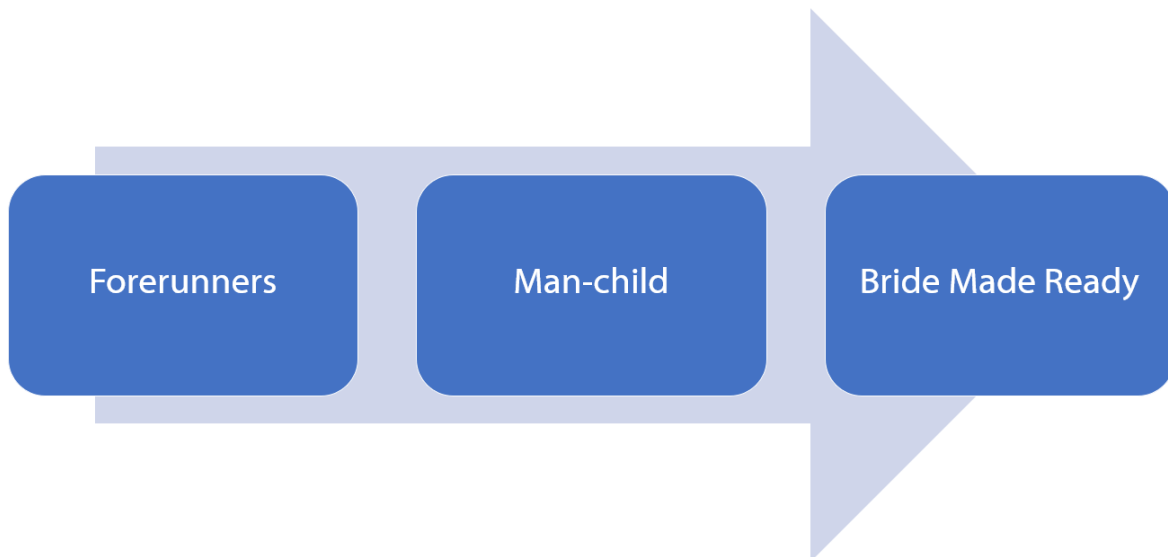


I. Introduction

- a) Let's quickly review what we have talked about over the last several weeks.
 1. *Our mission:* We looked at our mandate to make the bride ready and what it looks like when the bride is made ready. Specifically, we looked at 12 characteristics of the bride made ready.
 2. *The movement:* We looked at the present-day movement of the Holy Spirit to make the bride ready in the nations. The Lord has prepared and is preparing a corporate vessel of forerunners in the spirit and the power of Elijah to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. Restoration Life Church has been preparing for this for 30 years and now is the time for our complete commission into this mandate. We are called to trigger the bride being made ready in this community, nation, and nations. We are called to hasten the Lord's return.
 3. *The commission:* We looked at our responsibility to take what the Lord has taught us and to teach others in the nations. Our role in the Great Commission is to make the bride ready in the nations, especially in Eastern and Southern Africa, through Lifeschool and the Forerunner School.
 4. *The trigger:* The second coming of Christ and the fulfillment of end-time prophecy will not just happen in God's sovereignty alone. We, as the church, must hasten His return by making ourselves ready. To help facilitate this, the Lord is presently releasing end-time messengers who will trigger a remnant within the church to make themselves ready (the man-child) and that will trigger the rest of the church to make themselves ready during the Great Tribulation. This process is revealed in Revelation 12-14 and illustrated below.



- b) A sidenote before moving on. Forerunners will be part of the man-child and the man-child will be part of the bride made ready. The distinction is the unique role each plays in the process of making the bride ready.
- c) Last week, we looked at 10 reasons *why* we need to thoroughly understand Revelation 12-14. This week we will look at *who* the key players are depicted in Revelation 12-14.
- d) One side note before moving on. Once again, I highly recommend Watchman Nee's book, *The Glorious Church*, which talks about Revelation 12 in great detail. You can get this book on Amazon or you can get it for free as a PDF.¹

II. An Overview of Revelation 12-14

- a) Revelation 12-14 is a parenthetical section in the overall chronological narrative of the book of Revelation. It's a pause in the storyline, highlighting key events just prior to the last 3.5 years of the age and during the last 3.5 years of the age.
- b) Many biblical scholars refer to Revelation 12-14 as an explanatory interlude between the trumpet judgments, which conclude in Revelation 11, and the bowl judgments, which begin in Revelation 15.
- c) Revelation 12-14 is a prophecy within the prophecy, shining light onto the key event which activates the rest of the future events contained in the book of Revelation.
- d) Revelation 12-14 is the key which unlocks the mystery of this prophetic book; it's the heartbeat from which everything in this prophecy circulates and flows. Deep understanding of these three chapters brings clarity to the enigma surrounding this prophecy.
- e) After studying the end times for over 25 years, I believe *Revelation 12-14 is the most important unfulfilled prophecy in Scripture*. Not only is this prophecy the most important, but it's also one of the least understood, perhaps the most misinterpreted, and one of the most neglected prophecies in the Bible.

III. Answering the *Who* of This Prophecy

- a) Before answering the question of *who*, let me first state who this prophecy is not describing.
- b) Reading through commentaries and other writings focused on the book of Revelation, you quickly discover there are numerous views of Revelation 12. The crux of the debate revolves around interpreting Revelation 12:1-5.
- c) To keep it simple, I will narrow it down to the two most plausible interpretations.
 - View #1: The birth of the man-child is a historical description of Israel giving birth to the Messiah and then His ascension to the throne of God some thirty-three years later.
 - View #2: The birth of the man-child is a prophecy of the overcomers, a remnant within the church who fully obey Jesus' words in Revelation 2-3. These will come to full maturity as a corporate son 3.5 years before Jesus Christ returns (Eph. 4:13). This group will trigger key end-time events and will be the catalyst for the Lord's return.
- d) After examining Revelation 12:1-5 closely, I believe *View #1* is untenable. I don't believe the woman is Israel nor do I believe the man-child is Jesus. Here are five reasons why:
 1. The book of Revelation is about the future—not the past (Rev. 1:19). This is why this book refers to itself as *the prophecy* six times, stressing its contents are about the future and not the past (Rev. 1:3; 19:10; 22:7, 10, 18, 19). Since John wrote this book in 95 A.D., some 60-plus years after Jesus ascended to the throne, it's unlikely he used five verses in this prophetic book to describe a historical event.
 2. The woman flees into the wilderness immediately after the birth of the man-child—not 2,000 years later (Rev. 12:6). Clearly, the woman is prepared in the wilderness during the last 3.5 years of the age.
 3. When the man-child is born, all seven antichrist kingdoms (Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome, and the Revived Roman Empire) have come to power, revealed by the dragon's seven heads crowned with seven diadems (Rev. 12:3).² If this prophecy described Israel and

Jesus, only six heads would be crowned since the Roman Empire was the sixth kingdom or the sixth demonic head.³

4. The woman who gives birth to the man-child is in heaven; therefore, she can't be Israel, who is on earth in the Middle East.
 5. The heavenly woman is clothed with the sun, indicating she is glorious. When Jesus was born and ascended to the throne 33 years later, Israel was far from glorious. The nation, for the most part, rejected Jesus as the Messiah and was severely judged for this by the Lord in 70 A.D.
- e) For a more in-depth explanation of why I believe *View #1* is untenable, see *Addendum 1 – Why Revelation 12:1-5 Is A Prophecy of the Future* and *Addendum 2 – Why the Heavenly Woman Is Not Israel* at the end of these notes.
- f) Now I will explain *who* the key players are in Revelation 12-14.

