

## Excerpts from *The Mid-Week Rapture* and a few other items

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### Some Key Verses that Look to the End Times

***“For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words.”*** 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18 NASB

***“Now may the God of peace sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.”*** 1 Thessalonians 5:23 NASB

***“But flee from these things, you man of God, and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance and gentleness. Fight the good fight of faith [the faith]; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who testified the good confession before Pontius Pilate, that you keep the commandment without stain or reproach until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ, which He will bring about at the proper time, He who is the blessed and only Sovereign, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who alone possesses immortality and dwells in unapproachable light, whom no man can see. To Him be honor and eternal dominion! Amen.”*** 1 Timothy 6:11-16 NASB

***“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the faith; in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.”*** 2 Timothy 4:7, 8 NASB

### A Few Comments by Karl Kemp

I strongly believe in the relevance and accuracy of my books (and papers), but I realize that many Christians do not agree with the viewpoints I express, and I realize that my books are not as easy to read as some books, in that my books are written more like Bible commentaries, and are packed with detailed information. They are intended for serious students of the Scriptures. This website allows me to include enough excerpts so that a person can adequately evaluate my books before purchasing them. I dislike the idea of people buying books they will not appreciate. (I have done that many times.)

We desperately need to rightly divide God's Word and then cling (in faith) to the balanced truth of what the Bible teaches. We need to believe the truth and live the truth (by God's grace in Christ through faith). I have observed over the years that many Christians are not doing much seeking for the balanced truth because they assume that what they believe is the balanced truth already. But we can't all be right when we differ with other Christians. Many of us need to humble ourselves before God and seek Him for the balanced truth. My desire and prayer is that this teaching will prove to be a great blessing to many. May the name of God (God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit) be glorified and His will be done!

**A listing of the excerpts from *The Mid-Week Rapture*  
that are included below:**

The Copyright page (this material is copyrighted), Contents, Preface, Introduction, and the chapter that deals with Revelation chapter 12 (pages 311-325 in the book). I consider Revelation chapter 12 (and especially Rev. 12:5) to be one of the most important chapters in the Bible that deals with the last days. The notes (endnotes) for the Introduction and for Revelation Chapter 12 are included at the end of the chapters in the book and in the excerpts included below. The format of these excerpts is substantially different than the format in the book, but the content is the same.

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## **Preface**

Isn't the mid-week rapture viewpoint rather negative? In the first place, and I know that Bible-believing Christians will agree, the more important question is "What does the Bible teach?" Having said that, I'm thankful that I'm able to say that the mid-week rapture, as it is presented in this book, is a rather positive viewpoint. Especially see chapter 3: "Christians Will Be Saved from the Day of Wrath."

Several comments on the style of this book. Most of this book is written in a verse-by-verse commentary style. Many readers will not be familiar with this style so a few comments are in order.

Whether we are studying the end times or some other aspect of the Christian faith, our primary source must be the Bible. And whether we present a topic in a verse-by-verse manner or not, we must initially study the relevant passages of the Bible in a word-by-word, verse-by-verse manner. If we aren't interested in the meaning of words, and if we don't study words in their context, verses in their context, etc., we are certain to misunderstand the Scriptures. The Holy Spirit does not lead us to a knowledge of Scripture apart from the meaning of words, etc., at least not normally. The Bible was not given to give us an opportunity to be creative—we don't need novel interpretations—we need God's interpretation (cf. 2 Peter 1:20, 21)—we need the balanced truth.

There are several effective ways to present (teach) a topic, but I have always preferred to go through the relevant passages verse by verse. This method takes the Christian student (and we're all called to be students/disciples) to the right source, to the foundation of the Christian faith, to the Bible. And this method tends to force the student to study words, verses, passages, etc., in their context. It is very important for Christians to understand the Word of God for themselves; it is not good enough for Christians just to accept as truth that which is taught by their church, etc. Truth is too important; and it is all too easy to miss the balanced truth.

There is, of course, no guarantee that a verse-by-verse study will always lead to the correct interpretation—we all need to be humble and to remain teachable—but at least we have come to the right source—and, if we need to make corrections (or at least adjustments) in what we believe, it must start right here: what does the Bible say?

Although there are substantial advantages to the verse-by-verse style used in this book, there are also some (what could be called) disadvantages. One major purpose for this section is to help prepare the reader for the style of this book. Since we are going through a passage verse by verse, the discussion cannot be as pointed as when a discussion is limited to a particular topic. Some things that are said as we discuss the meaning of a verse will not be directly pertinent to the topic; we will not always be able to get right to the point. In some ways this is a disadvantage, but we will gain a better understanding of a passage of Scripture and that is a major advantage.

This style lends itself to the inclusion of many details and many scriptural references. It is appropriate, however, for the reader to skip over discussions and/or details that are not of immediate interest. And there is a limit to how many scriptural (cross) references you would want to look up, especially at the first reading—it depends on how much detail you want to get into at that time. It is intended that this book be used as a handbook, a reference book for continued, future study.

Clearly, this style of writing cannot flow as smoothly as the more standard style of writing—the reader cannot coast along in neutral. The reader must be motivated to study and understand the details that will lead to the correct understanding of verses, passages, and topics.

A request. I ask the reader to keep an open mind (as far as possible) to the viewpoint expressed in this book. Ask God to lead you (and all of us) into the balanced truth—most of us are not there yet.

Additional References. I would like to mention two books that I have read since I finished this manuscript. One is the new book by Marvin J. Rosenthal titled *The Pre-Wrath Rapture of the Church* (published in 1990 by Nelson). In this book M. J. Rosenthal explains why he abandoned the pre-week rapture viewpoint that he had taught for many years. His new viewpoint has quite a bit in common with the mid-week rapture.

James A. Buck (RR 1, Box 97; Freeman, Mo. 64746) wrote *Daniel's Time Line: The Seventieth Week of Daniel*. This 195 page book, which teaches the mid-week rapture, was published in 1984. J. A. Buck and I don't agree on every point, but we have much in common.

A last word. As I send this manuscript off for publication, I'm aware that there is much room for improvement. I do believe, however, that the content of this book is accurate (I didn't say infallible) and that it is time to publish this book.

May God's will be done and His name be glorified; and may this book prove to be a blessing to His people.

## INTRODUCTION

In 1959 I received a B.S. degree in Engineering, and for the next ten years I worked on various space projects, mostly as a test engineer. At night school I picked up a M.S. degree in Engineering.

In 1964 I became a born-again Christian, and my life began to change, greatly. Over the next several years I took several evening classes at Covenant Theological Seminary in St. Louis. Then in 1969 I terminated my job as an engineer so that I could go to seminary on a full-time basis. I wanted to learn Greek and Hebrew and the other basic skills that would permit me to study the Scriptures as effectively as possible. I'm sure that a person can understand the Scriptures apart from a knowledge of Hebrew and Greek, but I have found this knowledge to be very helpful. Of course there is no substitute for the person of the Holy Spirit. Apart from His work, no one is going to understand or rightly divide the Word of God.

Since graduating from Covenant a few years later with a M.A. degree in Biblical Studies, I have continued to study and teach. I have been teaching classes on the Bible in churches, home groups, and Bible colleges, and I have taught quite a few classes in New Testament Greek.

The church I was attending when I became a born-again Christian introduced me to the pre-week rapture.<sup>1</sup> (The #1 refers to a note included at the end of this chapter.) I basically agreed with this viewpoint, but I always had some reservations, and especially after I was very briefly introduced to the mid-week rapture at Covenant Seminary about a year after I had become a born-again Christian.

In the next two sub-sections I'll briefly discuss two key passages (Matthew chapter 24 and 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12) that began to incline me away from the pre-week rapture viewpoint. Then, in the following sub-section, I'll briefly discuss the first key passage (Revelation chapters 11-13) that began to incline me toward the mid-week rapture viewpoint.

