

Revelation — Chapters 11:19 to 14

Israel, the Dragon, the Two Beasts, and the Sevenfold Events

An Outline of "The Revelation" — Walter Scott From The Faith and The Flock, 1910–1911

The contents of this wonderful book are divided into two parts. The first part brings us down to the judgment of the dead (11:18), that great and solemn fact forms the link between time and eternity. The second part begins with Israel (11:19) and closes with an awful sight—the lake of fire! the eternal place of punishment to the Devil, his spiritual associates in evil, and the unsaved of the human race (21:8).

The Church in governmental splendor (21:9-22:5) has its historical place in Chap. 20:4, 6. Chapter 12 should commence with verse 19 of the previous chapter. This section pre-eminently concerns Israel.

She is on the earth, but the signs relating to her are seen in heaven.

Read “sign” not “wonder” in vv. 1, 3. Chapter 12 is one of “great” subjects, the adjective is used six times. Heaven is the source of the great events on earth in the prophetic crisis nigh at hand.

The first sign beheld by the Seer is a Woman invested with the fulness of governmental authority on earth. Without doubt this is Israel in millennial days (Gen. 37:9). Israel is here presented as a woman, a queen, and a mother. There are four representative women mentioned in the Apocalypse: Jezebel (2:20), the papal system; woman clothed with the sun (12:1), Israel in millennial splendor; the great whore (17:1), the corrupt, loathsome, and apostate Christian profession; the bride and wife of the Lamb (19), the Church. The “Man Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron” (see Psa. 2) is Christ. Israel then is the mother of the Child of Might. It is absurd to suppose the Church as the mother of the Lord according to the flesh. Why, the Church had no existence till the Lord’s ascension and the descent of the Holy Ghost. Israel was the mother of the Man Child (Isa. 9:6 ; Rom. 9:5 ; Isa. 7:14, with Matt. 1:21-23). Israel the mother, and the Church the bride of the Lord.

The controversy of centuries would never have arisen as to the mother of the Child, had two facts been fully admitted: first, that the Man Child is Christ personally, second that the Church dates her existence, not from or before the birth of Christ, but from His ascension, thirty-three years afterwards.

Next, we have presented the “great red dragon” with seven heads and ten horns. The heads are crowned. In Chapter 13, the horns of the beast are crowned; the heads of the one, the horns of the other.

Satan is the dragon who through Herod sought the death of the Man Child, but was foiled in his murderous attempt (Matt. 2).

Observe the double parenthesis in our chapter: the first, between the birth and ascension of Christ (v. 5). Between these two events related in the passage before us, the life and ministry of our Lord comes in, which is the subject of the gospels; second, between the rapture of the Man Child and the woman’s (Israel) flight into the wilderness, the whole history of Christianity comes in parenthetically—a period covered by the Epistles. The woman’s flight is yet future, and has its start in the middle of Daniel’s prophetic week of seven years. The reason why Christ is brought into this chapter is to connect Him with Israel.

Why Israel has to flee is told us from vv. 7-13. There is war in heaven. The contending hosts are angels. Michael is the leader on the one hand; the Devil the commander on the other. The latter is defeated and is cast down from heaven to earth, and his militant host with him. The war takes place during the first half of the closing week (seven years) of prophecy. Satan never regains his old place in the heavens, never again shall he accuse the saints there. As cast down, he turns his rage against Israel, or at least Judah, then standing as a witness for God. He seeks to destroy the woman who is providentially delivered from his purposed cruelty (v. 16). The Man Child was preserved (Matt. 2), so now the mother. How wonderful are the ways of God!

The next chapter (13) presents to our view the two chief ministers of Satan’s activity on earth. The two beasts are two men—apostates from God and truth. The first beast is a Gentile (v. 1-10); the second beast is a Jew (vv. 11-18). Rome is the capital seat of the first beast.

Jerusalem is the center of the operations of the second beast. Brute force characterizes the first, religious influence, Satanically inspired, marks the career of the second beast. The first beast is without doubt the revived power of Rome distributed into ten kingdoms, and headed by that great apostate and blasphemer—the little horn of Dan. 7. The second beast is the Antichrist, or man of sin. The two cooperate and through them Satan seeks to work out his plans and purposes. The two associates in evil are associated in one common doom. Both are cast alive into the lake of fire (19:20). The second beast first acts in Jerusalem,

then in the wider sphere of Christendom.

Now that we have had the sources of good and evil (Chapter 12), the human instruments (13), we witness the final results in a sevenfold series of events (14.). These are as follows:

(1) An hundred and forty-four thousand of Jews standing with the Lamb on Mount Zion. It is an anticipative millennial scene of great beauty. This numbered company must not be confounded with that of Chapter 7. The former is of Jews who have emerged out of the great tribulation; the latter is of all Israel. The two companies are distinct (vv. 1- 5).

(2) The preaching of the everlasting Gospel. This second event in the chapter commences the chronological order of subjects. The Gospel of God's grace to a ruined world as proclaimed now, the Gospel of the kingdom preached after the removal of the Church must both be distinguished from the everlasting Gospel. The Creator and not the creature is the alone object of worship, and that is the great and fundamental truth insisted upon here (vv. 6, 7).

(3) The fall of Babylon is next announced. The false, corrupt, apostate Church—the consolidated religious system of the future is the next link in the chain of events. But while briefly and tersely announced as “fallen,” it yet occupies a large portion of prophetic teaching, even more than that devoted to the beast (see Chs. 16, 17, 18, 19)—these portions give details of Babylon's character, doings, and doom. Here the simple fact of her fall is alone noted (v. 8).

(4) The worshippers of the beast and their awful doom.

Babylon having been destroyed the beast enters on a brief

career of wickedness and impiety. It knows no check. The beast is universally worshipped, but here we have the doom of those who do so. Vv. 10, 11 are unequalled in the Word of God for horror (vv. 9-12).

(5) The blessedness of the then righteous dead is announced.

They are just about to enter on their eternal scene of undying happiness. They will not have long to wait. “Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth,” i.e., from the time contemplated in the passage, just on the eve of the Lord's assumption of the kingdom (v. 13).

(6) The two closing stages in the history of this age are the harvest and the vintage. The former is first presented to view. The harvest of the earth is to be reaped. The separation of the vile from the precious, of the wicked from among the just is intimated in the harvest—a

discriminating judgment (see also Matt. 13:49). This judgment is executed by the Son of Man, His instruments the angels (vv. 14-16).

(7) The final scene is an awful one—judgment pure and simple. It is the time of Isa. 63, when the Lord treads the wine press alone—blood upon His garments and vesture, and vengeance in His heart. The carnage is so awful, the slaughter so immense that blood is said to reach to the bridles of the horses, and flows for about 200 miles. In Palestine and its vicinity will be witnessed the awful spectacle of apostate Jews and apostate Gentiles—Judaism and Christendom exposed to the utmost fury of an angry God.

These events are nigh at hand.