



FAITH PRINCETON SUNDAY SCHOOL

REVELATION 12:1-6 The Woman, Child & Dragon

SUNDAY, JUNE 28, 2026

REVELATION 12 Observation Worksheet

Chapter Theme _____

12 The Woman

1 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; 2 and she was with child; and she *cried out, being in labor and in pain to give birth.

The Red Dragon

3 Then another sign appeared in heaven: and behold, a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and on his heads were seven diadems. 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.

The Male Child

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

Enduring Word Commentary: Revelation 12: The Woman, the Child and the Dragon

A. The woman.

1. (1) The woman is described in celestial images.

Now a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars.

a. **Now a great sign appeared:** This is the first of seven signs that John relates, and is described as a **great sign** (*mega semeion*). In Revelation chapters 12, 13, and 14 the main figures of the Great Tribulation are described, and this **great sign** introduces the first of the seven:

- The woman, representing Israel.
- The dragon, representing Satan.
- The man-child, referring to Jesus.
- The angel Michael, head of the angelic host.
- The offspring of the woman, representing Gentiles who come to faith in the Tribulation.
- The beast out of the sea, representing the antichrist.
- The beast out of the earth, representing the false prophet who promotes the antichrist.

b. **A woman clothed with the sun:** Because John plainly said this is a **sign**, we don't expect this woman to appear literally on the earth. God will use this sign to communicate something to John and to us. Women often represent religious systems in Revelation.

- *Jezebel* is associated with a religious system promoting false teaching ([Revelation 2:20](#)).

- The *Great Harlot* is associated with false religion ([Revelation 17:2](#)).

- The *Bride* is associated with the church ([Revelation 19:7-8](#)).

c. **A woman clothed with the sun:** This woman has been associated with many different religious ideas. Roman Catholics claim this woman is Mary, pictured as the "Queen of Heaven." Mary Baker Eddy (the founder of Christian Science) said she was this woman.

- i. It is common in Roman Catholic art to represent Mary as standing on a crescent moon with **twelve stars** around her head.

d. **A woman clothed with the sun:** Scripturally, this **woman clothed with the sun** should be identified with Israel, according to Joseph's dream ([Genesis 37:9-11](#)). In that dream, the sun represented Jacob, the moon represented Joseph's mother Rachel, and the eleven stars were the sons of Israel which bowed down to Joseph. In this sign with **twelve stars**, Joseph is now among the other tribes of Israel.

- i. In other Old Testament passages, Israel (or Zion or Jerusalem) is often represented as a woman ([Isaiah 54:1-6](#), [Jeremiah 3:20](#), [Ezekiel 16:8-14](#), and [Hosea 2:19-20](#)).

2. (2) The woman gives birth.

Then being with child, she cried out in labor and in pain to give birth.

a. **Being with child:** Later in the chapter, it is clear that this child born of Israel is Jesus (*She bore a male Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron*, [Revelation 12:5](#)).

b. **She cried out in labor and in pain to give birth:** The **pain** described refers to the travail of Israel at

the time of Jesus' birth (under Roman occupation and oppression).

B. The dragon.

1. (3) A fearful, powerful dragon appears.

And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads.

a. **Another sign appeared in heaven:** Again, we are reminded that this is a **sign**. The creature here was not literally a **great, fiery red dragon**, but the dragon represented his nature and character.

i. His description "symbolically suggests his fierce power and murderous nature... a picture of the fullness of evil in all its hideous strength."
(Johnson)

b. **Seven diadems on his heads:** This dragon had great power (**seven heads and ten horns**) and claimed royal authority (**seven diadems**). The crowns represent his presumptive claims of royal authority against the true King. *He* wants to be considered a king.

i. "From the similar description given in [Revelation 13:1](#) and the parallel references in [Daniel 7:7-8](#), [20](#), [24](#), it is clear that the revived Roman Empire is in view... The seven heads and ten horns refer to the original ten kingdoms of which three were subdued by the little horn of [Daniel 7:8](#), who is to be identified with the world ruler of the great tribulation who reigns over the revived Roman Empire." (Walvoord)

2. (4) The dragon looks to the earth.

His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born.

a. His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven:

Many believe this describes one-third of the angelic host in league with Satan (*his angels* of [Revelation 12:9](#)). This army of angelic beings in league with Satan makes up the world of demonic spirits.

i. "God never made an evil being; but He made angels, principalities, and powers capacitated for mighty joys and distinctions in His glorious domain, yet with free will, implied in the very creation of moral beings, which they could exercise for their everlasting weal or woe. Many have remained steadfast, to wit, 'Michael and his angels.' But some abode not in the truth, but revolted against the rule of Heaven, and became unchanging enemies of God and His Kingdom."
(Seiss)

b. To devour her Child as soon as it was born:

The attempt to **devour her Child** was initially fulfilled by Herod's attempts to kill Jesus as a child ([Matthew 2:16-18](#)). It was also fulfilled throughout Jesus' life as Satan attacked Him ([John 8:58-59](#) and [Mark 4:35-41](#)).

C. The child.

1. (5) Jesus' ministry is described by its earthly beginning and end.

She bore a male Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. And her Child was caught up to God and His throne.

a. **A male Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron:** Clearly, this refers to Jesus Christ, the Messiah. He rules the world with a **rod of iron** ([Psalm 2:9](#) and [Revelation 19:15](#)).

b. **She bore a male Child:** This refers to Jesus' birth. **Rule all nations with a rod of iron** refers to the triumphant return of Jesus. By stating the

starting point and ending point of Jesus' earthly work, John alluded to all that stood in between.

i. "After a conflict with the Prince of this world, who came and tried Him, but found nothing in Him, the Son of the woman was taken up to heaven and sat on the right hand of God. Words can hardly be plainer than these." (Alford)

c. **A male Child:** This is obviously Jesus. This means that the *woman* of [Revelation 12:1](#) cannot be the church, because Jesus "gives birth" to the church, not the other way around. The *woman* must therefore either be Mary or Israel, the only two "women" who could have "given birth" to Jesus. The rest of [Revelation 12](#) will demonstrate that this woman is Israel, not Mary.

2. (6) The woman in the wilderness.

Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days.

a. Then the woman fled into the wilderness:

Persecuted by the dragon, the woman is protected by God in a **prepared** place for **one thousand two hundred and sixty days**

i. This helps us to understand with certainty that the *woman* is Israel and not Mary. How could Mary possibly flee into the wilderness in this way?

b. One thousand two hundred and sixty days:

This reference to a three and one-half year period connects these events with the final seven years of the [Daniel 9](#) prophecy. Since [Revelation 12:5](#) describes the ascension of Jesus, and [Revelation 12:6](#) describes yet-to-occur events in the 70th week of Daniel, between these two verses lies hundreds of years (our current period). This obvious "near-far" break in time is typical of

prophecy. Daniel's seventy week prophecy has such a break ([Daniel 9:24-27](#)).

c. **Into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God:** Some believe this **place** in the **wilderness** is the rock city of Petra, south of the Dead Sea. Reportedly, Christian businessmen have stocked the place with food and evangelistic tracts written in Hebrew.

d. **Prepared in the wilderness:** **Prepared** uses the same ancient Greek word Jesus used in *I go to prepare a place for you* ([John 14:2-3](#)). This demonstrates that God's careful planning works on earth as well as in heaven.

©1996–present *The Enduring Word Bible Commentary*
by David Guzik –