

THE REVELATION

JULY 21, 2024

Chapter 12:12b-17

(1) The Devil (12:12b)

^{12b} 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."

The loss of the war will infuriate Satan. He will have lost his ticket to enter heaven at will. He will have lost his place of prominence before the LORD to do his evil accusing of the righteous, and then, he will have landed on earth, enraged. But greater than that, he will finally know the length of time he will have to do his dirty deeds. He will not know the time until he is ousted from heaven. From a heavenly point of view, he has very little time left when we compare the span of eternity. But from a human point of view, this heavenly war may not come for many days and years. Nevertheless, when it all takes place, Satan's time, even in human terms, will be short.

(2) The Persecution (12:13)

^{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.

When Satan arrives on earth, he will focus on one group of people, the Nation of Israel. He intends to mistreat Israel with every power he still has available to him. From a heavenly position, he will be limited; from an earthly position, his power will still be great. He will attempt to control the world to destroy the Nation of Israel. No doubt his eyes will be on the land of Israel, the home of the Nation of Israel, at least at first.

(3) The Flight (12:14)

^{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.

Here we come upon an interesting statement, "But the two wings of the great eagle were given to the woman so that she could fly into the wilderness to her place ..." What "great eagle" is John identifying? The only eagle mentioned so far in the Revelation occurred in the sounding of Trumpet Four (8:13). However, it was not called a "great eagle" in that passage. Therefore, we do not know if this was the eagle that announced that the remaining three trumpets would be three "woes" or was a different eagle? Perhaps it will be a great eagle. John had never seen an airplane in his life; they would not be invented for another 1,800 years. If this was an actual airplane, the Nation of Israel would no doubt board as many as needed to fly away to safety somewhere in the world. Wherever that place is, it has already been prepared for her, and she will be there for "time and time and half a time." It is generally agreed among scholars that the Hebraism "time and times and half a time" represents three and a half years, with "time" meaning one year, "times" meaning two years, and "half a time" meaning half a year. When we add that all together, it equals three and a half years. The

same language was used in Daniel's prophecy (Daniel 7:25; 12:7). Once Israel makes her departure, she will be safe from the wiles of Satan.

What has happened in this storyline? The LORD has presented to John the "*the great red dragon ... the devil ... Satan,*" and in doing so, He has also presented what this dragon will attempt to do to the beloved Nation of Israel. We do not see it here, but this part of Satan's story, in connection with the Nation of Israel, will occur after Israel's conversion and the beginning of the second half of the seven years of tribulation after the deaths of the two witnesses. The witnesses controlled the first three and a half years in Israel, and Satan controlled the second three and a half years. After her salvation, Israel will be forced to leave her Promised Land and retreat to her wilderness protection. Where will that be? She knows where it is. She has owned it all along since the days of her victory to obtain the Promised Land. It is in the southernmost part of her land, in the wilderness. Take any map of Israel and look at its southernmost border. What do you find? The wilderness!

Moses' sister Mariam was buried in that region, and so was Aaron, his brother. Kadesh Barnea lay in its boundaries; it was the place of the great sin that caused the LORD to send Israel back to Mount Sinai for thirty-eight more years of wilderness journey. The first great battle that the Nation of Israel fought was in that region, and they won with the LORD doing most of the fighting. The Amalekite king had no real chance of victory even though he started the fight. Elijah ran to this wilderness when he was so afraid of Jezebel. He was brave enough to stand up to all the prophets of Baal one day, but the next day, he was so afraid of the threat of the king's wife that he ran far away to this same region. Abraham lived there, too, and so did Isaac. The people of Israel will be able to run far enough in their own wilderness to be away from the dragon that controls her capital, Jerusalem. But that is all getting ahead of the story in the REVELATION, and we will cross that path again later.

(4) The Flood (12:15)

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.

As Israel gives up her *holy city* to Satan on her flight out of town, Satan will attempt to overrun her with "water like a river out of his mouth." Once again, we do not want to get too far ahead in the story, but the LORD may have defined His meaning of the word "water" in a future verse as follows.

Rev 17:15 And he said to me, "The waters which you saw where the harlot sits, are peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues.

