

WHO IS THE SEED OF THE WOMAN: Revelation 12

Chapter 12 begins the second half of the book. It covers the same material as in the first half, but from a different perspective. We will begin with Rev 12:1-6 and 13-17.

Verses 1-6, "And 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 12 stars; and she was with child; and she cried out, being in labor and in pain to give birth. And another sign appeared in heaven; and behold, a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and on his head were seven diadems. And his tail swept away a third of the stars in heaven, and threw them to the Earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, so that when she gave birth he might devour her child. And she gave birth to a son, a male *child*, who is to rule all nations with a rod of iron; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne. And the woman fled into the wilderness where she had a place prepared by God, so that there she might be nourished for 1,260 days."

Verses 13-17, "When the dragon saw that he was thrown down to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male *child*. And the two wings of the great eagle were given to the woman, in order that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she was nourished for a time and times and a half time, from the presence of the serpent (the times mentioned here is the same time we saw the two witnesses testifying, 42 months or 3 1/2 years). 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. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and drank up the river which the dragon poured out of his mouth. And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and went off to make war with the rest of her seed (offspring), who keep the commandments of God and hold the testimony of Jesus."

We did not read verses 7-12 because they are simply an explanation of the spiritual conflict we read taking place upon the earth between the dragon and the woman. We will return to these omitted verses to show the origin of this spiritual conflict.

What is the intended message from this? We will show you in a few minutes why the woman is interpreted as the covenant people of God. The male child, of course, is Christ because He is described as the one who will "rule all the nations with a rod of iron" and "her child was caught up to God and to His throne." Verse 17 talks about the rest of her seed. The woman represents the covenant people of God. The rest of her seed is the church after Christ's ascension, described as those "who keep the commandments of God and hold the testimony of Jesus."

The great red dragon waiting to devour the male child, who makes war against both the woman and her seed, is Satan. Verse 9, "The great dragon was thrown down, the serpent of old who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him." His angels are the demons under his control (verse 4).

The early church knew from the time Satan deceived Eve in the garden to the time Cain killed Abel, through the Old Testament, to the time Herod destroyed the infants in Bethlehem, to Christ's temptations in the wilderness, His ministry, and crucifixion, Satan destroyed as many of God's divine seed as he could to prevent God from fulfilling His purpose in Christ.

After the male child is rescued from Satan, the symbolism skips over His life, ministry, death, and resurrection going directly to the ascension and the fact He is to rule the nations with a rod of iron. As we have shown previously, Jesus began to rule the nations with a rod of iron at His ascension and demonstrated His rulership by destroying Jerusalem and the entire Old Testament system in His wrath in 70 A.D. Early Christians were delivered from that event. In Matthew 24, Jesus told them to flee when they began to see these things take place. So, Revelation 12 tells us the woman was rescued by being taken into the wilderness and protected by God.

After "the earth helped the woman" (verse 16), "the dragon was enraged with the woman, and went off to make war with the rest of her seed (offspring) who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus" (verse 17).

The first question we want scripture to address is Who is a Christian? A Christian is a child of the new covenant, a product of the new covenant, which is the end-result of God's purpose which began in the book of Genesis. Galatians 4:22-24, identifies this free woman and her seed, "For it is written that Abraham had two sons, one by the bondwoman (Hagar produced Ishmael) and one by the free woman (Sarah produced Isaac). But the son by the bondwoman was born according to the flesh, and the son by the free woman through the promise. (now notice the next verse, verse 24) This is allegorically speaking (an illustration): **for these women are two covenants, one proceeding from Mount Sinai bearing children who are to be slaves; she is Hagar.**" He does not say so, but of course, the other woman was Sarah (she the free woman).

