide the land mass of each into five toes or countries on each leg – ten in all. Then it further tells us that those ten toes will one day join to form the final empire to afflict the Nation of Israel as all the other six have done through the ages. Those ten countries are called “horns” in the Scripture.