**Matthew chapter 24.** I never did agree with the typical pre-week rapture viewpoint regarding Matt. 24:30, 31 (Mark 13:26, 27). I have always believed that these verses picture the return of the Lord Jesus Christ and the attendant rapture of the Christian church. Most who hold the pre-week rapture deny this interpretation. At least one reason for this denial is the fact that it is rather clear that the events of Matt. 24:30, 31 follow the "abomination of desolation" of Matt. 24:15, which will not take place until the (approximate) middle of Daniel's 70th week; therefore, if Matt. 24:30, 31 do include the rapture, as I believe, it is difficult to hold that the rapture will take place before Daniel's 70th week begins.

Most of the verses of Matthew chapter 24 are discussed in this book, including the verses cited in the preceding paragraph. (See the Contents.)

**2 Thessalonians 2:1-12.** Also, I never did agree with the typical pre-week rapture viewpoint regarding these verses. I have always believed the apostle Paul told the Thessalonian Christians that the Lord Jesus Christ would not return and the rapture would not take place until after Antichrist had been revealed at the time he enters the temple at

Jerusalem. Antichrist will be revealed at his abomination of desolation. (2 Thess. 2:1-12 are discussed in chapter 24.)

**Revelation chapters 11-13.** It was probably in 1965 I first heard the idea (at Covenant Seminary) that the seventh and last trumpet of the book of Revelation (Rev. 11:15) will sound in the middle of Daniel's 70th week and that Rev. 12:5 speaks of the mid-week rapture of God's people. My Scofield Reference Bible informed me that the "child" of Rev. 12:5 refers to the Lord Jesus Christ, but (even then) it seemed much more reasonable to me (it seemed to fit the context much better) to see the child representing the people of God (especially with Rev. 2:26, 27) and to see the catching-up of Rev. 12:5 speaking of the mid-week rapture. (The same Greek verb is used for the catching-up [rapture] in Rev. 12:5 and 1 Thess. 4:17. And the book of Revelation, especially chapters 11-13, provides strong support for the viewpoint that the catching-up of Rev. 12:5 will take place in the middle of Daniel's 70th week.) I'll comment on Revelation chapters 11-13 extensively in this book, and these chapters are discussed verse-by-verse in chapters 20-22.

I mentioned that I could not reconcile Matthew chapter 24 and 2 Thess. 2:1-12 with the pre-week rapture. This does not mean, however, that these passages necessarily lead a person to the mid-week rapture. If I only had these two passages, I would favor the end-of-the-week rapture viewpoint. But, Matthew chapter 24 does fit the mid-week rapture well enough when it is studied in the light of other Scripture, as I'll try to show in this book. Second Thessalonians 2:1-12 can also be reconciled with the mid-week rapture, as discussed in chapter 24.

Until 1971 I didn't do any detailed study on the end times. (I knew I didn't understand this topic very well, including the book of Revelation.) In 1971 I took an elective class on the book of Revelation at Covenant Seminary. This class was co-taught by Dr. W. Harold Mare and Dr. Wilber B. Wallis. Both professors held the mid-week rapture viewpoint. A book that I used for this class (and have used quite a bit since then) was *A Systematic Theology of the Christian Religion* by James Oliver Buswell, Jr. (published by Zondervan). Dr. Buswell, who was a founding father at Covenant Seminary, taught the mid-week rapture. The second half of Vol. 2 of his Systematic Theology is titled "Eschatology," pp. 285-541. (Vol. 2 was published in 1963. The two volumes are now bound in a single volume.) I don't agree with everything that Dr. Buswell says on eschatology, but I consider his book to be the best I know of on this subject.

When I attended Covenant, not all the professors held the mid-week rapture viewpoint, in fact, they were not all premillennial.<sup>2</sup> At the present time I don't believe there is much of a mid-week rapture emphasis at Covenant, if it is taught at all.

**Other writers on the mid-week rapture.** W. B. Wallis, my former professor, wrote "The Coming of the Kingdom: A Survey of the Book of Revelation." I recommend this lengthy article; it is included in *Presbuterion: A Journal for the Eldership*, by the faculty of Covenant Theological Seminary (12330 Conway Rd., St. Louis, Mo. 63141). (This article is in Vol. VIII, Spring 1982, Number 1, pp. 13-70.) Dr. Wallis has another, more recent article titled "Reflections on the History of Premillennial Thought." (This article is

in the book *Interpretation and History, Essays in honour of Allan A. MacRae*, edited by R. Laird Harris, Swee-Hwa Quek, and J. Robert Vannoy, Christian Life Publishers, pp. 225-251.)

It was about 1986 that I obtained copies of two books written by Norman B. Harrison. One of these books is *The End: Re-Thinking the Revelation*. (This book, which was published in 1941 and revised in 1952, is out of print. I believe that a reprint would be beneficial. It was published by The Harrison Service; Minneapolis, Minnesota.) *The End* is a major work of 244 pages. Dr. Harrison has a shorter work (72 pages) titled *His Coming*. (It was also published by The Harrison Service.) I have found these books helpful, especially *The End*, but not as helpful as the writings of Dr. Buswell and Dr. Wallis.

Gleason L. Archer is another scholar who teaches the mid-week rapture. Dr. Archer has a relatively short chapter (10 pages) expressing this viewpoint in the book *When Is Jesus Coming Again?* (published by Creation House, 1974). Dr. Archer is one of the four contributors to the book *The Rapture: Pre-, Mid-, or Post-Tribulation?* (published in 1984 by Zondervan). I agree with much that he says as he presents the mid-week rapture viewpoint; I also agree with quite a bit of what the pre-week and end-of-the-week writers say in this book. (Dr. Paul D. Feinberg presents the pre-week rapture viewpoint; Dr. Douglas J. Moo presents the end-of-the-week rapture viewpoint.) Other writings by Dr. Archer include *A Survey of Old Testament Introduction* (a text I used in seminary); “Daniel” in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary*, Vol. 7; the translation of *Jerome’s Commentary on Daniel*; and “Isaiah” in the one-volume *Wycliffe Bible Commentary*.

Mary Stewart Relfe teaches the mid-week rapture in her book *When Your Money Fails 666*. (This book was published in 1981 by *The New Money System Ministries, Inc.*; Montgomery, Alabama.) Dr. Relfe’s later book, , has very little to say regarding the mid-week rapture. (This book was published in 1982 by Ministries, Inc.)

The mid-week rapture is often discussed by writers who are not presenting this viewpoint. One such writer is Millard J. Erickson, *Contemporary Options in Eschatology* (published in 1977 by Baker, pp. 163-168). The first book listed in each of the two following paragraphs also fit this category.

**Pre-week rapture writers.** I have learned a lot from those who teach the pre-week rapture. Hal Lindsey wrote *The Rapture: Truth or Consequences* (published in 1983 by Bantam Books). He has also written many other books on the end times, including *The Late Great Planet Earth* and *There’s a New World Coming*, which comments on the book of Revelation chapter by chapter.

John F. Walvoord wrote *The Rapture Question* (published in the “Revised and Enlarged Edition” in 1979 by Zondervan). Dr. Walvoord has written many other books on the end times, including his commentaries on the books of Daniel and Revelation, both of which I have used quite a bit. In his book *The Blessed Hope and the Tribulation* (published in 1976 by Zondervan), Dr. Walvoord interacts with the end-of-the-week rapture viewpoint, including the two writers I’ll mention next.