Verse 25, "Now this Hagar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and corresponds to the present (Old) Jerusalem, for she is in slavery with her children (these are the Jews who were under the old covenant law where everything was physical). Verse 26, **"But the Jerusalem above is free; she is our mother (this is spiritual and the only place in the bible where Christians are said to have a mother)." Sarah represents the new covenant. The (New) Jerusalem which is above is the new covenant. Paul says, "She is our mother."**

Then verse 27, John quotes from Isaiah, "REJOICE BARREN WOMAN WHO DOES NOT BEAR; BREAK FORTH AND SHOUT, YOU WHO ARE NOT IN LABOR; FOR MORE ARE THE CHILDREN OF THE DESOLATE THAN THE ONE WHO HAS A HUSBAND (there will be more Gentiles come in under the new covenant than there were Jews under the old covenant). Verses 28-31, **"And you brethren, like Isaac, are children of promise.** But as at that time he who was born according to the flesh persecuted him *who was born according to the Spirit*, so it is now also. But what does the scripture say? 'CAST OUT THE BONDWOMAN

AND HER SON, FOR THE SON OF THE BONDWOMAN SHALL NOT BE AN HEIR WITH THE SON OF THE FREE WOMAN (the Old Covenant people who did not accept Christ; the Old Covenant people shall not be heirs)'. (verse 31) So then, brethren, we are not children of a bondwoman, but of the free woman (the free woman is described as the (New) Jerusalem from above, which is the new covenant)."

Revelation 12:5, "and she gave birth to a son, a male child." What brought Christ into the world and produced Christ in the world was the product of the old covenant people. He is the first child of the spiritual (new) covenant, the first born of the (new) covenant people of God. **Christ was the first real new covenant person in the history of the world. He was the first child of God to be accepted by God as His child since Adam. Adam and Christ are the only two people in scripture spoken of as sons of God, outside the references to angels.**

Christ is the first to be born of the new covenant; the first covenant person to be appear upon the earth since Adam. There were great men (Abraham, Moses, and some great prophets), but they were all old covenant people. **Christ was the first man since Adam to appear upon the earth as the kind of man that God wanted to produce upon the Earth. God was not interested in producing more people like Abraham, Moses, or David. As faithful as these men were, they lied, committed adultery, killed, and they did everything any other human being would do.**

Christ is the first one since Adam who could stand upon the earth and say He was sinless, free from sin, and a product of heaven. He was the first. The woman gave birth to this male-child.

Now, we need to understand verse 17, "The dragon was enraged with the woman and went off to make war with the rest of her seed, (identified as those) who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus." Not only did woman have the first born, Christ, she had other children. (the church). Christ was the first, but there are many more like Him.

Romans 8:29, "For whom He foreknew, He also predestined (not to go to heaven or to hell) to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He (His Son) might be the first-born among many brethren." These are the children of the (new) covenant, what Rev 12:17 identified as "the rest of her seed (offspring). Christ was the first-born but there are many brethren that follow. We need to get a hold of this. He predestined them to go to heaven at their new birth, in the presence of God, their entire life enjoying all the richest resources of heaven throughout their entire lifetime.

Hebrews 2:10-11, notice what he says here. "For it was fitting for Him (Christ), for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect the author of their salvation through suffering. For both He who sanctifies (Christ) and those who are sanctified (us, the seed of the woman) are all from one Father." God is

Christ's Father in an incredibly special and different way. Jesus was the only begotten Son, but God has many sons. God is bringing, through Christ, many sons into glory, "the rest of her seed." We also are of the Father. Verse 11, "For which reason He (Christ) is not ashamed to call them brethren (or sisters, as the case may be)."

II Corinthians 5:21, "He made Him who knew no sin *to be* sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." In Christ, God brought us to the place where we could be accepted as Christ's brethren, as the sons of God.

Galatians 3:26, an especially important passage of scripture, "For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus." We are as much a son of God as Christ is, not in the same way, but we are sons. I John 3:2, "Brethren now we are the children of God and it does not yet appear what we shall be. But we know that when He appears, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him as He is."

Romans 8:16, "The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are sons of God." It is through Jesus Christ. Gal 3:27, "For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor freeman, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed (offspring), heirs according to (the) promise."