IV. The Heavenly Woman (Rev. 12:1-2,5)

- a) There are two women in the book of Revelation. First, there is the new city Jerusalem, described as a bride made ready for her husband (Rev. 21:2). Second, there is the harlot Babylon—the headquarter-city of a one-world religion, economy, and government—who reigns over the kings of the earth and prepares the way for the antichrist to reign for 42 months.
- b) Given the prominent role of these two women in the book of Revelation, the woman in Revelation 12 is likely related to the new Jerusalem—the heavenly city comprised of those who have made themselves ready. This heavenly city is built with living stones of men and women, who have been fit together to become the dwelling place of God for all eternity. Therefore, *it's impossible to separate the new Jerusalem from the bride made ready*. The individuals who have overcome and have made themselves ready for Jesus Christ are the same people who comprise the new city Jerusalem.
- c) Paul said, "The Jerusalem above is free; she is our mother" (Gal. 4:26). This further confirms the heavenly woman is related to the new city Jerusalem.
- d) Back to interpreting Revelation 12, notice the heavenly woman is clothed with the sun, speaking of her glory; the moon is under feet, speaking of her authority; and she is wearing a crown of 12 stars, speaking of her royalty and exalted rank attained by her victory (Rev. 12:1).
- e) Analyzing the type of crown she's wearing, we can better identify who the woman is. When John writes, "On her head [was] a *crown* of twelve stars," the Greek word for *crown* is *stephanos* (Rev. 12:1, emphasis mine). In the first century, *stephanos* referred to a victor's crown, given to champions in an ancient Roman contest. This word was also used to indicate "a mark of royal or exalted rank," which was gained by winning in a struggle or contest.
- f) The heavenly woman wearing a crown indicates her royalty—a position she won by overcoming the world, the flesh, and the devil. This in mind, the heavenly woman likely refers to the millions of justified believers throughout history—presently in heaven—who overcame and made themselves ready as a bride for Jesus Christ. This interpretation is strengthened when considering the *stephanos* crown of life is promised to the overcomers in Smyrna and was the prize Paul pursued vigorously (Rev. 2:10; 1 Cor. 9:24-25).
- g) So, those who comprise the heavenly woman have made themselves ready. Nevertheless, she is incomplete, for many more people on earth must be added to her number before Jesus returns (Heb. 11:40). Only when this happens will the bride finally be made ready at the end of the age and Revelation 19:7 be fulfilled.

- h) I like to say the heavenly woman in Revelation 12 is the new city Jerusalem under construction. That is, she is the glorious and prepared bride in heaven, revealed 3.5 years before the Lord's return, waiting for the rest of the bride on earth to be made ready and added to her number.
- i) Using the language of Hebrews 11-12, the heavenly woman is the great cloud of witnesses throughout history—those who overcame and obtained a testimony by their faith and obedience (Heb. 11). The heavenly woman is comprised of those who, during their short lives on earth, were seeking the eternal city, whose builder and architect is the Lord (Heb. 11:10,16). This being the case, "apart from us"—referring to born-again believers on earth—the heavenly woman cannot "be made perfect" (Heb. 11:40). For the heavenly woman to be complete, the church on earth must be made ready as a bride and then added to her number. Only then will the bride be made ready at the end of the age (Rev. 19:7).
- j) In the poetic language of the Song of Solomon, this heavenly woman is "as lovely as Jerusalem. . . . As beautiful as the full moon, as pure as the sun, as awesome as an army with banners" (Song. 6:4,10). She is the glorious, overcoming bride in heaven who has made herself ready, waiting for millions more on earth to be added to her number.

V. The Dragon (Rev. 12:3-4)

- a) The dragon is easy to identify. This is Satan, the serpent of old. The dragon is the accuser of the brethren who accuses God's people day and night.
- b) Though there's many points I could make about this passage, the most important for us is knowing the devil's number one goal in spiritual warfare. Namely, it's to abort the man-child. It's to stop the bride on earth from being made ready.
- c) When a remnant within the church are made ready as a bride and overcome him and his selfish nature, it will mean the end of his rule in the second heaven and ultimately in the earth.
- d) This explains why those who are actively making themselves ready for the Lord and are helping to make others ready experience so much spiritual warfare. The devil is dead set against the bride on earth being made ready for the Bridegroom.

VI. The Man-Child (Rev. 12:5)

- a) Just as the identity of the woman was at the center of much debate, the same is true with the man-child who will rule the nations with a rod of iron. To see why I don't believe the man-child is Jesus Christ, please see *Addendum 3 – Why the Man-Child of Revelation 12:5 Is Not Jesus* at the end of these notes.
- b) Revelation 12:5 states, "And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne" (KJV).
- c) Jesus vowed to give the rod of iron, symbolizing authority over the nations, to those who overcome Jezebel (Rev. 2:26-27). He also promised the throne to those who overcome lukewarmness (Rev. 3:21). Notice carefully the man-child is given both the rod of iron and the throne.
- d) Following sound rules of hermeneutics (the science of interpretation) and conservative principles of exegesis (critical explanation or analysis of a text), the man-child symbolizes the overcomers—those within the church who repented, obeyed, and overcame every issue Jesus listed in Revelation 2-3. Specifically, they overcame losing their first love, self-preservation, false teachings leading to compromise, the works, character, and influence of Jezebel, complacency, apathy, and indifference, and lukewarm love. These will be given the rod of iron and they will rule the nations in partnership with Jesus Christ during His 1,000-year reign on earth.

- e) Watchman Nee, in his book, *The Glorious Church*, said, "God always lays hold of a group of overcomers to make a dispensational move [to shift us from one age to another age]." Because "the church . . . has failed and is still failing today," wrote Nee, ". . . There is only a group of people left to do that work for the church and to take up the church's responsibility. This group is the overcomers. What they do is counted as the work of the whole church. If there are those who will be the overcomers, God's purpose is attained and He is satisfied. This is the principle of the man-child. The reason we are considering this matter of the man-child is because in God's eternal purpose He needs a group of overcomers."⁴
- f) Just as the Holy Spirit impregnated the virgin Mary and formed the Messiah within her womb, the Holy Spirit will form Christ within this man-child company of overcomers. The Spirit of God will shape and mold a remnant within the church into a corporate son, a mature man, who fully obeys Jesus' words in Revelation 2-3.
- g) The Lord invites all of His people to be part of this man-child company—to be made ready before the majority of the church. If we say "yes" to this invitation, allegorically speaking, we will be placed into the womb, a place of hiddenness and seclusion. It's here, in our secret place relationship with the Lord, where the indwelling Spirit will form, mold, and shape us into the image of Christ internally, similar (though obviously not the same) to how the Spirit impregnated the virgin Mary and formed Christ within her womb.
- h) When Christ is fully formed in these individuals who say "yes," then the man-child will be born. This remnant within the church, who matured into Christ-like sons before the majority, are the forerunners who will trigger key end-time events leading to the second coming of Jesus Christ. They will literally be used to shift us from the present Church Age to the Kingdom Age.

