

14b REV

Let's pick up our study in Revelation chapter 12. We're looking at the great sign that appears in heaven, a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars. We've already talked about the clothing and the representative meaning of the sun and the moon, as that which illuminates and so on, but you have to remember that there have been counterfeits.

One of the big themes of the 70th week of Daniel, one of the great strategies of Satan is to counterfeit God's truth. Satan has been counterfeiting from the beginning. That was his deception in the garden.

He counterfeited an animal that had been raised to new intellectual heights by eating the fruit. He had the serpent climb up in the tree, sitting there with fruit juice dripping out of his mouth, saying, oh, if you eat this fruit, you'll become wise. Eve says, well, you're the first talking serpent I ever saw.

That must be true. So she said, this is my theory anyway. He was sort of, at that time, a walking advertisement.

Now he's a slithering advertisement for that. Satan has been a counterfeiter. He's been a liar and a deceiver from the beginning.

In the 70th week, it's all about counterfeit. There's going to be a counterfeit Christ. There's going to be a counterfeit Trinity we're going to see as we go into these next few chapters.

Counterfeit religion, counterfeit peace, counterfeit leadership, counterfeit one world government. Everything is a fake. Everything is a phony.

Everything is a knockoff copy, poorly executed, of God's truth. So you would expect that the sun and the moon are going to have some significance, and they do. Instead of just looking at Jacob and Rachel or Jacob and Leah or whatever, it's interesting to look at what the moon meant in the ancient world.

I was particularly intrigued with the moon. The sun is fairly self-evident. You can think about sun worship and some of that that's gone on in the past.

But the moon, under her feet, clothed with the sun, you can sort of understand glory, the brightness of it. But the moon, in fact, the ancient language for the sun and the moon, the word for the sun means hot one, which sort of stands to reason. But the name for the moon means the pale lady or the white lady.

The moon is always thought of in sort of feminine terms, where the sun is male. It's the strong, dominant, complemented by the less glowing moon. So yareach in Hebrew is the

word for moon, and that Y-R-C-H is something you want to watch for.

You might not have made this association, but what is the famous town near Jerusalem that has these consonants in its name? Where was the guy going when he got knocked into the ditch and the Good Samaritan found him? What was the city that was destroyed and God said if it's ever rebuilt, there'll be a curse on the man that rebuilds it? Jericho. You know what Jericho is in Hebrew? Yarecho. Y-R-C-H.

It's a moon city. It's moon city. You could just say moon city.

Not fist city or sin city. It's moon city. But yareach, that's the Hebrew word.

In Greek, it's Selene. Selene Dion. Well, she's a moon woman.

Selene. The moon has been an object of worship since very ancient times. It's been worshipped in the nations of the Far East.

Assyria, Babylonia had moon gods. The moon god of the Assyrians was Sin. S-I-N.

And you remember the name of the famous general that came down and attacked? Sin-Acherib. Well, the first part of his name is a reference to the moon god. His whole name means something like the moon god is going to restore the lost brother or some, you know, dances with wolves, something like that.

But his name incorporates the name of the moon deity of the Assyrians. He was also, in Babylon, he was called Aku and Nanara, whatever that's worth. Egypt had moon deities that were masculine.

Thoth, T-H-O-T-H, was the moon god of the Egyptians. He was also the god of knowledge because the moon measures time and was sort of the celestial clock. The Babylonians had the goddess of the moon being the consort of the sun.

In Phoenicia, it was Ashtarothe, Karnaim. So, my whole point is, lots of these ancient people were focused on the moon and said, you know, here's the moon, she's the goddess that we worship. So, what do you think this sign in the heavens is going to signify when here's this woman representing the nation of Israel and the moon is under her feet? Sit thou at my right hand until I do what to your enemies? Make them your footstool.

And so, along with the other symbolism of the celestial bodies providing illumination and so on, the fact that the moon is under the woman's feet is a subtle indication of promise that every surrounding nation that you want to name in ancient Israel had a moon goddess. Israel was the only nation that didn't worship the moon. And they got in trouble when they did.

If you want to do an interesting study sometime, get a concordance and look up the

word crescent because in two or three places, like over in Judges chapter 8, I don't know if you remember the story of Ziba and Zalmuna, but you have Gideon and he gets tangled up with Ziba and Zalmuna and he ends up killing them and he takes the crescent ornaments that are on their camel's necks. The crescent, wherever you find that crescent over in the Middle East, you know where that crescent is from? It's from the moon. It's not a crescent sun.