**End-of-the-week rapture writers.** I didn’t read the books I’ll mention here until relatively late, about 1986. Two of the most-often-referred-to writers are George Eldon Ladd and Robert H. Gundry. Dr. Gundry wrote *The Church and the Tribulation*

(published in 1973 by Zondervan). Dr. Ladd wrote *The Blessed Hope* (1956) and *The Last Things* (1978). (Both were published by Eerdmans). Dr. Ladd has written other books on the end times, including *A Commentary on the Revelation of John*. Dr. Gundry has written other books, but, so far as I know, no other books on the end times.

The book by Dr. Gundry and *The Blessed Hope* by Dr. Ladd both interact extensively with the pre-week rapture viewpoint, attempting to show that it is in error. I agree with much that they say on this topic, and in general. It is also true that the pre-week rapture writers interact with the end-of-the-week rapture viewpoint, attempting to show that it is in error. I also agree with much that they say on this topic, and in general. None of these writers has interacted extensively with the mid-week rapture viewpoint, undoubtedly because it has not been widely accepted (yet). I'm quite sure that this viewpoint will become widely accepted because I'm quite sure that it is the correct viewpoint.

I believe I can honestly say that I respect the work of each writer I have mentioned above. It is very important for Christians to respect one another, even when differing on issues that are of secondary importance. We can't afford to divide the Body of Christ over such issues, and many of the differences on the end times must be considered of secondary importance.

**The primary basis for the mid-week rapture.** Under Rev. 11:15, in the section titled "The Time of the Sounding of the Seventh and Last Trumpet," I summarize the primary reasons why I believe that this trumpet will sound, the Lord Jesus Christ will return, and the resurrection/transformation and rapture will take place right in the middle of Daniel's 70th week. Although I mention quite a few passages of Scripture in this summary that do not come from the book of Revelation, my primary reasons for believing in the mid-week rapture center in the book of Revelation, especially chapters 11-13.

It is not surprising that the book of Revelation should play a pivotal role in our understanding of the end times when we consider verses like Rev. 1:1-3: *The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants, the things which must shortly take place; and He sent and communicated (it) by His angel to His bond-servant John, (2) who bore witness to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, (even) to all that he saw. (3) Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of the prophecy, and heed the things which are written in it; for the time is near.* Most would date this Revelation about A.D. 95, some sixty-five years after the teaching recorded in Matthew chapter 24 was given, and some thirty years after the apostle Paul died.

Many of the passages I mention in the summary (under Rev. 11:15) that do not come from the book of Revelation must be read in the light of the book of Revelation to see the mid-week rapture in them. It is also true that we could not adequately understand the book of Revelation apart from the light shed on it by other portions of Scripture, including the book of Daniel.

**Why hasn't the mid-week rapture been widely held (yet)?** In the Introduction to chapter 24, I'll answer this question to some extent.

**Some key topics/passages of Scripture that are discussed in this book on which I believe I am making a contribution to the correct understanding of what the Scriptures teach on the end times.** Since the mid-week rapture viewpoint hasn't been widely held or discussed, it is not surprising that many things I say in this book are different. It could be that others have taught all these things, but I'm not acquainted with these teachings.

I didn't write this book to present a different viewpoint (or for the sake of argument); my goal is to present an accurate viewpoint. Each Christian must seek God for the balanced truth, and the things I have said must be checked out against the Word of God. To me the scriptural evidence weighs heavily in favor of the mid-week rapture.

The following listing does not necessarily list the most important items first. For the most part, this listing follows the order of this book.

- The interpretation regarding the uprooting of the “three horns” of Dan. 7:8 and the annihilation of “the three shepherds” of Zech. 11:8. (See under Dan. 7:8; Zech. 11:8.)
- The viewpoint that the Lord Jesus Christ will claim Jerusalem as His city and as a city for the elect remnant of Israel at the time of His mid-week return. (See the Chronological Chart #14; and see under Dan. 7:9, 10; Zech. 9:8-10; 12:1-13:6; 13:8-14:7; Rev. 11:1, 2, 13.)
- The interpretation of the 2,300 days of Dan. 8:14. (See under Dan. 8:10-14.)
- The time (as related to Daniel's 70th week) of the abomination of desolation. (See the Chron. Chart #7; and see under Dan. 9:27.) W. B. Wallis has already suggested this viewpoint (“The Coming of the Kingdom,” pp. 45, 46).
- The content of, time of, and duration of the short “great tribulation” of Matt. 24:21, 22/the “time of distress [tribulation]” of Dan. 12:1. (See the Chron. Chart #8; and see under Dan. 11:36-44; 12:1.)
- The cause of the darkening of the sun and moon, as pictured in Matt. 24:29; Mark 13:24; Acts 2:20 with Joel 2:31; Rev. 6:12; etc. (See the Chron. Chart #9; and see under Dan. 12:1.)
- Much of the interpretation of Rev. 7:9-17. (See the Contents.)
- Much of the interpretation of Zechariah chapter 11. (See chapter 14.)
- Much of the interpretation of Zech. 13:8-14:7, including the viewpoint that the Lord Jesus Christ will come to the Mount of Olives right in the middle of Daniel's 70th week, not long after the mid-week rapture, and the viewpoint that the “great earthquake” at Jerusalem of Rev. 11:13 correlates with the massive shift of the earth pictured in Zech. 14:4. (See the Chron. Chart #14; and see under Zech. 13:8-14:7; Rev. 11:13.)
- Much of the interpretation of Isa. 66:6-8. (See chapter 16.)
- Much of the interpretation of Mic. 5:3. (See chapter 17.)
- Much of the interpretation of Psalm 2:4-9. (See chapter 18.)
- Much of the content of the section titled “The Time of the Sounding of the Seventh and Last Trumpet” (under Rev. 11:15) and quite a bit of the content of the all-important chapters of the book of Revelation, chapters 11-13. (See chapters 20-22.)

**Some suggestions on how to read this book.** You could just read through this book chapter by chapter, but I doubt that the majority will choose this approach. When I teach classes on the end times, I usually start with Daniel chapters 2 and 7 and at least the first part of Daniel chapter 8, then Daniel chapter 9 with the emphasis on the last four verses. The first time through these chapters you could skip some of the details; I would not include all the details I have included in this book if I were going through these chapters for the first time in a class. For example, I wouldn't expect most readers to look up each Scripture reference I have listed, especially not the first time through, and some readers may want to skip a discussion on a topic not of particular interest.

Next, I usually go to Revelation chapters 11 and 12, and sometimes chapter 13. While studying Revelation chapters 11 and 12, the reader may want to go off and study at least some of the closely related passages that are mentioned there. For example, you may want to read the chapters (or at least the key parts of the chapters) on Isaiah 66:1-8; Micah 4:9-5:6; Psalm 2; Psalm 110; and Zechariah chapters 12-14. The reader could then turn to the chapters on Daniel 11:36-45 and Daniel chapter 12. Matthew chapter 24 is discussed to some extent in these two chapters; see the Contents for further discussion of Matthew chapter 24. Next, Zechariah chapters 12-14 (if not already studied) would be a good choice, and so on.

You could also start with the Chronological Chart (chapter 2). The notes on this chart will direct the reader to the appropriate passages of Scripture. For many, the primary topic of interest will be the time of the rapture. You could start with the Chron. Chart, then turn to the section titled "The Time of the Sounding of the Seventh and Last Trumpet" under Rev. 11:15.

**A few comments regarding translations of the Bible.** In this book all quotations are taken from the NASB (the New American Standard Bible) unless otherwise noted. I have been using the NASB for most of my study and teaching for about twenty years, and I plan to keep on using it most of the time. There are quite a few places in this book where I suggest that the translation of the NASB could be improved, but this certainly should not be considered as a lack of respect for this translation. For one thing, many of the passages we are studying are quite difficult. I don't believe any translation of the Bible is perfect, but there are many very good translations, any of which will enable a person to know the will of God and to live a godly Christian life.