If we are heirs according to the promise, that puts us on the same level as Christ in verse 16. Christ is an heir. He is the seed of Abraham. He is the one to which the promises were spoken. And now we are a part of Him. We have become His body. Romans 8:17, "We are heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ."

Ephesians 2:4-6 tells us whatever God has in store for Christ, He has the same thing in store for us. Whatever happens to Christ, happens to us. That started when Christ died. When Christ died, we died. When Christ was buried, we were buried. When Christ was raised, we were raised with Him. When Christ ascended, we ascended with Him. All of this occurred in Spirit, but everything Christ is going to be and to do in the future, it is also going to happen to us. He has a new body, He is going to give us a new body. II Timothy 2:12, "If we endure, we shall reign with Him." If Christ reigns, we reign with Him. Whatever Christ inherits, we are going to inherit it also. Daniel 7:13-14, pictures Christ as ascending and receiving a kingdom. Just four verses down, Dan 7:18, Daniel pictures the saints as receiving the same kingdom that Christ receives.

We also are the seed of the woman. We are children of the covenant. We share with Christ because He was the first child of the covenant. She (the New Covenant) gave birth to the man-child. He was taken up to heaven. The rest of her seed (us) are the ones Satan makes war with (Rev 12:17).

The character of these new covenant people is important. Hebrews 8:8-13, quoting Jeremiah, best describes our character in Christ. We will not read all of this, but want to notice three characteristics:

Verse 10, "I WILL PUT MY LAWS INTO THEIR MINDS, AND I WILL WRITE THEM UPON THEIR HEARTS." It is not going to be raw physical obedience. It will be spiritual. John 3:6, Jesus told Nicodemus, "That which is born of flesh is flesh, and that which is born of Spirit is spirit." Paul spends a great deal of time on this in I Corinthians, chapters 1 and 2, and again in Romans, chapter 8. We are to walk in the Spirit, live by the Spirit, the Spirit fills us, indwells us, leads us, and guides us. **New covenant people are spiritual people. Romans 8:6, "To be fleshly minded is death, to be spiritually minded is life and peace." That which should characterize the Christian is his or her spiritual mind. The Christian is not of this world any more than Christ is of this world, so much so**

Verse 11, "THEY SHALL NOT TEACH EVERYONE HIS FELLOW CITIZEN, AND EVERYONE HIS BROTHER, SAYING, 'KNOW THE LORD,' FOR ALL SHALL KNOW ME." **God is going to give us a new understanding. John 17:3, Jesus said, "This is eternal life, that they might know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou has sent." The essence of new life is that we know God. The Old Testament people did not know much about God. They should have known Him, they thought they knew Him, but had they truly known Him, they would not have acted or done the things they did, nor would they have rejected God's only begotten Son, Jesus the Christ. We know God through Christ.**

Verse 12 concludes saying, "I WILL BE MERCIFUL TO THEIR INIQUITIES, AND I WILL REMEMBER THEIR SINS NO MORE." Christian people are forgiven. We are free from the power and the penalty of sin. Ephesians 1:7, "In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace." We have it. We have been forgiven. We are forgiven. That is the new covenant people.

The second thing about these New Covenant people (Rev 12:17), "They are the ones who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus." We want to simply note that, and move to the third characteristic.

The third characteristic of these new covenant people, the seed of the woman, the Christian, this is very important, are the ones who have (past tense) overcome Satan, Rev 12:11, "They 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 unto death." Paul repeats this in the last chapter of Romans, chapter 16, verse 20, "And the God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet." Genesis 3:15, the first prophecy concerning Christ was He would bruise the head of Satan. Not only did Christ bruise the head of Satan whenever He died on the cross, the Christian walks upon that bruised head of Satan. Christ continues to have Satan

under His feet. That is the sign of Satan's defeat. He has been defeated for us and we can walk in that victory.

"They overcome him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony." They testified concerning the effect of that blood in their lives, even if it cost them their life. The word of their testimony was about the blood. Many times it cost them their lives.