It's not a crescent Jupiter. It's a crescent moon and it has its roots all the way back in this moon worship. So, the fact that the woman is sitting there and she's got the moon under her feet, that tells you what the ultimate fate of all of these people flying the crescent flag are going to experience.

So, it's significant. It's meaningful. It's comforting.

But she's with child. She bears the male child to rule the nations with a rod of iron. Then she flees into the wilderness where she has a place prepared by God that they should feed her there 1,260 days.

At this point in verse 7, what happens? War broke out in heaven. Michael and his angels fought with the dragon and the dragon and his angels fought, but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. So, the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world.

He was cast to the earth and his angels were cast out with him. Now, I remember them asking, I had to write a little short paper on this in seminary. When was Satan cast out of heaven? When did Satan and the demons get kicked out of heaven? Was it before the creation of man? Was it after and perhaps as a consequence of the fall of man? Or is it yet future? And this passage was put before us.

So, basically, figure out when this is taking place and justify your answer, which I did. Of course, I didn't go dig up the paper. I have no idea what I actually said in it, but I know the answer now.

What do you think the answer is? Has Satan already been kicked out of heaven, he and the demons? How do we know? What makes us think that that's true? What does it say in the first chapter of Job? God says, Hi there, Satan. Satan says, Hi there, God. God says, What have you been up to? He says, Well, I've been walking up and down in the earth.

What did Jesus tell Peter? And what does Peter say later on? The devil is like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour. Satan desires to sift you. Satan is the god of this world.

He is the prince of the power of the air. Right? All of that is true. However, looking at this chapter, do we have a suggestion of sequence? Have we gone back in time to review and rehearse the history of the fall? If so, why is it here in verse 7 and not at the

beginning of the chapter? Why does Satan's fall not precede the appearance of the woman? We have the woman appearing first.

We have the birth of the child. Then we have the fleeing of the woman into the wilderness to escape the dragon. The dragon is after the woman.

The woman flees into the wilderness where she is fed. Then it says, War broke out in heaven. The dragon and his angels fought, but they did not prevail, and there is no place for them in heaven any longer.

The great dragon is cast out, that serpent of old. His angels were cast out with him. Now, this is not a reference to Satan's original fall.

This is not a reference to him walking to and fro in the earth. This is a yet future event. Iron clad, no doubt about it.

Do you know how we know? Take a look at verse 13. Now when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male child. When he saw he was cast out, he persecuted the woman who gave birth.

But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle that she might fly into the wilderness to her place. So this is in sequence. There is some element of battle, of conquest, and of getting kicked out for Satan that is yet future.

He still has access to the heavenly realms. That's why he was up there conversing with God in Job chapter 1. That's why he is up there now accusing, and Jesus is up there interceding for us. But there is going to come a time when Satan's movements are going to be restricted.

Keep in mind, he started out having access to the throne room of God and was dismissed from that. He is no longer the covering cherub. But he still has access to God and you see that in Job 1. At this point, he is going to be dismissed from the realms that he still has access to and limited strictly to the earth.

And after this, he is going to be limited still further by being cast into the bottomless pit. So Satan's horizons are shrinking in stages. He goes from unlimited access.

Suppose, just for the sake of argument, that we have three heavens. Third heaven being God's throne room. Second heaven being the realm where most of the angels hang out.

The first heaven being the physical universe that we can perceive. Satan initially gets kicked out of the third heaven. Here he is kicked out of the second heaven.

And after his defeat and being sent into the bottomless pit, he is kicked out of the first heaven. And he can't even interact with the earth until he is released from the bottomless pit at the end of the millennium. So, this war in verse 7 is future.

Satan has not yet been defeated by Michael and the other angels. This takes place in heaven. Michael and his angels fought with the dragon.

And the dragon and his angels fought. If the dragon is Satan, that's a first class condition, if and he is, then Michael is a pretty senior angel. He is the chairman of the joint chiefs here.

He is the five star general of the angelic armies. Nobody outranks him in the angelic realm. He may have equals, but he has no superiors.

And no one else is charged with angelic battle. Michael is diametrically compared to Satan. Michael and his angels, Satan and his angels.

There are some cult people who think Michael is Jesus. And that's just rubbish. That's failure to pay attention.

Michael is an angel. He fights with the dragon. They do not prevail and there is no place for them in heaven any longer.

As a result of this battle, they are basically expelled. They get the bum's rush out of heaven. And the dragon is cast out.

Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, verse 10, Now salvation and strength and the kingdom of our God and the power of his Christ have come for the accuser of our brethren who accused them before our God day and night has been cast down. It's another way we know this is future because Satan is still doing this. He is up there accusing.

Now there is merit in paying attention to who is speaking. In verse 15 of chapter 11, there were multiple voices in heaven saying the kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ and he shall reign forever and ever. Multiple voices said that.

There is a single voice that says, Salvation, strength and the kingdom of our God and the power of his Christ have come for the accuser of our brethren who accused them before our God day and night has been cast down. And they overcame him, they the brethren, overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony and they did not love their lives unto death. Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them.

Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea, for the devil has come down to you having great wrath because he knows that he has a short time. This takes place toward the end of the 70th week of Daniel, toward the end of the tribulation period. Satan is going to be cast out of heaven and his presence here on earth is going to be part of what causes all the commotion.

The accuser of our brethren who accused them before our God day and night has been cast down. The power of God's Christ has come because the accuser has been cast down. Who is being referred to here by the term the brethren? Who are the brethren? We have three possible choices.

These could be angel brethren, they could be church brethren, they could be Israel brethren. There's a single voice in heaven that makes this proclamation. Let me ask you a question.

Do the angels need salvation? No. Scratch the angels off the list. Where is the church? The church has already experienced its salvation, has it not? White robes, thrones, crowns up there.

White robe multitude from every tribe and nation waving palm branches, praising God. Who is it that still needs salvation? Who is it that has not yet received the fulfillment of the promises that are symbolized by the Ark of the Covenant in the heavenly temple? Israel. Revelation 4-20 is all about Israel.

Our brethren who were accused, just as Job was accused, these are the children of Israel. They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony. Now, the accuser of our brethren has been cast down.

They, our brethren, overcame him by the blood of the Lamb. Now, who of Israel is able to apply the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony and who do not love their lives unto the death? This is your 144,000, right? These are your literal Old Testament type saints on the earth, in the wilderness. Notice that this is sandwiched between the picture of the woman fleeing into the wilderness and the woman, in verse 14, being given the wings of a great eagle that she might fly into the wilderness.

It's an Israel sandwich. You have Israel at the beginning. You have Israel afterward.

And right in the middle, you have our brethren to whom salvation has come because an angelic victory has been won. Now, the power of Christ for these represented by the woman who is now in the wilderness and the living generation of Israel who is dwelling in the wilderness are the remnants of the 144,000. Does this make sense? That's who the woman is.

The living generation of Israelites is who we're looking at. And they have overcome Him. They have not loved their lives even unto death.

So, rejoice. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea. The devil has come down having great wrath.

He knows he has a short time. When the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male child. Satan, when he loses the

angelic battle, is going to concentrate on rooting out and destroying those who live in the mountains.

Now, how successful have we been against the remnants of the Taliban and Osama Bin Laden in rooting them out of the mountains and destroying them? Not much. That is the worst place to try to get somebody and destroy them, which is why they're there. That's why we haven't gotten Osama till yet.

This is good tactics. This is good ground for defense. If you want to defend, get the high ground.

Get up in the mountains. Get in the heights. Make people run uphill and shoot uphill to try to get you.

Satan is going to come down to earth and he's going to go after these who are in the hills. He's going to persecute the woman. But the woman is given two wings of a great eagle.

You cannot believe the speculation that has taken place about the two wings of the great eagle. It's the United States coming over and helping Israel. The United States is going to be long gone as a world power by this point in the tribulation.

Babylon will have already gone up in smoke, so to speak. Some people say it's Rome. Rome had the eagle as their Roman legions marched under the eagle.

It's some form of Rome. Well, if you've got sort of a schizophrenic Rome, you've got the bad Rome of the revived Roman Empire and the good Rome that's going to help Israel, it doesn't work. What does the Bible say about the wings of an eagle? We had a memory verse to this effect, did we not? They who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength.

They shall mount up with wings as eagles. They shall run and not be weary. They shall walk and not faint.

They who wait upon the Lord. These are the faithful. These are the 144,000.

These are the ones who obeyed and got out of town. And waiting on the Lord is an expression of faith. And God is going to preserve them.

What did Jesus say to Jerusalem? How often I would have gathered you under my wings. Psalm 91, dwelling in the secret place of the Most High. He shall cover you with his feathers and under his wings you shall take refuge.

This isn't Rome as an eagle or the U.S. as an eagle. This is God's compassion and preserving strength. Given the wings of a great eagle.