VII. The Overcomers (Rev. 12:10-12)

- a) After the heavenly woman gives birth to the man-child, war breaks out in heaven between God's angels and the powers of darkness. After Satan and his angels are defeated, John writes, "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. 12:10).
- b) Who, exactly, is this loud voice in heaven, celebrating heaven's victory over Satan? We know for certain this group is comprised of the redeemed, for they refer to Satan as the accuser *of our brethren*. This company realizes the accuser is assaulting their brothers and sisters in Christ. Probing deeper, the next verse gives us additional clarity. John writes: "And they [the loud voice celebrating in heaven] *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. 12:11, emphasis mine). Undoubtedly, this group of saints are the overcomers.
- c) The overcomers are born-again, justified believers who have won the battle against the world, the flesh, and the devil. The overcomers are those within the church who have fully embraced the way of the cross and allowed the Holy Spirit to put their self-life to death. The overcomers are a remnant within the church who fully live by the indwelling life of Christ and obey the Lord's voice and Word without compromise. The overcomers are those who fully obey Jesus' words in Revelation 2-3 and have repented of every issue He addressed. The overcomers, by yielding their self-life to the cross and living by Christ's indwelling life, became mature sons of God, conformed into the image and likeness of Jesus Christ.

VIII. Overcoming Relates to Sanctification

- a) Just to clarify, we don't overcome to get saved. We overcome because we are saved. We don't overcome to stay saved. We overcome because we have the Overcomer living in us. We don't

overcome so God will love us. We overcome because we have experienced the height, width, and depth of His love, and in return, we love Him with everything within us.

- b) As the Reformers preached, we are saved by faith alone through grace alone on the basis of Christ's finished work alone apart from any works. This means we are justified and declared righteous because of Christ's finished work on the cross—not by our obedience. Nevertheless, obedience is innate within the DNA of saving faith, and if our faith never produces the fruit of obedience, we merely have the faith of devils—a mental assent powerless to save us, for it is faith of the mind and not faith of the heart (James 2:19). Faith, if it never produces works or obedience, is dead, like the body without the spirit (James 2:17,26). Reading Hebrews 11, the greatest description of faith in Scripture, it's clear faith and obedience are inseparable.
- c) Paul taught we have been saved, we are being saved, and we will be saved (Eph. 2:5,8; 1 Cor. 1:18; 2 Cor. 2:15; Rom. 5:9; 1 Cor. 3:15). Salvation is a process of justification (we have been saved), sanctification (we are being saved), and glorification (we will be saved).
- d) Justification is by faith alone through grace alone through Christ's finished work alone apart from any works. Justification is instantaneous, resulting in the forgiveness of sins, the gift of imputed righteousness, the indwelling Holy Spirit, a regenerated spirit made new, righteous, and holy, and deliverance from the wrath of God. Justification is what Christ finished for us, relates to God's completed work in our spirits, and determines our eternal destination.
- e) Sanctification, on the other hand, involves us working out what the indwelling Spirit has worked into our spirits. Unlike justification, sanctification can't be imputed or reckoned to us. Sanctification is the result of us being consecrated (set apart for God). This is a gradual process in our hearts, souls, and bodies that occurs as we obey the Word of God in the power of the Holy Spirit. Sanctification is what the Spirit is finishing in us, relates primarily to our souls, and determines our eternal destiny.
- f) Glorification relates to our bodies and will take place at the resurrection of the dead. The intensity of our glorification—whether we will shine like the sun, the moon, or a faint star—is determined by the depth of our sanctification (1 Cor. 15:41). Glorification will seal our eternal destination and our eternal destiny forever.
- g) Piecing together various Scriptures, it's unmistakable sanctification or readiness determines our eternal destiny—how we will spend eternity. Many wrongly believe the kingdom of heaven is a socialistic government, where eternal rewards are evenly distributed among the redeemed and everyone's experience of eternity is the same. Nothing could be further from the truth.
- h) For starters, Jesus taught some will "be called least in the kingdom," for they disregarded portions of God's Word, failed to obey His Word fully, and taught others to follow their example of disobedience (Matt. 5:19). Contrast the *least in the kingdom* with those who will "be called great in the kingdom," for they fully obey God's Word and exhort others to do the same. Clearly, *sanctification through obedience* determines whether we are considered least in the kingdom or great in the kingdom.
- i) In the parable of the sower, Jesus taught there are various degrees of fruitfulness within the kingdom—"some a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty" (Matt. 13:23). I refer to thirty-fold fruitfulness as outer-court Christianity; sixty-fold fruitfulness as holy-place Christianity; and hundred-fold fruitfulness as holy-of-holies Christianity.
- j) Paul revealed we can be justified, born-again, and heaven-bound but lose all of our eternal rewards through undisciplined, lazy, and selfish living. Though many will suffer great loss at the judgment seat of Christ, they still "be saved, yet so as through fire" (1 Cor. 3:15). Paul also delivered someone living in gross sexual immorality over to Satan "so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus" (1 Cor. 5:5). Contrast this with the overcomers, who fully obeyed Jesus' instructions in

Revelation 2-3 and will therefore “inherit these things”—the unfathomable rewards of eternal intimacy, eternal authority, and eternal glory (Rev. 21:7).

- k) Speaking of the resurrection of the dead, Paul said, “There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for star differs from star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead” (1 Cor. 15:41-42). The intensity of our glorification is determined by the depth of our sanctification.
- l) In the kingdom of heaven, some will be wise virgins, who purchased the oil of intimacy in the secret place. Others will be foolish virgins, who grew lukewarm and lost their first love. Some will be faithful stewards—self-sacrificing servants who multiply the talents, time, and treasures Christ entrusted to them. As a result, they will be given authority over cities in the 1000-year reign of Christ and throughout eternity. Others, characterized by laziness, passivity, and selfishness, will bury their talent and lose the opportunity to rule and reign with Christ.
- m) Though justified, born-again, and heaven-bound, some will remain an immature child—a *teknon*. Others will put to death the deeds of their body by the Spirit and will become a mature son of God—a *huios* (Rom. 8:12-14).
- n) Like Paul, who forgot his past and pressed onward to the upward call of God in Jesus Christ, some will win the prize and receive the crown (Phil. 3:14; 1 Cor. 9:24-25). Others, by their passive and lukewarm lifestyle, will be disqualified from this eternal reward (1 Cor. 9:27).
- o) The chart below summarizes how our sanctification or readiness determines our eternal destiny—how we will spend eternity.