The religious world today does not like to hear much about blood. It has been taken out of our songs, readings, and sermons. It is too old fashioned for our churches today. But Hebrews, chapter 9, points out several things we need to understand. Verse 13, "For if the blood of goats and bulls and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling those who have been defiled, sanctify for the cleansing of the flesh, **how much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without blemish to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve a living God?**" You see, he said in verses 11-12, "**But when Christ appeared as a high priest of good things to come, He entered through the greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this creation; and not taking the blood of goats and calves, but taking His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.**"

The blood does three things: it cleanses our conscience. Go back to Heb 9:8-9, he talks about the symbolism in the Old Testament, "The Holy Spirit is signifying this, that the way into the holy place has not yet been disclosed, while the outer tabernacle is still standing, which *is* a symbol for the time present. Accordingly both gifts and sacrifices are offered which cannot make the worshiper **perfect in conscience**, since they *relate* only to food and drink and various washings, regulations for the body imposed until a time of reformation." The old sacrifices could not make the Jew perfect in consciousness. It could not cleanse his conscience.

Verse 14, but Christ's sacrifice, "how much more will the blood of Christ . . . cleanse your conscience from dead works in order that you might serve the living God." **The "perfect conscience" the writer is referring to is a conscience cleansed of sin.** The Old Testament offerings could never bring perfection to the conscience because "the worshipers, having once been cleansed, would no longer have had consciousness of sins" (Heb. 10:2). This teaches that sacrifices under the law could not so perfect a person that he could regard himself as free from guilt.

The christian, then, who has no consciousness of sin is not because he never sins, but because God has cleansed his conscience from dead works (of the flesh) so that he might serve the Living God (Heb. 9:14). **This gives us "confidence to enter the holy place (Heaven Itself, Heb. 9:24) by the blood of Jesus" and "draw near (to God) with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed in pure water" (Heb. 10:9, 22).** When a christian has this knowledge, he has a clear conscience concerning his past life. **His conscience does not condemn him for the past. Heb 10:2 emphasizes Christ's sacrifice on the cross is the only thing in God's universe that can**

cleanse your conscience at your rebirth and continue to make you have a good conscience your entire life before God. Nothing else can cleanse our conscience. We can work our fingers to the bone and our consciousness of sin will still be there. The only thing that can take away your consciousness of sin now, while you live in this world, is faith in the blood of Christ, to then enter the Holy Place (Heaven Itself) NOW; we do not have to wait until we get over-yonder (the truth will set a bunch of preachers free alright, free of their nice fat denominational salaries by getting them fired . . . those are the preachers you want to support).

You do not have to wait until you get over-yonder to cleanse your conscience of dead works and sin to serve the living God. Accept it now by faith. Believe what God says in His word. Pay close attention to the tense God uses in scripture when He identifies a benefit or blessing for us. If He speaks in a present or past tense, He has made that benefit or blessing available to us by faith at our new birth. With the exception of our new bodies, everything else our preachers push over-yonder is pushed in-error because of their unbelief (not believing God's word) because no matter what they say about themselves, they are still the type who must see to believe; they have not learned the truth of Psm 27:13 that they must believe to see. Believe God's word in faith to see and earn the rewards God has for us. Do not lose God's intended rewards for us because of our preacher's unbelief. If our preacher pushes anything other than our new bodies over-yonder, Trust God's Word more than you trust your preacher's preaching. The richest blessings for the christian, the ones that are exceedingly abundantly beyond anything we can ask or think, the ones that give us life more abundantly, are the ones our preachers wrongfully push over-yonder because of their unbelief. Do not let them rob you of your intended eternal rewards!!

Go over Hebrews 10:1-2, where he talks about the people of the old covenant, "For the law, since it has *only* a shadow of good things to come *and* not the very substance of things, can never by the same sacrifices year by year, which they offer continually, make perfect those who draw near. Otherwise, would they not have ceased to be offered, because the worshipers having been once cleansed would no longer have had a consciousness of sin." Only the blood of Christ cleanses our conscience.