Remember the four faces of the cherubim? What was the face that faces God? It was an

eagle, right? It's a picture of the divine aspect. Wings of a great eagle. This is God's direct power.

I think there will be supernatural, miraculous preservation on the order of the Old Testament miracles. On the order of the miracles of Jesus Christ at this point. Remember when the prophets would blind an oncoming army? Or they would mysteriously vanish in the night? That's going to happen again.

The wings of an eagle. That is God's supernatural, divine power intervening in history. There will be miraculous preservation, miraculous deliverance for these faithful.

She will fly into the wilderness to her place where she is nourished. Once again, it says there is provision. You would think, what can you possibly eat and drink and so on? I think there's going to be the equivalent of water from the rock and manna for these people.

The wings of an eagle nourished, fed in the mountains. If you've been in the mountains in the Middle East, I have been, and I will tell you, there's nothing to eat. There's no way you can grow anything.

There's not fresh water springs up in the mountains. There is nothing. It is barren, it is rocky, it is wasteland.

But they're going to flee there on faith because God tells them to. And when they get there, God is going to miraculously provide food and water. That's how I understand this passage.

Nourished for a time and times and half a time from the presence of a certain... Time, times, half a time? 42 months, 1260 days, right? All during the time that the two witnesses are operating in and around Jerusalem. So, what is Satan's response when this happens? The serpent spewed water out of his mouth like a flood after the woman that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood. What does a flood represent? Remember the chaotic forces of darkness, the dwelling place of Leviathan and Behemoth? This is chaotic and multitudinous attack.

Big armies are going to go combing through. There's going to be a flood of soldiers, a flood of people. There's going to be a massive effort to root these Jewish believers out of the mountains.

He's going to literally flood them. It's going to be a sweep coming through to be carried away. But the earth helped the woman and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth.

And once again, supernatural, divine intervention. The earth has swallowed up the enemies of God before. It's going to do it again.

And the dragon was enraged with the woman and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. Now, this is a point that's been made in some of our recent discussions that these people are believers in Jesus Christ because they are post-cross. Old Testament saints were looking forward to whatever it was that God was going to use to deliver.

And depending on when they lived, they had various degrees of specificity on what form God's salvation would take. All they knew was seed of the woman represented by the sacrifices and so on. These Old Testament saints are looking back and they have the testimony of Jesus Christ just as the two witnesses do that we saw in chapter 11.

They keep the commandments of God. What are the commandments of God? Old Testament, covenant, truth. They will be Sabbath keepers.

They will be Ten Commandments observers. That's why Jesus said, pray that your flight is not on the Sabbath. They keep the commandments of God, Old Testament truth, and they have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

And they're unique in that regard. Well, this is a picture where we have rewound time and gone to the middle of the tribulation, gone to the end once again. And how are we viewing it now? We saw in the seals globally, mankind.

This is how it looks. We saw in the trumpets, angelic realm, the middle ground of observation, what all is happening. And we are quickly moving to the bold judgments which are God's perspective.

And in this interim, around the time of the seventh trumpet and before the bold judgments start, what are we seeing? This is a continuation of that sixth and seventh trumpet. The trumpet judgments give us the angelic perspective. The angelic perspective.

And this is manifestly the angelic perspective. The dragon and his angels. Michael and his angels.

The dragon spewing, trying to destroy national Israel, just as has happened all through the Old Testament. Well, then in chapter 13, it says, I stood on the sand of the sea and I saw a beast rising up out of the sea. We have come 12 full chapters in Revelation and this is only the second time that we have seen the Antichrist.

The beast is Antichrist. He is the rider on the pale horse, going forth conquering and to conquer, that we saw back in, what, five chapters ago, six chapters ago. I stood on the sand of the sea.

John's perspective has suddenly shifted. Where was John standing before? He was in heaven looking at the lamb that had the scrolls and so on. Then he saw the mighty

angel, Michael I think, come down and stand with a foot on the sea and a foot on the land holding the scroll.

John ate the scroll. He went and did the measuring of the temple. Now he is standing on the sand of the sea.

What sea is this? What sea is this? Standing on the sand of the sea. There is only one sea for Israel, isn't there? It's the Mediterranean Sea. It's the Mediterranean Sea.

That's the big sea. The Gennesaret is a lake. The Dead Sea, we call it a sea, but they didn't call it a sea.

This is the sand of the sea. This is the shore of the Mediterranean Sea. The western border of Israel.

And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name. Now, does this ring a bell? What did we see in verse 3 of chapter 12? Great fiery red dragon. What was his description? Seven heads, ten horns, and on those seven heads, seven crowns.