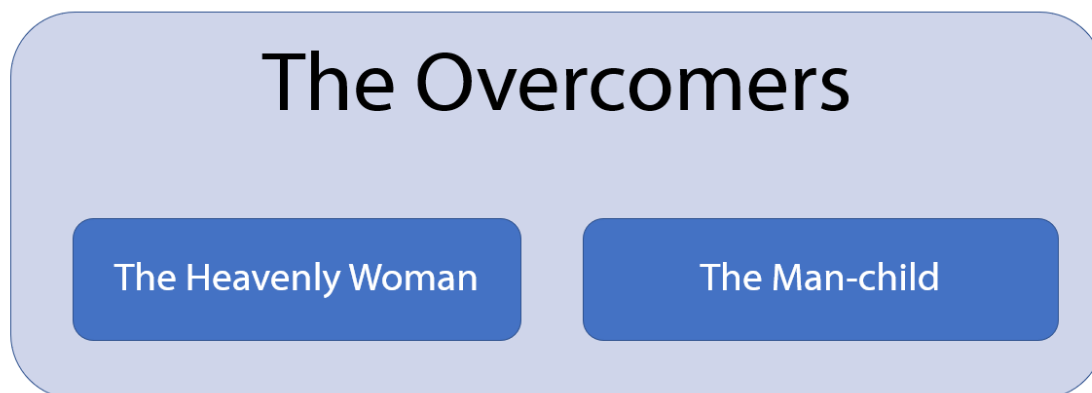
IX. Responding with Faith and Obedience

- a) Some who hear this exhortation to overcome feel as if they could never live up to this lofty standard. They believe they have too many responsibilities, issues, hang-ups, failures, strongholds, and besetting sins to ever be part of such an elite group of overcoming saints. If you feel this way, I want to instill unshakable confidence in your heart—Christ the Overcomer in you is powerfully enough to overcome in you and through you if you yield entirely to Him.
- b) “I am confident of this very thing,” wrote Paul, “that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus” (Phil. 1:6). Our God is the One “who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy” (Jude 1:24).

- c) At the same time, overcoming requires much more than passive faith. We must also respond with radical obedience. We must fully obey God's Word and His voice. Overcoming by grace-empowered, affection-filled obedience must become one of our most important priorities. A casual, cavalier, passive, indifferent, lukewarm attitude toward making ourselves ready will keep us immature, unprepared, and defeated.
- d) Paul, who set the example for us, focused his entire life on overcoming and being made ready. Because Paul had laser-focused vision on the upward call of God in Christ Jesus, he disciplined his body, let go of his past, refused to put confidence in the flesh, decreased so Christ could increase, and strived with all of his might, empowered by the Spirit, to win the race and receive the prize (1 Cor. 9:24-27; Phil. 3).
- e) Let's follow Paul's example and let our eternal destiny define our temporal lifestyle rather than our temporal lifestyle define our eternal destiny.

X. The First-Fruits Harvest Completed (Rev. 12:10-12; 14:1-5)

- a) With all of this in mind, the group celebrating in heaven are the overcomers (Rev. 12:10-12). They are the overcomers throughout history (those who comprised the heavenly woman) *plus* the overcomers 3.5 years before the Lord's return (those who comprised the man-child).
- b) This is shown in the diagram below.



- c) Here's a simple way to think about it. When the heavenly woman gives birth to the man-child and the man-child is caught up to God and to His throne, those who comprise the man-child become part of the heavenly woman. So now the number of people who comprise the heavenly woman—those who overcame and made themselves ready—is enlarged. These are the overcomers.
- d) Let me give one more example to hopefully make this clear. Let's say there are 2 million believers who comprise the heavenly woman and there are 1 million believers who comprise the man-child. After the man-child is born, the heavenly woman would then be made of 3 million believers.
- e) When the heavenly woman is enlarged by those who comprise the man-child, thereby increasing the overcomers who have become mature sons of God, this will complete the first-fruits phase of the end-time harvest. This is described in Revelation 14:1-5. Specifically, note this statement: "These have been purchased from among men as *first fruits* to God and to the Lamb" (Rev. 14:4, emphasis mine).
- f) Along these same lines, Jesus said, "The harvest is the end of the age" (Matt. 13:39). The end-time harvest is when God's people come to full maturity as Christ-like sons of God (Matt. 13:38). This in mind, the birth of the man-child will complete the first-fruits phase of the end-time harvest.

- g) The 144,000 in Revelation 14:1-5, a symbolic number representing a remnant with governmental authority, are the first-fruits harvest of overcomers—those within the church who made themselves ready before the majority. Or put another way, the 144,000 reveals the heavenly woman after those who comprised the man-child have been added to her number. For an in-depth teaching about this subject, please see my teaching, *Who Are the 144,000?*, on RadicalPursuit.net.⁵
- h) When the first-fruits harvest of overcomers has been completed—those who have overcome throughout history plus those who overcome 3.5 years before the Lord's return—it will trigger war in the heavens. This will result in Satan and his angels cast down to the earth just prior to the start of the Great Tribulation—the last 3.5 years of the age.
- i) Connecting Revelation 11:15 with Revelation 12:10, these overcomers will be the catalyst for shifting the world from the Church Age to the Kingdom Age, resulting in the second coming of Jesus Christ and the kingdom of God coming to the earth in fullness.
- j) These overcomers will also be a trigger who helps make the rest of the church ready—the majority of God's people—through the fires of the Great Tribulation during the last 3.5 years of this age (Dan. 12:10; Rev. 12:6; and Rev. 12:13-17).
- k) Thus, the birth of the man-child completes the first-fruits harvest and triggers the final and ultimate harvest, when the greatest number of God's people in history are made ready (Rev. 14:14-20).

XI. The Earthly Woman in the Wilderness (Rev. 12:6, 13-16)

- a) With the first-fruits harvest completed, we now come to the final ingathering, where the greatest number of born-again believers are made ready as the bride in history.
- b) Daniel 12:10 describes it like this: "Many will be purged, purified and refined, but the wicked will act wickedly; and none of the wicked will understand, but those who have insight will understand."
- c) During the Great Tribulation, the last 3.5 years of the age, many of God's people will be refined by fire. In the words of Daniel 12:10, they will be purged, purified, refined, and made white. The bride will be made ready for the Bridegroom through the fires of the Great Tribulation.
- d) This will happen in two ways. Some will be destined for preservation and others for persecution.
- e) Those marked for preservation are symbolized by the woman fleeing into the wilderness, where she is protected, nourished, and prepared for the Lord for 3.5 years.
- f) The logic behind this interpretation is simple. After identifying the heavenly woman, we can easily determine the earthly woman, since both the heavenly woman and the earthly woman must have a similar meaning. Because the heavenly woman is the bride who has already made herself ready, the earthly woman refers to those who will be made ready in the wilderness during the Great Tribulation.
- g) After the birth of the man-child, Revelation 12:6 states, "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."
- h) The Lord will prepare many of His people by protecting them from the wrath of the antichrist and preparing them for Himself in the wilderness.
- i) As I explain in our class, *Understanding the End Times*, the antichrist will not have complete dominion over every single nation on earth—from the remotest island in Fiji to the cold terrain of the Antarctica and every nation in between.⁶ In a paradigm shift from traditional evangelical eschatology, the antichrist's domain will not include every nation. Instead, the Lord will only allow him to subdue the nations which comprised the ancient Greek, Persian, and Babylonian empires

(Rev. 13:2). That is, his empire will likely stretch from Greece through Turkey into the heart of the Middle East and onward into Iran, Afghanistan, and Pakistan.