I believe a Christian can depend on the NASB, the KJV (King James Version), or the NIV (New International Version). They were all translated by dedicated Christians who respected the Bible as the Word of God and held to the basic doctrines of the Christian faith. I certainly don't mean to limit the number to these three, but I haven't used the other translations much. I have used the Amplified Bible enough to appreciate it, and I know enough about the NKJV (New King James Version) that I don't have any reservations regarding it either. Again, I don't mean to infer that these are the only reliable translations. I should mention though that I am quite concerned about some of the notes I have seen in some editions of the Bible, notes that approach the Bible, or books of the Bible, from a modernistic point of view.

The NASB and NIV have the benefit of being translated into a more modern (easier to understand) English than the KJV. Also, the NASB and NIV should benefit from the fact

that, in our day, we have a somewhat better understanding of Hebrew and Greek grammar, the meaning of Hebrew and Greek words, the exact form of the original manuscripts, etc. But then, when there is a difference between the NASB and KJV, I don't just assume that the NASB is to be preferred. I'm quite sure there are many places where the KJV translation is to be preferred.

Some believe that the only acceptable translation is the KJV. I have been disappointed a few times to hear one Christian attack another (as if he were a heretic) because he didn't use the KJV. I haven't seen an adequate basis for this point of view. The difference between the KJV and the NASB, or the NIV, isn't all that substantial. I don't believe any basic doctrine is at stake.

One reason I started using the NASB instead of the NIV was that it became available about ten years earlier. I also tend to favor the style of the NASB in that it stays closer to a word-by-word translation of the Hebrew and Greek. This does not mean, however, that the NASB is more accurate, and I'm sure that there are many places where the NIV more accurately communicates the intent of the author/Author.

**A few comments regarding Covenant Theological Seminary.** I appreciated my years of study at Covenant. I found the administration, faculty, staff, and students to be dedicated Christians who desired to teach and live the Christian life in line with the Scriptures. They treated me with respect, as a brother in Christ, even though I didn't fully agree with all that they taught. It must be understood that some things I say in this book are different than what they teach at Covenant; they certainly are not responsible for what I say in this book.

## NOTES

1. The words "pre-week rapture" are short for "pre (Daniel's 70th) week rapture." These words mean that the rapture of the Christian church will take place just before ("pre") Daniel's 70th week begins. We learn of Daniel's 70th week from Dan. 9:24-27; it is a seven-year period that will come at the end of this age. At the end of Daniel's 70th week, the millennial kingdom will begin.

By the words "pre-week rapture" I mean the same thing as the commonly used words "pre-tribulation rapture." This latter expression assumes that Daniel's 70th week can be called "the tribulation." I don't believe it is reasonable to speak of Daniel's 70th week as "the tribulation." The key verse on Daniel's 70th week (Dan. 9:27) seems to indicate that things will not break loose until the (approximate) middle of the week. At this time, Antichrist will break his covenant with Israel and initiate the abomination of desolation. There will undoubtedly be some "tribulation" during the first half of Daniel's 70th week, before Antichrist's abomination of desolation (every year knows some tribulation), but I don't believe there is a sufficient basis to speak of Daniel's 70th week as "the tribulation."

2. The "pre-week," "mid-week," and "end-of-the-week rapture" viewpoints are all premillennial. The premillennial viewpoint, which was very widespread in the Christian church for the first few centuries, holds that there will be a literal millennial kingdom on the earth at the end of this age and that the Lord Jesus Christ must return first (note

premillennial) in order to judge the earth and to set up this kingdom. I certainly believe that the premillennial viewpoint is correct, but there is no doubt that there are many solid, Bible-believing Christians who hold other viewpoints, including the “amillennial” and “postmillennial” viewpoints. Those who hold other viewpoints frequently have much to say that is accurate and helpful.

## REVELATION CHAPTER 12

**Rev. 12:1.** *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 twelve stars.*

I believe this woman represents God’s true Israel. She embraces all the members of God’s true Israel: those believers who lived in the days before the new covenant and those believers who live on the earth in the days of the new covenant (Christians). All true Christians are part of this *woman*, including those who will be resurrected/transformed and raptured at the time of the mid-week return of the Lord Jesus Christ (Rev. 12:5) and those (the end-time elect remnant of Israel) that will not be converted until at the time of, or after, His return (cf., e.g., Mic. 5:3-6; Zech. 12:10-13:6; 14:4-6; Rev. 11:13; 12:6, 13-17; 15:2-4). In Rev. 12:5 we read that the *woman* gives birth to the “male (child),” and in Rev. 12:17 we read of “the rest of her seed [offspring].”

All the members of God’s true Israel will ultimately reign with the Lord Jesus Christ—forever (cf., e.g., Dan. 7:9, 10, 13, 14, 18, 22, 27; Rev. 22:3-5). The crown on the head of the woman probably indicates this fact. Those who are raptured at the time of the mid-week return of the Lord Jesus Christ will begin to reign with Him at that time (Rev. 12:5). Those who are martyred during the second half of Daniel’s 70th week will be resurrected to reign with Him (and the rest of the saints) in the millennial kingdom (Rev. 20:4). I assume that those Christians who live through the three and one-half year super-evil reign of Antichrist will be transformed into the glory of eternal life at the end of Daniel’s 70th week (see under Isa. 66:8); they too will then begin to reign with the Lord Jesus Christ.

God’s true Israel, represented by the *woman* who is pictured in her glory in Rev. 12:1, is to be contrasted with the other woman of the book of Revelation, Babylon the great, the great harlot of Rev. 17:1-19:3. The people of God (God’s true Israel) are part of His city, New Jerusalem (cf., e.g., Rev. 3:12; 21:2, 9-23; 22:14, 19; Gal. 4:26; Heb. 12:22, 23). Babylon the great is also pictured as a city (cf. Rev. 17:18; 18:10, 16, 18, 19, 21).

I believe God’s true Israel is to be distinguished from “the nations” (who are pictured in Rev. 21:24-22:2), even though “the nations” eventually come to New Jerusalem and are saved through the Lord Jesus Christ (Rev. 21:27). God’s true Israel will reign with Him, but it seems that “the nations” will not (cf., e.g., Rev. 1:6; 2:26, 27; 3:21; 5:9, 10; 12:5; 20:4; 21:24-22:5).

The *sun, moon, and twelve stars* help identify the woman as Israel. (Cf. Gen. 37:9-11. Joseph had eleven brothers.) I will comment further on the identity of the woman and her seed (offspring) as we continue with our discussion of Revelation chapter 12.

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

*and she was with child.* The *child* is the “male (child)” to whom the woman gives birth (Rev. 12:5).

*and she cried out, being in labor and in pain to give birth.* In the Greek *she cried out* is in the present tense, which fits the idea that the woman was crying out on a repeated, or a continuous, basis. We should probably think of the woman crying out throughout the entire period of her *being in labor and in pain to give birth*. This period probably began about the time that mankind fell. Genesis 3:15 (which we quoted and discussed under Dan. 7:13, 14) spoke of the warfare that would continue between Satan (the serpent) and his seed, and the woman and her seed. (It is worthy of note that Genesis chapter 3 speaks of Satan as “the serpent” and Rev. 12:9 speaks of him as the “serpent of old.”) Satan’s warfare against the woman is at least a major cause of her painful condition, as it is pictured in Rev. 12:2. Much of Revelation chapters 12 and 13 speak of Satan’s warfare against the woman.

Genesis 3:15 explains Satan’s great hatred for the woman and her seed. The seed of the woman, which centers in the Lord Jesus Christ but includes His people with Him (true Israel), will ultimately crush the head of Satan and his kingdom. (Cf. Rom. 16:20.)