Now, we have a similar thing, but this is a beast rather than a dragon, but instead of the crowns being on the heads, the crowns are on the horns. Is this important? Well, it is. We know from later description here in the book of Revelation, what these heads and horns represent.

Turn over to chapter 17, verse 7. We're going to have another woman, you know, the great harlot, the whore of Babylon, riding the beast and all that. But in Revelation 17, 7, the angel said to me, why do you marvel? I will tell you the mystery of the woman and the beast that carries her which has the seven heads and the ten horns. The beast that you saw was and is not and will ascend out of the bottomless pit and go to perdition.

And those who dwell on the earth will marvel whose names are not written in the book of life. Look at verse 9. Here is the mind which has wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains on which the woman sits.

There are also seven kings. Five have fallen, one is, and the other has not yet come. And when he comes, he must continue a short time.

The seven heads are seven kings. Five have come and gone. One is and one has not yet come.

We're talking here about world empires that Satan has tried to use with the main objective of crushing the Jews. That's not his only objective. Remember, Satan is trying to be God and trying to construct a civilization apart from God.

And each of these heads represents one of those attempts. So, the seven mountains on

which the woman sits, if you know about Rome, what's the famous thing about Rome? Rome is the city on what? Seven hills. Rome is the city of seven hills.

You know, Romulus and Remus, and you've got the whole seven hills thing. So, this is another indication that the feet of iron and clay in Nebuchadnezzar's vision, the final world empire, is the revived Roman empire. And this is it.

Seven heads. Five have fallen. One is and the other has not yet come.

So, you're at number six and there's one yet to come. When he comes, he must continue a short time. The beast that was and is not is himself also the eighth and is of the seven and is going to perdition.

The ten horns, verse 12 of 17, which you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast. This is your confederation, your European Union, if you will. These will make war with the land.

They are of one mind. They will give their power and authority to the beast and so on. So, we know that the dragon is Satan and the beast is Antichrist, which is Satan working through a human individual.

And he is so similar to Satan, they're almost synonymous. Same heads, same number of horns. The only thing that has changed is the crowns.

Because Satan is delegating crown authority to each of the kings in succession that rule these world empires. And at the time of the revived Roman Empire, that one crown that is currently in existence is going to be distributed amongst these ten. They have power for one hour.

It's our power. On his head is a blasphemous name. What is the blasphemous name? Well, who is the blasphemer from the beginning? It's Satan.

It's going to be saying, I am God, I am Christ, I am your salvation, I am the answer to all your prayers, I am the be-all and end-all, I am like the Most High, I have ascended my throne above everybody else. And it's blasphemy. It is replacement.

It's counterfeit God, counterfeit worship. Now, the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like the feet of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion. The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority.

These animal parts are harking back to Daniel chapter 7. We're going to be seeing these in Daniel chapter 7 very shortly, where you have the revived confederacy that is a culmination of all of these world empires. We saw the head of gold and all the rest of it. Well, the leopard here, the bear, the lion, this is like the world championship of poker or the Super Bowl, where you get the cream of the crop.

This is like the all-star game. You're going to get the best from all the previous empires and roll it together and make the revived Roman Empire out of it. We've got the best of Babylonian culture.

We've got the best of Assyrian culture. We've got the best of Greek and Roman and every other major world empire. We've got the best of everything.

This is the creme de la creme. This is the summary and the pinnacle of human history. So we've got feet like the bear.

We've got the mouth like the lion. The dragon gives him his powers, throwing him great authority. I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded and his deadly wound was healed and all the world marveled and followed the beast.

This is going to be a miracle, a fake miracle. It's going to look like a resurrection. How better to fool the world into thinking that you are the Messiah than to emulate the death and resurrection of the Messiah? And this head is going to be mortally wounded.

Everybody thinks it's dead, but it's going to recover. And people are going to be so impressed that they're going to follow the beast and say, he has got the secret. He's got the wisdom.

He is the answer to everything that mankind has been seeking for 6,000 years. And this impressive media event, and I have no doubt that this is going to be on, this is back now early. This is early in the week before the devastation, before the atmospheric disturbances when everybody's still got satellite and still got cable.

He's going to appear to be mortally wounded and he's going to come back. And it's going to be so impressive. It's going to be the catalyst that brings together this false peace and false kingdom.

That's how it's going to be done. He's not just going to charm them with words. There's going to be a seemingly... He's going to die.

And then he's going to come back. The world will marvel. And they worship the dragon who gave authority to the beast.