- j) Though the antichrist's rule will be concentrated in the Middle East, his thirst for power will still shake every nation on earth. Nevertheless, many nations will be refuge nations, where the Lord will prepare the bride for 3.5 years—a wilderness where she will be protected, preserved, and spiritually prepared as a bride for her Bridegroom.

XII. The Rest of Her Seed (Rev. 12:17)

- a) While the Lord will protect many of His people from the wrath of the antichrist, there will be those whom the Lord will prepare through martyrdom.
- b) In Revelation 6:9-11, we see the martyrs throughout history crying out for God's justice. They are specifically told to "rest for a little while longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brethren who were to be killed even as they had been, would be completed also" (Rev. 6:11).
- c) Revelation 13:10 adds further insight to this dynamic, stating, "If anyone is destined for captivity, to captivity he goes; if anyone kills with the sword, with the sword he must be killed. Here is the perseverance and the faith of the saints."
- d) During the last 3.5 years of the age, some will be destined for preservation in the wilderness while others will be destined for martyrdom. John wrote, "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" (Rev. 12:17).
- e) The rest of her children—those destined for martyrdom—will be made ready by laying down their lives. They will overcome Satan by being overcome by the antichrist (Rev. 13:7; 14:12-13; 15:2).

XIII. Answering the *When* of This Prophecy

- a) The next question we want to ask is *when?* When will the prophecy of Revelation 12-14 be fulfilled?
- b) These three chapters will be fulfilled during the last 7 years before Jesus Christ returns. Prophecy scholars refer to this time-period as Daniel's Seventh Week. If you are unfamiliar with Daniel's 70-Week Prophecy, I encourage you to check out the session named *Daniel's Seventy-Week Prophecy* in our *Understanding the End Times* class.⁷
- c) To help simplify when these three chapters will take place and the order in which these chapters will unfold, I created the diagrams below.

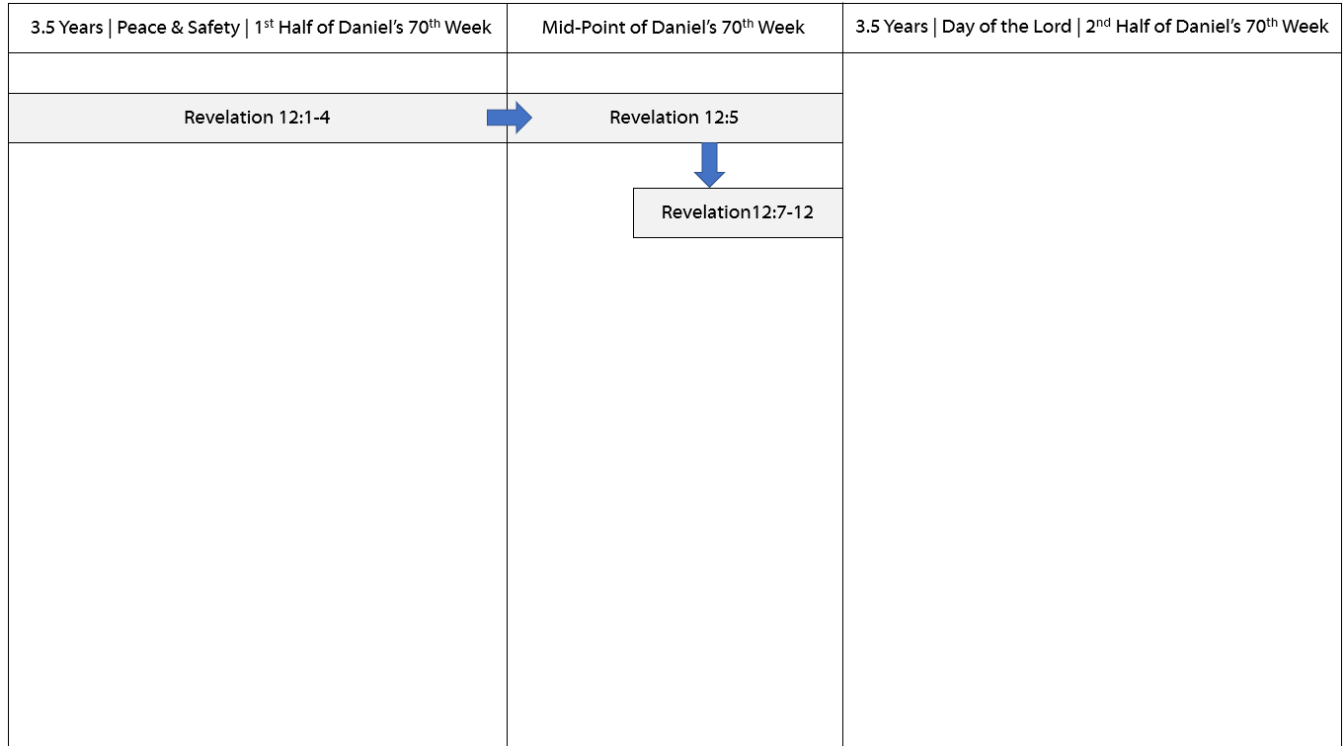
The heavenly woman pregnant with the man-child (Rev. 12:1-4).

3.5 Years Peace & Safety 1 st Half of Daniel's 70 th Week	Mid-Point of Daniel's 70 th Week	3.5 Years Day of the Lord 2 nd Half of Daniel's 70 th Week
Revelation 12:1-4		