**Rev. 12:3. *And another sign appeared in heaven: and behold, a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads (were) seven diadems.***

*a great red dragon.* Revelation 12:9 makes it clear that the *dragon* is Satan. (Cf. Isa. 27:1.) The red undoubtedly refers to the fact that he is the arch-murderer (cf. John 8:40-44; 1 John 3:8, 12).

*having seven heads.* The *seven heads* represent the seven world kingdoms of the Bible. (See the discussion of Rev. 17:9, 10 under Rev. 11:7.)

*and ten horns.* The *ten horns* are ten kings. (See the discussion of Rev. 17:12-14 under Rev. 11:7.)

*and on his heads were seven diadems.* The KJV and NIV have “crowns” in place of *diadems*. The fact that each of the seven heads is crowned helps demonstrate that we are to think of Satan’s murderous persecution of the woman throughout each of the seven world kingdoms. (In Rev. 13:1, by contrast, the crowns are on the heads of the ten horns.) Satan also used Cain (1 John 3:12), and many others, as he waged warfare against the elect of God.

**Rev. 12:4. *And his tail swept away a third of the stars of 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 his tail swept away a third of the stars of heaven.* Stars can symbolize angels, good angels (Rev. 1:16, 20) and evil angels (Rev. 9:1, cf. 8:10, 11). The angels in view here are evil angels. As far as I know, this is the only place in the Bible which indicates that *a third* of God’s angels fell and followed Satan in his rebellion. On the devil and his angels, cf. Rev. 12:7-9; Matt. 25:41.

The devil's angels (as pictured by the *stars*) will be thrown down to the earth with Satan, right in the middle of Daniel's 70th week (Rev. 12:7-9). The Greek verb translated *swept away* is *suro*. The KJV translates, "drew." The BAGD Greek Lexicon gives "drag, pull, draw away (something)" as the basic meaning of this Greek verb. This helps show that the idea here is that these evil angels (who are united with Satan) will be dragged down to the earth along with him, when he is thrown down. The Greek verb *ballo* (translated *threw*) is also used three times in verse 9 and once in verses 10 and 13 for the throwing down of Satan and/or his angels.

***And the dragon stood before the woman.*** In line with what I said above regarding Satan's continuous, age-long warfare against the woman, I would translate "the dragon was standing before the woman."<sup>1</sup> I believe Satan has been standing before the woman (in the sense of Rev. 12:4) ever since the age-long warfare began (e.g., Gen. 3:15). The Bible, from the beginning to the end, shows that Satan has been doing everything he could do to try to destroy the woman and her seed (offspring) and prevent this birth (of Rev. 12:5) from taking place.<sup>2</sup> All the people of God have been targets for his evil work, whether in the form of temptation, persecution, murder, etc. Some have been special targets for Satan's hatred because he knew that they were to have crucial roles to play in his demise. He knew, for example, that the seed of Abraham would play a significant role, then, more specifically, the seed of the tribe of Judah, then, more specifically yet, the offspring of King David, etc. Every consecrated Christian is a threat to Satan, especially those called into a special ministry, starting with the apostles.

In this symbolic presentation (Rev. 12:1-5), Satan is out to destroy the "male (child)" at birth because he knows that the birth of this child means the end for him. Through the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Head of this "male (child)," Satan has already been defeated; this defeat will be openly manifested at the end of this age.

***the woman who was about to give birth.*** In line with what I said above, it would probably be better to translate "the woman who was to give birth," or "the woman who was going to give birth."<sup>3</sup>

***so that when she gave birth he might devour her child.*** In this symbolic presentation the emphasis is placed on the fact that Satan wants to destroy this child at birth, before the child can destroy him (e.g., Gen. 3:15). But, as discussed above, Satan does not wait for the birth to attack the woman and her seed (offspring). A prime example was the attempt of Satan to destroy the young child Jesus through Herod (Matt. 2:7-18).

Each conversion and new birth that takes place throughout this age is another preliminary step in the birth of the child; however, the emphasis in Rev. 12:1-5 is on the ultimate birth (the birth into the fulness of eternal life that will take place right in the middle of Daniel's 70th week, at the sounding of the seventh and last trumpet).

**Rev. 12:5. *And she gave birth to a son, a male (child), who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne.***

Before we discuss the meaning of these words, I would like to consider a preliminary question. How is it that Satan, who had been waiting for the birth of the male (child) that he might devour the child, disappears from the scene while the birth and rapture seemingly take place uncontested? I believe Rev. 12:7-10 answer this question. Just

before the birth (essentially at the time of the birth), Satan and his angels are overpowered and cast down to the earth. (See under Rev. 12:7-13.)

As I have mentioned, I believe this birth speaks of the resurrection/transformation of the saints (the birth into the fulness of eternal life) that will take place at the sounding of the seventh and last trumpet, right in the middle of Daniel's 70th week.<sup>4</sup> I believe the *son, a male (child)* embraces all the members of God's true Israel that will have been converted before the mid-week return of the Lord Jesus Christ. It will include those who will have died before that time—they will be resurrected (cf., e.g., Dan. 12:2; 1 Cor. 15:23, 51, 52; 1 Thess. 4:16); and it will include those who will be living on the earth at that time—they will be transformed (cf. 1 Cor. 15:52, 52).

I believe this birth is the same as the one spoken of in Isa. 66:7; Mic. 5:3; and Ps. 2:7. Taken together, these four verses (in their contexts) provide very strong support for the viewpoint that this birth is the birth into the fulness of eternal life and that this birth will take place right in the middle of Daniel's 70th week. (See the section titled "The Time of the Sounding of the Seventh and Last Trumpet" under Rev. 11:15, especially #'s 1, 2, 3, and 4, and see chapters 16-18.)

**Jesus Christ was the first-born from the dead** (Col. 1:18; Rev. 1:5; cf. Rom. 8:29).

That is, He was the first man (though He was, and is, much more than a man) that was born into the glory of resurrection life and God's new creation. On the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ being pictured as a birth, also see Ps. 2:7 with Acts 13:33; Heb. 5:5; and 1:5. (See the discussion under Ps. 2:7.) At the time of His mid-week return, His people will follow Him in this birth (cf., e.g., 1 Cor. 15:20-23).

**Further discussion to help show that the Christian church is part of God's true Israel and part of the seed (offspring) of God's true Israel.** In Romans chapter 11 the apostle Paul shows that Gentile Christians are grafted into the tree of God's true Israel, and in Gal. 6:16 he speaks of the Christian church as "the Israel of God." (Also see Rom. 2:28, 29.) Abraham, the father of the nation Israel, is, in a greater sense, the father of all believers (Rom. 4:1-25; Gal. 3:6-4:7; Heb. 2:16). In Gal. 4:26 the apostle says, "the Jerusalem above...is our mother" (cf. Psalm 87 NIV). Hebrews 12:22, 23; Rev. 3:12; and 21:2, 9-23 show that Christians are part of God's Jerusalem.

The only way to become a member of God's true Israel (in the full and final sense) is through the Lord Jesus Christ, who is Himself God's true Israel (Isa. 49:3). All who are redeemed and born again (born from above) through Him become part of God's true Israel. See Isaiah chapter 53, especially verses 10 and 11. Isaiah 53:10 specifically mentions the seed (offspring) of the Lord Jesus Christ (who is Himself God's true Israel). (Isaiah chapter 53 bases this salvation on the atoning death of the Lord Jesus Christ. This very important chapter from the book of Isaiah is discussed in some detail in Extended Notes A, B, and C [in my book *Holiness and Victory Over Sin*].) Galatians 3:1-4:7 show that the promises made to Abraham are fulfilled through the Lord Jesus Christ and His atoning death, and that, through Him, believers "are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise" (Gal. 3:29). On being born again (born from above) through the Lord Jesus Christ, cf. John 3:1-21; 1 John 2:29; 3:9; 5:1, 4, 18.