He's going to say, I am in the service of a higher power. I am just channeling this great authority. They worship the beast saying, who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him? He can't be killed.

He just comes back. He's like the ever ready bunny. And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies.

This is the second time you have blasphemy associated with the beast. On his head are these blasphemous names. Now he's speaking blasphemy.

And he is given authority to continue how long? Forty-two months. Three and a half years. Twelve hundred and sixty days.

Times and half a time. Now this is the first half of the seventieth week of Daniel. That's the first forty-two months.

That's the first three and a half years that he's given authority. But then what does he do? In the middle of that week, he opens his mouth in blasphemy against God to blaspheme his name, his tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven. This is the point at which he sets up the abomination of desolation in the temple.

And when the Jews are supposed to flee. It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over who? Every tribe, every tongue, and every nation.

The same ones that John was told to prophesy to. All who dwell on the earth will worship him whose names have not been written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. These are the 144,000, whatever's left of them.

If anyone has an ear, let him hear. He who leads into captivity shall go into captivity. He who kills with the sword must be killed with the sword.

Here is the patience and the faith of the saints. Well, we're going to go into more detail on this next time. But if you think about this as Old Testament scripture, this is future Old Testament history, if you will.

If we were looking at this in the book of Ezekiel, or in the book of Daniel, and it was talking about historical events, how would we treat it? What would we draw from it? We would look for interpretation and application, wouldn't we? If this is what God has done in dealing with his people in times past, how should we then live? Well, the fact that it's future makes it no less real and no less certain, and we can just as easily go to it, interpret it after we've observed it, and then apply it based on that interpretation. So, looking at what we've seen in these two chapters, what conclusion do we draw? What difference does this make tomorrow and the next day and the next? Because we're not going to be here on the earth. We don't have to worry about fleeing to the mountains.

We don't have to worry about where our food and water are going to come from, or how big of a flood the dragon is going to send. So, why do we care about this other than just interesting information? What is the application? What is the application? If you were teaching a Sunday school class, how would you conclude? What would you say? Well, what is the first step in determining the application? It's observation, isn't it? What is the big idea in these chapters? I would say, number one, God is in absolute control. All of these things take place at God's time, in God's way, according to God's preordained plan.

Not a minute sooner. Not a minute later. Satan fights a battle, but God already knows the outcome.

Satan pursues the woman, but God already has a way of escape. Satan tries to destroy the woman with a flood. God already has the provision in place.

Nothing can touch the people of God that God does not allow. The timing is up to God. The place is up to God.

The duration is up to God. The deliverance is totally in God's hands. And it is always that way.

Our life is just as fixed, just as certain. We are just as securely held in God's hands as any saint that has ever walked the earth or any saint that ever will. God is in His heaven, and God is in complete control.

Can God provide water from the rock? Can God provide manna in the wilderness? He did it for 40 straight years for nearly 2 million people. So, can God meet your needs and my needs? We are not hurting, most of us, for food and water and shelter and clothing. Our challenges are more in the realm of mental pressure, relationships, situations, circumstances.

None of us, to my knowledge, are threatened with fear for our lives, as these people will be. But God's provision and God's plan is just as certain. If He can take care of these people and write them into the eternal decrees, He's done the same for us.

If He can deliver these people and preserve them from the direct attack of Satan, He can do the same for us. He has done the same for us. Who is it that doesn't get this deliverance from the dragon? Those who do not listen to the Word of God, who do not flee to the mountains when God tells them to.

The mountains seem like the least likely place. Human intuition would say, we can't live up there. But the command of God says, go there.

That's where God's miraculous provision, the wings of the eagle, the food and the shelter, the nourishment, the food, is going to be provided for three and a half years. It's counterintuitive. It requires faith.

Much of our life as believers can be counterintuitive. It doesn't seem to make sense on an earthly level. But if it's the promise of God, then you can bet that it's worth putting our faith in.

Well, we've covered quite a lot this evening. We've covered the better part of two chapters. We're going to pick up and look in detail at the symbolism of the beast, his head and horn configuration, his leopard and bear parts, and all the rest of that when we

pick up our study next time.

But let's close here in a word of prayer. Father, thank you for the clear and concise way that you communicate to us through your word. We thank you that we have confidence because of your demonstrated faithfulness throughout human history and the sure fulfillment of your prophetic word is near at hand.

We pray that God the Holy Spirit will impress these truths in our hearts, help us to live in the light of your word, to walk as children of the day and not of the night. We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.