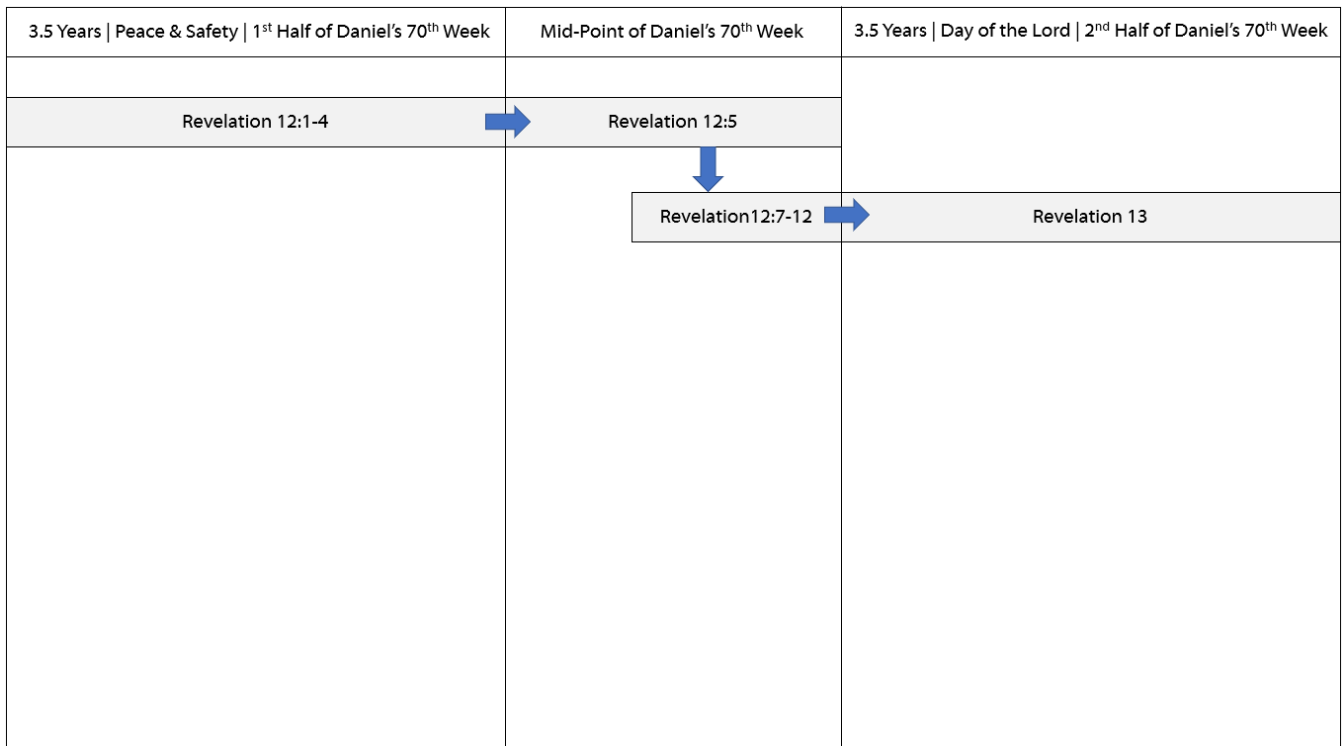
The heavenly woman gives birth to the man-child (Rev. 12:5).

3.5 Years Peace & Safety 1 st Half of Daniel's 70 th Week	Mid-Point of Daniel's 70 th Week	3.5 Years Day of the Lord 2 nd Half of Daniel's 70 th Week
Revelation 12:1-4	Revelation 12:5	

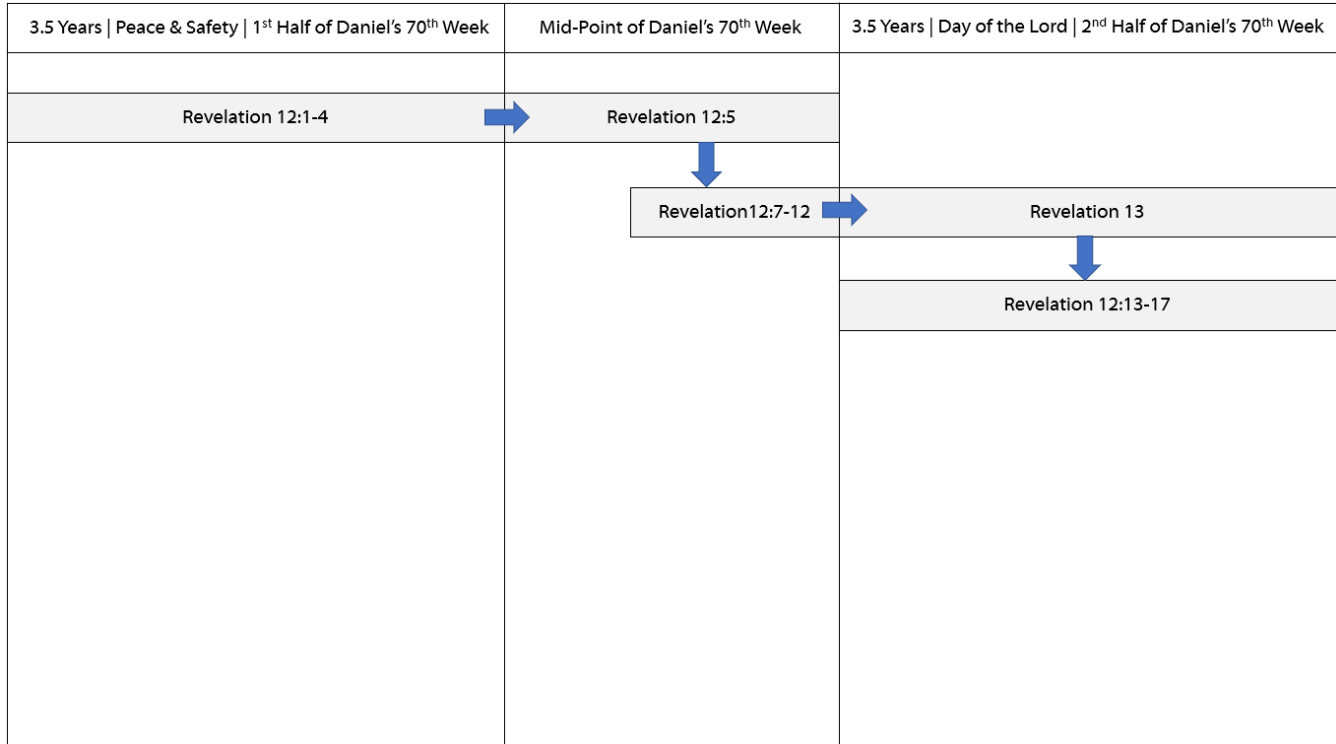
The birth of the man-child triggers war in the heavens and the casting down of Satan to earth (Rev. 12:7-12).