***who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron (Rev. 12:5).*** It is significant that these words build on Ps. 2:9. (Psalm 2 is discussed in chapter 18. I have mentioned that the birth of Rev. 12:5 is to be equated with the birth of Ps. 2:7.) The raptured “male (child)” will begin to rule (reign) at the time of the rapture. Note the next words of Rev. 12:5: ***and her child was caught up to God and to His throne.*** (The Greek verb *harpazo*, which is translated ***was caught up***, is also used in 1 Thess. 4:17 for the mid-week rapture [catching up].) For the saints to be caught up (raptured) to God and to His throne probably includes the idea that they will begin to reign. In Rev. 3:21 the Lord Jesus Christ said: *He who overcomes, I will grant to him to sit down with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.* Even more important as a cross-reference are Rev. 2:26, 27. These verses quote from Ps. 2:8, 9 and actually speak of Christians reigning with a rod of iron. (On the reign of the raptured saints, see under Dan. 7:9, 10, 13, 14; cf., e.g., Ps. 110:3; Rev. 14:1-5, 14-16; 17:14; 19:14, 19; 1 Cor. 6:2, 3; 2 Tim. 2:12; Heb. 2:5-13. On the rapture cf. Rev. 11:12; Matt. 24:31, 40, 41; Mk. 13:27; Lk. 17:34, 35; John 14:3.)

**Is it scriptural to think of the church as a “male (child)”?** I have been asked one question more than any other when teaching on the end times. How can the church be spoken of as a male (child) when we know that the church is the bride of Christ? I usually start to answer this question with a question. Is the Lord Jesus Christ a Lion, or a Lamb, or a vine, etc.? Of course He is all of these according to the Scriptures. In Rev. 5:5 He is called “the Lion from the tribe of Judah,” and in Rev. 5:6 He is spoken of as “a Lamb standing as if slain.” This is figurative language. He is a Lion in His power and His reigning. He is a Lamb in that He was slain for our sins. Likewise, the church is the bride of Christ (e.g., Rev. 19:7) in her glorious relationship with the Son of God, and the church is a “male (child)” in that Christians will reign (along with the Lord Jesus Christ) with a rod of iron (Rev. 2:26, 27; 12:5).

**Rev. 12:6. *And the woman fled into the wilderness where she had a place prepared by God, so that there she might be nourished for one thousand two hundred and sixty days.***

This verse is also very important. For one thing, it enables us to locate the birth and rapture of Rev. 12:5 right in the middle of Daniel’s 70th week. (See below.)

Although the “male (child)” has just been born (Rev. 12:5), the woman still embraces more seed (offspring) who must yet be born: the rest of the members of God’s true Israel. Revelation 12:17 speaks of “the rest of her seed [offspring]” and further identifies them as Christians, those “who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus.” They will become Christians, starting at the time of Christ’s mid-week return. We can probably say that they will be born into the fulness of eternal life, through a birth like the birth of Rev. 12:5, by the time the millennial kingdom begins (see under Isa. 66:8).

I believe we can equate “the rest of her seed [offspring]” with the end-time elect remnant of Israel. We have already discussed this remnant in some detail. (See under Isa. 66:7, 8; Dan. 7:9, 10, 21, 22, 25-27; 12:5-7, 10-13; Mic. 5:3-6; Zechariah chapters 9-14; Rev. 11:1, 2, 13, 19; 13:5-7). It is very clear that the end-time elect remnant of Israel will know much travail and hardship throughout the second half of Daniel’s 70th week (cf.

Isa. 66:7, 8; Dan. 7:21, 22, 25, 26; 12:7; Zech. 13:9; Rev. 12:13-17; 13:5, 7; 15:2, “fire”). But Rev. 12:6 (and Rev. 12:14-16) shows that this remnant will also know God’s nourishment and protective care throughout these three and one-half difficult years (cf. Rev. 7:1-8; Mic. 5:3-6; Zech. 9:8-10; 10:3-12; 12:4-13:6; 14:3-21).

Revelation 12:13-13:7 show why *the woman fled into the wilderness*. On *the wilderness* see under Rev. 12:14.

*for one thousand two hundred and sixty days*. These 1,260 days constitute the second half of Daniel’s 70th week. This same three and one-half year period is also specifically mentioned in Dan. 7:25; 12:7; Rev. 12:14; and 13:5, cf. Dan. 12:11. (The first half of Daniel’s 70th week is referred to in Rev. 11:2, 3.)

**Rev. 12:7-9. And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels waging war with the dragon. And the dragon and his angels waged war, (8) and they were not strong enough, and there was no longer a place found for them in heaven. (9) And 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.**

I believe the warfare pictured in these verses, which will take place right in the middle of Daniel’s 70th week, will not last long, perhaps a matter of hours, or less. As we will discuss below, this warfare will apparently take place immediately before the “male (child)” is born and raptured. Matthew 24:29-31 (cf. Mk. 13:24-27; Lk. 21:25-28) are an important cross-reference. (Cf. Rev. 6:13-17; Isa. 13:13; 24:21, 22; 27:1; 34:4.) Let’s look at Matt. 24:29.

Matt. 24:29. *But immediately after the tribulation of those days THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED, AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, AND THE STARS WILL FALL from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.*

Matthew 24:29 brings us to the middle of Daniel’s 70th week, immediately after the short “great tribulation” of Matt. 24:21, 22. (See under Dan. 12:1.) We have already discussed the darkening of the sun and moon. (See under Dan. 12:1.) These are portents (signs) of the return of the Lord Jesus Christ and the beginning of the day of the Lord. His coming with the clouds, the great trumpet, and the rapture are all mentioned in Matt. 24:30, 31.

*AND THE STARS WILL FALL from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken*. As I pointed out under Rev. 12:4, stars sometimes symbolize angels. In Rev. 12:4 a third of the stars are thrown to the earth; in Rev. 12:7-9 Satan and his angels are thrown down to the earth. I believe the stars falling in Matt. 24:29 (Mk. 13:25) speaks of the same reality as Rev. 12:4, 7-9. The words the powers of the heavens will be shaken speak of the shaking of Satan’s kingdom that will take place at the time he and his angels are cast down to the earth. (Cf. Mk. 13:25; Lk. 21:26; Rev. 6:13.) The powers of Satan will be overpowered by the power of God at the time of the mid-week return of the Lord Jesus Christ. On the power of God, cf., e.g., Matt. 24:30; 26:64; Mk. 13:26; 14:62; Lk. 21:27; 22:69; 1 Cor. 6:14; 15:24; Phil. 3:21; 2 Thess. 1:9; 2 Pet. 1:16; Rev. 11:17; 12:10.

From the time that Satan is cast down, he will no longer be able to reign in the heavenly places (cf. Eph. 6:12, 2:2). The authority and power of the Lord Jesus Christ and His raptured saints will fill the void left by Satan and his angels in the heavenly places from that time on. Satan will, however, be permitted to exercise some authority on the earth for the next three and one-half years (cf. Rev. 12:12-13:18; 20:1-3).

Matthew 24:29-31 help show that Satan and his angels will be cast down right before the mid-week return of the Lord Jesus Christ and the rapture. Revelation chapter 12 fits this sequence very well. Instead of Satan being able to devour the male (child) at birth, Satan will apparently be overpowered and cast down immediately before this birth.<sup>5</sup> Revelation 12:10, 11 confirm that the warfare of Rev. 12:7-9 has much to do with the ultimate salvation of Christians. It is rather clear that Satan will be cast down just before the woman flees, as pictured in Rev. 12:6. There is widespread agreement in the commentaries that the woman flees because she is persecuted/pursued by Satan after he is cast down (as pictured in Rev. 12:13ff.).

