

SUMMARY NOTES ON THE CONTENT OF REVELATION 12-13

1. We may divide the chapters on this line:
 - 12:1-6...the heavenly signs
 - 12:7-12...the heavenly warfare
 - 12:13--13:18...the continuance of the struggle in heaven on earth.12:7-12 is a parenthetical portion explaining the action of vs 13 in the light of verse 6. There is in them a short commentary on the warfare of these past ages and it is sketched like this:
 - yesterday...the dragon waited to devour the child (12:4)
 - today.....he accuses the brethren (12:10)
 - tomorrow...he will seek to exterminate the people of the woman(12:1!
2. The time feature is significant. in chapter 11 we have the two witnesses and their work covering a period of three and one half years. The time of the trouble of the woman is a similar period but it would seem to be obvious that it is not the same period. Many scholars think that the ultimate triumph of the two witnesses (11:11) is the sign that signals the end of the dragon's power is near (12:12) and that he then makes this drastic move. The two 3½ year periods are thought to constitute a 7 year span and this is associated with Daniel's seventieth week. It may be assumed that the seed of the woman (I am speaking of persons, not the Lord) are much less persecuted during the time of the two witnesses and much more persecuted after it.
3. The warfare itself is not easily described but included in it are:
 - vigorous persecution
 - attempted annihilation
 - the erection of a false worship center
 - the combining of all earthly powers (to some extent)
 - the compulsive worship of the beastThose who are not cooperative in this are represented as overcoming the Dragon by the blood of the Lamb (12:11) and having the testimony of Jesus (12:17), being written in the book of Life (13:8)
4. Divine deliverance marks the difficulties of this age...first of the man child, second of the woman, and third of the seed. That is not to say that the physical persecution, etc., will not touch these but that rather it will not overcome them and the Lord's will will be enacted in spite of the difficulties.
5. The identifications of personnel in these chapters is sometimes troubling. My own are these: The dragon is certainly the devil (12:9), the woman is Israel (12:1, compare with Genesis 37:9), the child is the Lord Jesus (compare 12:5 with Psalm 2), the brethren (vs 12) are those who in all ages have been opposed by the devil, the seed (12:17) are essentially those of the remnant and in greater detail the 144,000, the beast from the sea is the Anti-Christ (13:1) and the other beast (13:11) is the false prophet. There are discussions on these and not all believers agree so the rule is to be kind and willing to allow others to study for themselves. This is how I see it but I do not claim to have the last word.
6. That the dragon and his two beasts are imitators of the Holy Trinity seems very plain.