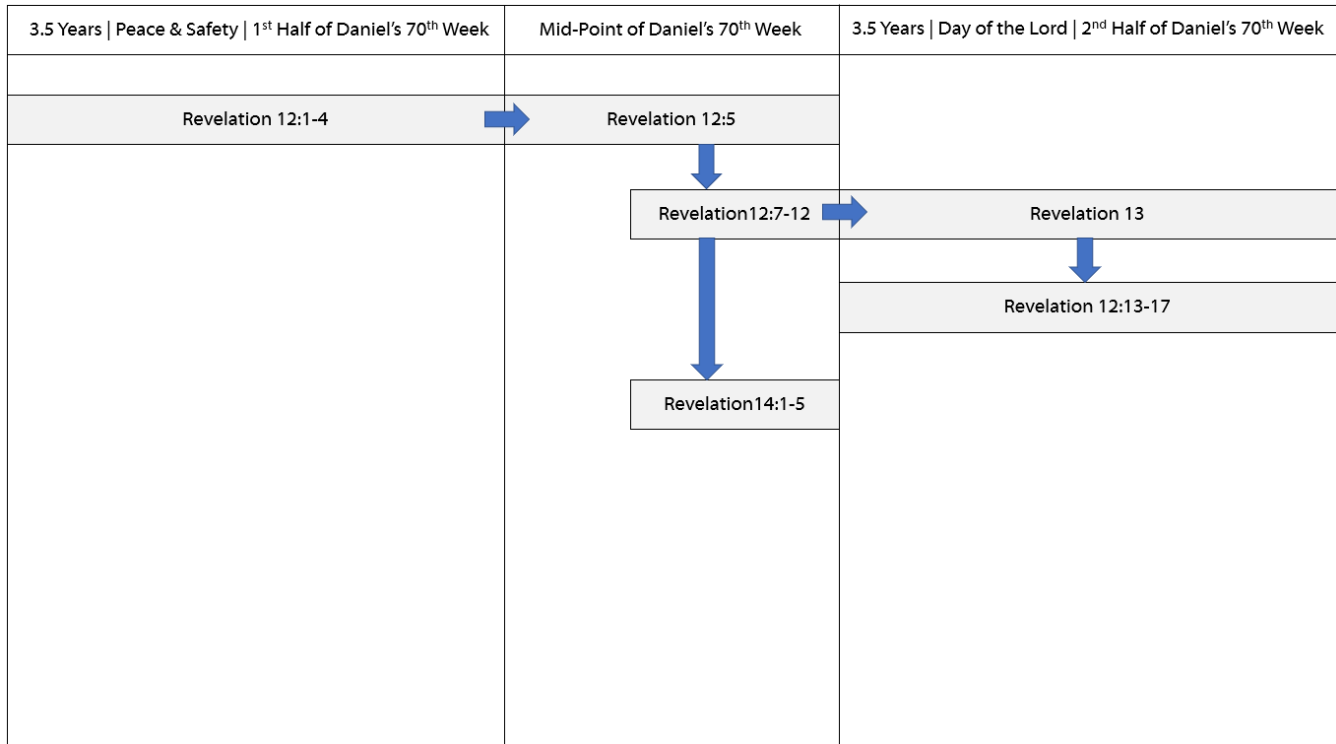
When Satan is cast to the earth, it leads to the 42-month reign of the antichrist (Rev. 13).



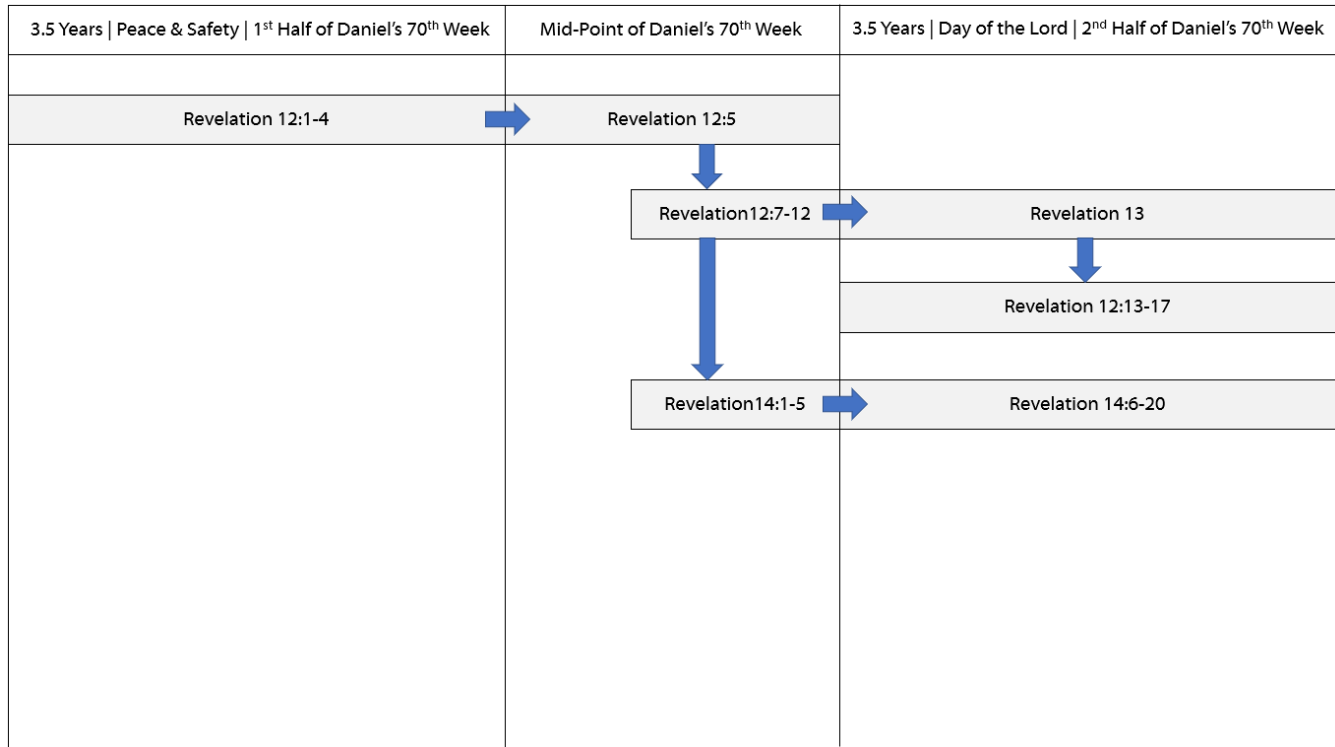
The reign of the antichrist leads to the persecution of some and the preservation of others (Rev. 12:13-17).



After Satan is cast to the earth, the first-fruits harvest is completed (Rev. 14:1-5).



After the first-fruits harvest is completed, the final ingathering takes place, when the bride is made fully ready (Rev. 14:6-20).



Addendum 1 – Why Revelation 12:1-5 Is A Prophecy of the Future

1. The book of Revelation is about the future—not the past.

The book of Revelation refers to itself as *the prophecy* six times, stressing its contents are about the future and not the past (Rev. 1:3; 19:10; 22:7, 10, 18, 19).

Furthermore, John was told explicitly to write “the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after these things” (Rev. 1:19). Most scholars believe the “things which you have seen” refer to John’s initial revelation of Jesus in Revelation 1; “the things which are” to the condition of the seven churches in Revelation 2-3; and “the things which will take place after these things” to the events recorded in Revelation 6-22.

Based upon this premise, nowhere in the book of Revelation was John commissioned to record a historical event. Yes, there are several allusions to the past in the various prophecies scattered throughout the book (Rev. 2:14, 2:20, 12:9, 17:9-11), but Revelation 12:1-5 would be the only time in this prophecy where a historical event is recorded in detail and written as if a prophecy.

Therefore, it seems uncharacteristic of the book of Revelation to devote five verses to events that had already taken place over ninety years before John wrote this book.

2. The woman flees into the wilderness immediately after the man-child is born.

Revelation 12:6 states, “Then the woman fled into the wilderness,” where she will be protected and “nourished for one thousand two hundred and sixty days.” The most logical way to read this is not to place a two-thousand-year gap between the birth of the man-child and the woman being protected in the wilderness at the end of the age.