Second, it cleanses our conscience from dead works. **Hebrews 6:1 is the only other place in scripture that mentions dead works**, "THEREFORE, leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God." Rev 9:20-21, "The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, so as to not worship demons, and the idols of gold and of silver and of brass and of stone and of wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk, and they did not repent of their murders nor of their sorceries nor of their immorality nor of their thefts."

Usually, we apply repentance only to particular sins we commit. John says, "They did not repent of their murders, sorceries, immoralities, and theft." We do repent of sin, but there is more to it than that. In scripture, repentance is usually directed towards religious people, telling religious

people to repent. Throughout the gospels, the Jews are told to repent. But, they were busy with all their works and ritualism under the old covenant. John the Baptist and Jesus come along and say, "Repent (change your mind about these things)." The passage in Revelation says they did not repent of their idol worship, murders, sorceries, immorality, or thefts. In Revelation, John is talking about religious people under the Old Covenant. Today's religious people, Christians, the church, are to repent also of dead works "to serve the living God."

What are dead works? Colossians 2, every Christian should memorize this entire chapter. Colossians 2:16, "Therefore let no man act as your judge in regard to food and drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day." These were the important things in the lives of the Jews that they kept in their ritualistic worship of God. Did they fast, pray correctly, go to the temple often enough, offer enough sacrifices, or keep the holy days? Verses 17-18, "things which are a *mere* shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ. Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize, by delighting in self-abasement and the worship of the angels, taking his stand on *visions* he has seen, inflated without cause by his fleshly mind."

These verses accurately describe much of the religious world today. Paul says these are products of their fleshly minds. They were not holding fast to the head. The important thing in our life is holding fast to the head, who is Christ. Col 2:19-21, "From whom the entire body, being supplied and held together by joints and ligaments, grows with the growth which is from God. If you have died with Christ to the elementary principles of the world, why, as if you were living in the world, do you submit to decrees such as, 'Do not handle, do not taste, and do not touch!'" Much of the religious world today is made up of these same rules and regulations regarding things we should not handle, taste, or touch.

The modern church has a bad case of the don'ts . . . these are dead works, Col 9:22-23, "(all *referring* to things destined to perish with the using)--in accordance with the commandments and teachings of men? These are matters which have, to be sure, the appearance of wisdom and self-made religion and self-abasement and severe treatment of the body, **but are of no value against fleshly indulgence.**" Look at the people tied up in legalism with all their rules and their regulations that control their entire life: they don't smoke, they don't drink, they don't curse, they don't on-and-on-and on . . . that is their entire life . . . they don't do. Do not kid yourself. Paul says, they have the appearance of being very holy and religious, and make most of us wish we were more like them, but do not believe it for a second because Paul says what they are and what they do "are no value against the fleshly indulgence."

We are not encouraging people to do these things, but that is repentance from dead works. If you think your refraining from these things makes you a better Christian, more justified, more righteous, more right-with-God, all of your doing and refraining from doing are dead works because all of your forgiveness, justification, righteousness, and right-standing before God was accomplished by Christ; we cannot add anything to what He has already accomplished for us and given to us. If we try, those are dead works.

Third, serve the living God. The blood of Christ will cleanse our conscience from dead works, prepare us to serve the living God, overcome Satan, and testify to these things. They told people what that blood would do. Some lost their lives when they did it because men do not like to hear these truths. Men would rather be told about do's and don'ts than hear about the blood of Christ. So they lost their lives, "they loved not their lives unto death."

The seed of the woman (the true Christian) are a product of the new covenant of God. They are God's children by the New Covenant. They are the ones who keep the commandments of God, hold to the testimony of Jesus, and have overcome Satan by the blood of the Lamb. That is who a christian is.

Are you a Christian? Are you a covenant person born of the new covenant? Do you keep the commandments of God? Do you hold to the testimony of Jesus? Have you really overcome Satan? Make your calling and election sure.