In this passage, the LORD is describing the "waters" that the "harlot" is sitting on as "peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues." We would love to see this dragon spew water from his mouth in an attempt to drown the nation of Israel as she runs to the south and no doubt that would make a great movie. But the LORD is extremely consistent in everything He does and His words. It is extremely reasonable to use this same definition with the flood of water that will come from Satan's mouth. It will be a flood of people under the direction of Satan who will attempt to overtake the nation as she leaves. Here, we must bring in other *End Times* Scripture to prove this point.

The book of Obadiah in the Old Testament was written after the Edomites deserted their land in the southern portion of the Promised Land to relocate to the Gaza Strip area and began to marry into the Philistine nation. But the book prophesies that the Edomites will rebuild their homes in the land of Edom and establish their old capital of Teman before the Second Coming of the LORD. It must be in place because the LORD will destroy the Nation of Edom before He destroys the forces gathered at Armageddon. His clothing will be stained with the blood of the Edomites before He reaches the valley of Megiddo. Their sin is explained in Obadiah. Here are some pertinent excerpts.

*Ob 1:1 The vision of Obadiah. Thus says the Lord GOD concerning Edom— We have heard a report from the LORD, And an envoy has been sent among the nations saying, "Arise and let us go against her for battle"—
 2 "Behold, I will make you small among the nations; You are greatly despised. ... 4 "Though you build high like the eagle, Though you set your nest among the stars, From there I will bring you down," declares the LORD. ... 10 "Because of violence to your brother Jacob, You will be covered with shame, And you will be cut off forever. 11 "On the day that you stood aloof, On the day that strangers carried off his wealth, And foreigners entered his gate And cast lots for Jerusalem— You too were as one of them. 12 "Do not gloat over your brother's day, The day of his misfortune. And do not rejoice over the sons of Judah in the day of their destruction; Yes, do not boast in the day of their distress. 13 "Do not enter the gate of My people In the day of their disaster. Yes, you, do not gloat over their calamity in the day of their disaster. And do not loot their wealth in the day of their disaster 14 "Do not stand at the fork of the road To cut down their fugitives; And do not imprison their survivors in the day of their distress. 15 "For the day of the LORD draw's near on all the nations. As you have done, it will be done to you. Your dealings will return on your own head. 16 "Because just as you drank on My holy mountain, All the nations will drink continually. They will drink and swallow and become as if they had never existed. 17 "But on Mount Zion there will be those who escape, And it will be holy. And the house of Jacob will possess their possessions. 18 "Then the house of Jacob will be a fire and the house of Joseph a flame; But the house of Esau will be as stubble. And they will set them on fire and consume them, So that there will be no survivor of the house of Esau," For the LORD has spoken.*

This End Times prophecy speaks of the final doom of the Edomites because of their participation with Satan's nation to block Israel in her escape from Jerusalem during her time of great distress and tribulation. It mentions not only Edom but also others who will also participate in the affliction on the Nation of Israel – “peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues” all moving under the control of Satan to annihilate the LORD’s chosen people.

(5) The Help (12:16)

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.

To understand this verse, we must understand how the earth will help the Nation of Israel escape from this dragon. The text states that “the earth opened its mouth and drank up the river.” How does that happen? It occurs with an earthquake. We already know about this earthquake. John foretold the quake in 11:13 when the two witnesses rose from the dead and ascended into the clouds. At that point, a great earthquake will destroy ten percent of Jerusalem, and 7,000 people will die in the quake. Because of the testimony of the two witnesses and the miracle of their resurrection, Israel will finally believe in the Messiah they had long before cast away.

(6) The Children (12:17)

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.

When the leaders of the Jews in Jerusalem have left the city and are safe in the wilderness, Satan will change his strategy. He cannot attack those who have escaped, but he can afflict the millions of Jews left behind in the Promised Land and the countries he controls. The Israelites are now believers and will keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus. The LORD calls them “the rest of her children.”

But the great red dragon, Satan, will not do this alone in the future; he will need help. Here, the LORD has introduced the Nation of Israel and this dragon for the first time. The LORD still must identify several more characters who will aid Satan in causing Israel great affliction. The next two participants will have an uncanny resemblance to Satan, the great red dragon himself!