Defenders of the “woman as Israel and the man-child as Jesus” position typically counter this two-thousand-year-gap argument by referencing several Old Testament prophecies, which in the very same breath, predict the first and second coming of Jesus (Isa. 9:6-7; Isa. 11:1-4; Zech. 9:9-10). As they point out, the natural reading of these Old Testament prophecies seems to indicate these events were going to take place at the same time. But in hindsight, we know there is at least a two-thousand-year gap between the first and second coming of Jesus. Though this is true, because these prophets all prophesied hundreds of years before the birth of Christ, Jesus’ first and second comings were both future events to them.

In John’s case, however, he is supposedly looking back at events which took place over ninety years before his prophecy and he is connecting it to an event at least two-thousand years into the future. I can’t think of another example in the Bible where such a prophetic declaration was made.

Because this is inconsistent with the precedent set by the Old Testament prophets, there is good reason to reject the interpretation as a historical description of the birth and ascension of Jesus.

3. The context clues indicate this prophecy occurs just prior to the Great Tribulation rather than in 5 or 4 BC.

Perhaps the most convincing proof these verses are prophetic rather than historical is found in Revelation 12:3. When John sees the dragon, he has “seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads were seven diadems” (Rev. 12:3).

Most scholars don’t pay much attention to this statement, but it is a vitally important clue giving us insight into the timing of this event. Notice carefully on the dragon’s heads are seven diadems—signifying royal authority. This means each of the heads, which are interpreted later as seven satanic kingdoms, have either ruled or are presently ruling when the woman gives birth to the man-child (Rev. 17:9-11).

Most prophecy experts agree the six satanic kingdoms are: 1) Egypt; 2) Assyria; 3) Babylon; 4) Media-Persia; 5) Greece; and 6) Rome. Though there is disagreement about the seventh kingdom, for the purpose of this discussion, it doesn't really matter. The point is the dragon's seven heads are all crowned, meaning Egypt, Assyria, Babylon, Media-Persia, Greece, and Rome have all had dominion over the nations in the past and the seventh kingdom either has had dominion or presently has dominion when the woman gives birth to the man-child.

If the woman represents Israel and the man-child represents Jesus, then this event would have taken place during the rule of the Roman Empire and only six of the dragon's heads would have been crowned rather than all seven.

If this sounds like I'm stretching Scripture to prove my point, consider what John sees in the very next chapter, where the ten horns are crowned because these ten kings have received power to rule alongside the antichrist for the last 3.5 years of the age (Rev. 13:1; 17:12). The placement of diadems on the demonic heads and horns do not occur by happenstance in the book of Revelation, but happen strategically and are loaded with meaning and significance.

My point is the placement of these diadems help us see the timing of prophetic events in the book of Revelation. Therefore, given this insightful clue, it is unlikely Revelation 12:1-5 is describing a historical event. Rather, it's prophesying a future event.

Addendum 2 – Why the Heavenly Woman Is Not Israel

Because most conservative scholars interpret Revelation 12:1-5 as a historical event, they interpret the heavenly woman as Israel. The primary text to support this view is Genesis 37:9-10, where Joseph's dream of the sun, the moon, and the stars represent Jacob, Rachael, and the twelve patriarchs of Israel.

Although this is the most popular interpretation, there are several weaknesses to this view.

As discussed in Addendum 1, Revelation 12:1-5 is a prophecy and not a retelling of history. That weakens the chances of the heavenly woman being natural Israel.

Furthermore, the woman in Revelation 12:1-5 is in heaven; she is not on the earth, making it even more unlikely the heavenly woman represents the nation of Israel located on the earth in the Middle East.

Finally, the heavenly woman is clothed with the sun, indicating she is glorious. When Jesus was born and ascended to the throne 33 years later, Israel was far from glorious. The nation, for the most part, rejected Jesus as the Messiah and was severely judged for this by the Lord in 70 A.D.

Because of these three objections, the heavenly woman does not represent the nation of Israel.

Addendum 3 – Why the Man-Child of Revelation 12:5 Is Not Jesus

Just as the identity of the woman was at the center of much debate, the same is true with the man-child who will rule the nations with a rod of iron.

Many conservative scholars view the man-child as Jesus Christ. But I don't think this is the correct interpretation. Let me explain why.

Once again, because most scholars interpret Revelation 12:1-5 as a historical event, they interpret the man-child who will rule the nations as Jesus. At face value, it is easy to see why many believe this, for Jesus Christ will certainly "rule all the nations with a rod of iron" when He returns (Rev. 12:5). Nevertheless, in addition to what has already been stated about Revelation 12:1-5 being a prophecy rather than a description of history, there is another consideration that makes this interpretation untenable.

After the woman gave birth to the man-child who will rule all the nations, John said “her child was caught up to God and to His throne” (Rev. 12:5). If this is Jesus, as many suppose, then this scene would be describing His ascension when He was 33. With this in mind, notice carefully the Greek word used for *child* in this verse is *teknon*.

If you study *teknon* in the Greek, this word was typically used to describe a child or an offspring whereas *huios*, though sometimes used to describe a child, was most frequently used to distinguish the honor, respect, worthiness, and moral qualities of a mature son from an immature child. Doing a quick word study, the Greek word *huios* is used to refer to Jesus over 240 times in the New Testament whereas the word *teknon* is only used once—when Jesus was twelve years old (Luke 2:48).

Given the overwhelming evidence Jesus was never described as a *teknon* after the age of twelve—and the age of thirteen was typically when boys began to mature and become accountable for their actions—then using *teknon* to describe Jesus at the age of 33, when He ascended to the throne, seems very out of place.

That is why, in addition to the overwhelming evidence for a prophetic interpretation rather than a historic one, it’s unlikely Jesus Christ is the son in Revelation 12:5 who will rule the nations with a rod of iron.

¹ See <https://issacharpropheticcity.files.wordpress.com/2015/01/the-glorious-church.pdf>, referenced on 9/1/2021.

² To understand these seven demonic kingdoms better, please see these four sessions in our *Understanding the End Times* class:

<https://radicalpursuit.net/sessions/7-the-four-beasts-revealed-by-daniel/>

<https://radicalpursuit.net/sessions/8-the-final-empire/>

<https://radicalpursuit.net/sessions/9-the-seventh-kingdom/>

<https://radicalpursuit.net/sessions/14-the-eighth-kingdom/>

³ Consider what John sees in Revelation 13, where the ten horns are crowned because these ten kings have received power to rule alongside the antichrist for the last 3.5 years of the age (Rev. 13:1; 17:12). The placement of diadems on the demonic heads and horns do not occur by happenstance in the book of Revelation, but happen strategically and are loaded with meaning and significance. The placement of these diadems helps us see the timing of prophetic events in the book of Revelation. Therefore, given this insightful clue, it is unlikely Revelation 12:1-5 is describing a historical event. Rather, it’s prophesying a future event.

⁴ Emphasis mine. See pages 87 and 154.

⁵ <https://radicalpursuit.net/teachings/who-are-the-144000/>

⁶ <https://radicalpursuit.net/sessions/14-the-eighth-kingdom/>

⁷ <https://radicalpursuit.net/sessions/6-daniels-seventy-week-prophecy/>