On **Michael** cf. Dan. 10:13, 21; 12:1; and Jude 1:9. Jude 1:9 speaks of “Michael the archangel.” It is interesting that the only other use of the word “archangel” in the New Testament is in 1 Thess. 4:16: *For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of (the) archangel, and with the trumpet of God; and the dead in Christ will rise first.* It’s very probable that we can see Michael in 1 Thess. 4:16, and the voice of the archangel could at least include Michael’s “voice” as he is involved with the warfare of Rev. 12:7-9. This would be the appropriate time for this warfare, just before the resurrection/transformation and rapture spoken of in 1 Thess. 4:16, 17.

**Rev. 12:10.** *And 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, who accuses them before our God day and night.*

(This very important verse is discussed under Rev. 11:15.) Note the connection between the casting down of Satan and the coming of *the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ*. On Satan as *the accuser*, cf. Job 1:9-11; 2:4, 5; Zech. 3:1.

**Rev. 12:11.** *And 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 to death.*

*they overcame him* [Satan]. The word *they* refers to the Christians who have just been resurrected/transformed and raptured, as pictured in Rev. 12:5. All true Christians, from the start of the Christian church to the time of the birth of the “male (child),” are included. All true Christians are overcomers by the definition of the book of Revelation (cf. Rev. 2:11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21; 21:7). Each of these references, and Rev. 12:11, use the Greek verb *nikao*. Some other relevant uses of *nikao* are found in 1 John 2:13, 14; 4:4; 5:4, 5; and Rev. 15:2. Let’s look at Rev. 15:2.

Rev. 15:2. *And I saw, as it were, a sea of glass mixed with fire, and those who had come off victorious from the beast and from his image and from the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, holding harps of God.*

(We have already discussed Rev. 15:2-4 under Isa. 66:8.) The words *those who had come off victorious* is a translation of a participle of *nikao*. In Rev. 15:2 we see the end-time elect remnant of Israel not long after they have arrived in glory, about the time of the end of Daniel's 70th week. It is obvious they have come off victorious over Antichrist; they have stayed faithful to God and have been rewarded with heavenly glory. Antichrist, on the other hand, has just been totally overthrown (Rev. 19:19-21).

The Christians pictured in Rev. 12:11 **overcame** Satan by staying faithful to God to the end. It is very obvious they have overcome Satan; they have just been caught up to the throne of God (Rev. 12:5) and to eternal glory. Satan, on the other hand, has just been cast down to the earth and is heading toward his final judgment (Rev. 20:1-3, 10). In the rest of verse 11, we learn more about the overcoming of the saints.

**they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb.** The Christian gospel centers in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ and His atoning death (**the blood of the Lamb**). Through His sacrificial death, believers are forgiven and find acceptance with God (cf., e.g., Matt. 26:28; John 1:29, 36; 14:6; Acts 2:38-40; 20:28; Rom. 5:8-11; 1 Cor. 11:25; Eph. 2:11-22; Col. 1:22; 2:13-15; Heb. 9:14-28; 10:1-31; 1 Pet. 1:2, 18-21; Rev. 1:5; 5:1-14; 7:14; 21:27; and there are very many more such references). And if a Christian should sin, restoration is provided by the same sacrificial **blood of the Lamb** (1 John 2:1, 2).

When we say that a Christian [overcomes Satan] **because of the blood of the Lamb** it must be understood that they receive the enabling grace to overcome through the Lord Jesus Christ and His atoning death. The Holy Spirit comes to believers through the Lord Jesus Christ and His atoning death, regenerating them, sanctifying them, strengthening them, leading them, etc. Some of the many passages which show that Christians are sanctified and given the victory over sin and Satan through the blood of the Lamb are Romans chapter 6; Rom. 8:1-17; 2 Cor. 5:14-21; Gal. 2:19-21; Eph. 1:7; Col. 2:10-15; Heb. 9:14; 10:10-31; 13:12, 13; 1 Pet. 1:14-20; 2:24, 25; 1 John 1:7; Rev. 7:14 with Rev. 19:8. (We will discuss this important topic further in Extended Notes F, G, and H in my book *Holiness and Victory Over Sin*.)

**and because of the word of their testimony.** They continued to testify to Jesus Christ as their Lord and to the basics of the Christian gospel.

**and they did not love their life even to death.** They would rather die than turn away from the Lord Jesus Christ (cf., e.g., Rev. 2:10, 13; 6:9; 17:6; 18:24; 19:2; Matt. 10:38, 39; 16:24-27; John 12:24-26; Acts 20:24).

**Rev. 12:12.** *“For this reason, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them. Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he has (only) a short time.”*

**For this reason, rejoice, O heavens and you who dwell in them.** The ones who dwell in the heavenly places refer (at least in part) to those who constitute the “male (child)” that

have just been raptured to the heavenly places. The Christians that will be living on the earth at the time of the mid-week return of the Lord Jesus Christ will have a special reason to rejoice in that they will be raptured just before Satan is permitted to manifest his great wrath, and just before Antichrist is permitted to begin his three and one-half year super-evil reign.

***Woe to the earth and the sea, because the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, knowing that he has (only) a short time.*** Revelation 12:7-9 show by what means the devil will come down to the earth. He will know that he has only three and one-half years left before he is cast into the abyss (Rev. 20:1-3). Much of his great wrath will be manifested through Antichrist and the false prophet (cf. Revelation chapter 13).

***Rev. 12:13. And when the dragon saw that he was thrown down to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male (child).***

Revelation 12:13ff. explain why the woman fled into the wilderness, as pictured in Rev. 12:6. The dragon, having been thrown down to the earth right in the middle of Daniel's 70th week, will not be able to persecute the "male (child)" because, at essentially the same time that he is cast down, the "male (child)" will be raptured from the earth. (Rev. 12:13 with Rev. 12:14-13:7 strongly confirms that the male child will be raptured right in the middle of Daniel's 70th week.) Satan will, however, ***[persecute] the woman who gave birth to the male (child).*** Instead of persecuted, the NIV has "pursued." (The Greek verb *dioko* can be translated either way.) The translation "pursued" fits the idea of the woman fleeing (Rev. 12:6, 14, cf. Ex. 14:8).

***Rev. 12:14. 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 half a time, from the presence of the serpent.***

The two wings of the great eagle remind us of Ex. 19:4: *You yourselves have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and (how) I bore you on eagles' wings, and brought you to Myself.* As God delivered Israel from Pharaoh and Egypt and brought her to Himself in the wilderness (on the way to the promised land), He will deliver the end-time elect remnant of Israel from the god of this world and will bring them ***into the wilderness.*** There He will nourish them throughout the second half of Daniel's 70th week, even as He provided manna, etc. for Israel in the wilderness. (It is significant that Rev. 12:6 and 14 both mention the equivalent of three and one-half years.)

This verse makes it clear the God will protect His people ***from the presence of the serpent*** (Satan) throughout the second half of Daniel's 70th week. This surely includes the idea that He will protect His people from Antichrist (who is Satan's right hand man, cf. Rev. 13:1-7) throughout this same period.

If all we had was Rev. 12:6, 14-16, we would not have an adequate appreciation of the fact that these will be very difficult days for the end-time elect remnant of Israel, and there will be martyrs (Rev. 20:4). These verses help balance out the teaching of passages like Rev. 13:7; Dan. 7:21, 22, 25; 8:10-14; 12:7; Zech. 13:9.

I doubt that ***the wilderness*** of Rev. 12:6, 14 represents any one location on the earth. On the wilderness cf. Ezek. 20:32-38, especially verses 35, 36; and Hos. 2:14.

**Rev. 12:15, 16.** *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. (16) 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.*

I assume the words *the river which the dragon poured out of his mouth* speak (in figurative language) of all the attacks that Satan will launch against the end-time elect remnant of Israel throughout the second half of Daniel's 70th week. Most (if not all) of these attacks will come through Antichrist and the false prophet (cf. Rev. 12:17-13:18). However, throughout this period God will watch over His people, 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*. (Cf., e.g., Rev. 12:6, 14; Zech. 9:8-10; 10:3-6; 12:4-13:6; 14:3-15.)

One very important thing that God will do for the end-time elect remnant of Israel is to give them strength to be faithful so that they can come off victorious over Satan and Antichrist (cf. Rev. 15:2). We know that this remnant will endure much hardship throughout these three and one-half years.

**Rev. 12:17.** *And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and went off to make war with the rest of her offspring [seed], who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus.*

I couldn't be dogmatic on this point, but I believe there should be something of a break after Rev. 12:16 and that Rev. 12:17 goes with, and serves as an introduction for, Revelation chapter 13. I believe the words *and the dragon was enraged with the woman* go back to Rev. 12:12, 13 and speak of the time starting right in the middle of Daniel's 70th week, just after Satan has been cast down to the earth. The rage of Satan pictured in Rev. 12:17 fits Rev. 12:12, 13. Then, Rev. 12:17 speaks of the rage of Satan that will be manifested throughout the second half of Daniel's 70th week (cf. Rev. 13:5), especially as that rage is expressed through Antichrist (Rev. 13:1-10) and the false prophet (Rev. 13:11-18).

It is clear that Revelation chapter 13 covers the second half of Daniel's 70th week. (I believe Rev. 12:13-16 also cover this same three and one-half year period.) Revelation 12:17-13:18 provide some of the details on how Satan will attack the end-time remnant of Israel (the woman).

*the dragon went off to make war with the rest of her offspring* [seed]. As I mentioned, I believe Revelation chapter 13 goes on to show how Satan will make war against the end-time elect remnant of Israel throughout the second half of Daniel's 70th week. Revelation 13:2 speaks of Satan giving Antichrist "his power and his throne and great authority," and Rev. 13:5 shows that this super-evil reign of Antichrist will last for three and one-half years. Revelation 13:7 speaks of Antichrist making war with the saints. The Greek verb for "make war" is the same in Rev. 12:17 and 13:7, and *the rest of her offspring* [seed] of Rev. 12:17 refer to the same persons as "the saints" of Rev. 13:7.

*the rest of her offspring* [seed], *who keep the commandments of God and hold to the testimony of Jesus*. The words *the rest of her offspring* [seed] build on the idea that the

woman has already given birth to the “male (child)” in Rev. 12:5. After the birth of Rev. 12:5, the woman still embraces more children who must be born.

I would translate “the rest of her seed.” The KJV has “seed.” The word “seed” fits better with the fact that these persons (as they will exist at the time of the events of Rev. 12:17) have not yet been born, that is, they have not yet been born with a birth like that of Rev. 12:5. Their birth into the fulness of eternal life will not take place until the end of Daniel’s 70th week. (See under Isa. 66:8.)

“The rest of her seed” are Christians. They will be converted at the time of, or after, the mid-week return of the Lord Jesus Christ. Like all true Christians, *they keep the commandments of God* (cf., e.g., Matt. 7:13-27; 22:34-40; John 14:15-24; 15:10-12; Rom. 2:26, 27; 8:4; 13:8-10; 1 Cor. 7:19; 1 Thess. 4:1-8; 1 John 2:3-11; 3:22-24; 5:2, 3; 2 John 1:6; Rev. 14:12; 19:8). And they *hold to the testimony of Jesus*. That is, they have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (cf. Rev. 14:12), and they testify to this faith (cf. Rev. 1:9; 6:9; 12:11; 19:10; 20:4). (All of these verses, including Rev. 12:17, use the same Greek noun for “testimony,” *marturia*.)

I have already mentioned that I believe “the rest of her [seed]” speaks of the end-time elect remnant of Israel. I believe this remnant of Israel embraces many Gentiles, even as the “male (child)” of Rev. 12:5 embraces Jews and Gentiles. We can probably say that all who answer the gospel call of Rev. 14:6, 7 become part of God’s true Israel.

## NOTES

1. R. C. H. Lenski (*The Interpretation of St. John’s Revelation*; Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1943; p. 367) translates “was standing,” and he says the Greek verb is in the imperfect tense. (The imperfect tense is used for continuous action in the past time.) A. T. Robertson (*Word Pictures in the New Testament*, Vol. VI; Nashville: Broadman, 1933; p. 389) also says the verb is in the imperfect tense. The BAGD Lexicon (under *steko*) says the imperfect tense is probably to be preferred in Rev. 12:4.

2. For example, Satan worked against the people of God through the first six world kingdoms, and he will yet work greatly through the last world kingdom, as Revelation chapter 13, for example, shows. (Cf., e.g., Dan. 10:13, 20; Job chapters 1 and 2; Zech. 3:1, 2; Matt. 4:1-11; Lk. 8:12; 13:11, 16; 22:3-6, 21, 22; John 8:44; 13:2; Acts 5:3; 2 Cor. 2:11; 11:13-15; Eph. 4:27; 6:10-20; 1 Thess. 2:18; 2 Thess. 2:9, 10; 2 Tim. 2:26; Heb. 2:14; James 4:7; 1 Pet. 5:8-10; 1 John 3:12; Rev. 2:10, 13; 12:10.)

3. The Greek verb that the NASB translates “was about” is *mello*. I have already commented on this verb under Rev. 10:7 (discussed under Dan. 12:5-7) and under Rev. 17:8 (discussed under Rev. 11:7). Here in Rev. 12:4, as in Rev. 10:7 and Rev. 17:8, I don’t believe there is any idea of “about to.” The Greek verb *mello* is also used in Rev. 12:5, before the infinitive “to rule”; this is another verse in which *mello* does not contain any idea of “about to.” (Note that the NASB does not translate *mello* as “about to” in Rev. 12:5. Neither do the NIV or KJV.)

4. This is the view of J. O. Buswell, *Systematic Theology*, Vol. 2, pp. 461, 462 and W. B. Wallis, "The Coming of the Kingdom," pp. 35-37.

J. A. Seiss (*The Apocalypse*, pp. 295-303) discusses at length the fact that the birth of Rev. 12:5 speaks of the birth into eternal life that will take place at the end of this age under the seventh and last trumpet. He does not, however, locate this event in the middle of Daniel's 70th week; he would locate the birth of the Christian church earlier. (See his note at the bottom of p. 302.) I consider this commentary to be one of the most helpful that I have seen on the book of Revelation.

H. A. Ironside (*Revelation*, pp. 208-212) says that the "male (child)" of Rev. 12:5 represents both the Lord Jesus Christ and the church, His Body. He would not, however, locate the resurrection of the church in the middle of Daniel's 70th week, but earlier.

William E. Biederwolf (*Second Coming Bible*; Grand Rapids: Baker, 1972 reprint; p. 623) makes a "curious" comment. He says (in part): "Petingill, MacKintosh and a few others have a curious idea here. They think the 'catching up' does not refer to the historical, bodily ascension of Christ from the mount of Olives, but to His spiritual body, believers who are caught up at the coming rapture, that the man-child therefore is still in progress of birth, the Church not being fully formed as yet, and that the dragon is still seeking to destroy the man-child, the true Church of Christ in the world today." As I have said, I believe the birth refers (for the most part, at least) to the yet future resurrection/transformation into the fulness of eternal life. I consider this book by W. E. Biederwolf a valuable resource, and I very often agree with his viewpoint.

5. J. O. Buswell (*Systematic Theology*, Vol. 2, pp. 462, 463) speaks of Satan being cast out of heaven just before the rapture of the true church.