

Sermon to the saints of God at Topeka – Sunday, October 1, 2017

The two wonders, the birth and a war (continued)

Picking up from last Sunday, beloved:

And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: - Rev. 12:3-4(a)

This 'wonder', or sign, or symbol, runs parallel with the great wonder or sign of verses one and two (the Woman), and is very closely related to it. As the woman is the symbol of the visible Church throughout time, this wonder symbolizes the history of the mighty antagonizing power with which the Church has ever contended, and which has always been set to thwart her progress and destroy her hopes. It isn't possible to have a complete view of the great wonder in verse 1 and 2 without some corresponding account of the second wonder. Hence, they appear one before the other – the one helping to describe the other by contrast. We know who the great dragon is – there is no mystery there:

And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan... - Rev. 12:9

The attributes that frame this wonder paint a vivid picture of His Majesty the Devil, complete with the enormity and pervasiveness of all his force and power that we must be educated about – and every word of the vision is pregnant with meaning. This isn't a matter to be taken lightly - it is vital that we know the nature embedded in this word picture of attributes.

Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices. – 2Cor. 2:11

Dragon - The English word dragon appears in both the Old (Hebrew) and New (Greek) Testaments. The word in the Old Testament that is rendered in English as 'dragon' is: *tanniyn* (tan-noon'), and it is used to describe:

- Pharaoh, King of Egypt - Eze. 29:3, Isa. 51:9
- Nebuchadnezzar - Jer. 51:34
- Satan (figuratively) - Isa. 27:1, Ps. 91:13

In the New Testament, the English word 'dragon' only appears in the Revelation (Rev. 12 is the first mention), and always and only refers to Satan. The Greek is *drakon* (drak'-own) – which is just the Greek forefather of our word, getting picked up in Middle English usage (English is somewhat of a mongrel language, partly made up of bits and chinks of other languages).

Great - Seiss has some pretty powerful words to help us with this some of this wonder's attributes, so I will draw help from his writings in this area:

Seiss: (In the realm of intelligent beings) there are but two distinct and essentially diverse confederations — two empires, with two primal heads. On the one hand sits the Almighty and ineffable Jehovah, whose majesty transcends all human thought or comprehension; his being, eternal; his nature, perfect; his throne, absolute; to whom "every creature which is in the heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and upon the sea," in one form or another, is compelled to give the blessing, and the honour, and the glory, and the dominion, for all ages. But, on the other hand, stands a mimic god, a creature, indeed, and not at all beyond the Almighty's government and control, but one of the sublimest of angelic beings, a prince among the celestial hierarchies, set against God, seeking to overturn heaven, aiming to supplant the kingdom, authority, and rightful worship of the great Eternal, himself grasping for the reins of universal sovereignty. We tremble as we think of the awful daring. The ambition and adventure of earthly despots in setting out to conquer this world, is startling; and because of what men have done towards accomplishing it, history calls them "great." Yet here is a being, who has adventured upon the exploit of conquering the universe, of wresting creation from its Maker! Under the mysterious economy of God, he has also been enabled to make mighty strides towards the realization of his fell purposes. Principality after principality, in the celestial realms, succumbed, and fell in line beneath his banner. A third of the very stars of the heaven (angels) joined his cause, and followed in his train. The appointed lord and sovereign of the earth at the beginning (Adam) was betrayed into his power, and all earth's naturally engendered children were made his born slaves and servants. And so there now exists a mighty confederation of evil, made up of angels and men, disembodied and in the flesh, numbering millions of minions of disloyal spirits, who burden our atmosphere, and overspread our planet with disorders, anarchy, misrule, darkness, gloom, wickedness, sorrow, death, and ten thousand embitterments of existence, from which uncounted creatures sigh, and groan, and cry to be delivered! Long ago, indeed, an effectual check was put upon the growth and sway of this impious coalition in heaven (and in the decrees

of God, the unalterable determination stands, to uproot and destroy it utterly and eternally, in due course). (Yet) only when we have surveyed the dimensions of an empire so gigantic, and counted the cost at which alone its hold could be broken, are we in position to estimate the greatness of that fell spirit, who created it out of his own subtle deceit and unholy ambition, sits as its head giving force and direction to all its parts, and wields it with a genius and will inferior only to that of eternal uncreated Mind. Ah, yes, the Dragon is "great."

Red - The Greek put as 'red,' here, means something closer to fiery, or fiery red.

Seiss: We look next at his colour; for nothing in the description is without significance. This Dragon is red, the hue of fire and blood. This was the color of the horse whose rider was to take peace out of the earth, who carried the great sword of execution, and who filled the world with bloodshed and slaughter. (Rev. 6:4.) It tells of flaming heat, of intensity of fierceness, of bloody administrations. And this well describes the inmost nature of Satan, as everywhere portrayed. He is a fierce and murderous being, cruel, bloodthirsty, and ever intent on destruction. Jesus says, "He was a murderer from the beginning." (Jn. 8:44) There has never been a murder, but he caused it. There has never been a sanguinary war, but he instituted it. Every blight of human happiness, every failure of human peace, every sorrow of human life, has come from him. All the fiery passions that rankle in men, and break forth in deeds of violence and blood, are his inspirations. Never a being has been perverted from the beneficent object of its existence, never a soul has lost its Creator's image or gone down to perdition, never a life has been disabled or extinguished, never a heart has been broken or a wretchedness enacted, of which he is not the primal cause. All graves, all tears, all mutilations and dismemberments of earth's families, nations, or the race, are results of his doings and malignity. And when we think of the blood that has been shed, and the murders committed, since Cain raised his hand against his brother's life; how rapine, and plunder, and violence have disgraced and tormented the world in every age; what hellish devastations war alone has wrought; how human society has been continually (plagued) and cursed with intemperance, ignorance, uncleanness, and vice; and remember that all these, with all the calamities, misfortunes, and sufferings of time and eternity, have their source in Satan, and are but outbirths, enactments or results of his spirit, how could a truer characterization be given of him, than that of a monster, indyed with flames and blood! He is red, for he is the Satan, the Devil, the Apollyon.

Seven heads (wearing seven crowns) - The head is the governing power, and implies rule. When crowned, it implies political rulership.

Seiss: *These seven heads of the dragon are all crowned heads. He is an imperial personage. Each one of his heads has on it a diadem, indicating imperial rulership and autocratic administration. And just so far as these heads show themselves on earth, terrestrial government is implied. The number of these crowned heads is seven, which is the number of dispensational fulness, the earthly complete number. Hence we have in these heads the symbol of the entire imperial government of this world from beginning to end, the universal secular dominion of the earth in all periods. They are seven heads, in the same sense that we read of "the seven Spirits of God" — a manifold unity. And they are the Devil's heads. All sovereignty is, indeed, of God, but, in this world, Satan has usurped much of it. When he pointed out to Jesus "all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them," and offered them as a compromise and compensation to the blessed Christ if He would but "fall down and worship" him, it was not mere boast and false pretense. Three times the Saviour pronounces him "The Prince of this world" (Jn. 12:31; 14:30; 16:11). Its governments, therefore, above all, must be in his power, and pertain to his administration. Good elements, in a greater or less degree, may here and there be in them, and sometimes they may largely conform to what is right and true; if now and then modified, so that his presence is not so conspicuous, and his influence repressed, it matters not. He is the great usurper, and one or the other of his numerous heads has been under and in every temporal crown that ever swayed the sceptre of sovereignty on earth, save only the Israelitish theocracy - and hence the image before us presents him as wearing the diadems of all the dominions of this world. And through these world-powers he puts himself forth over against the kingdom of God.*

Ten horns – They represent the strength or power to harm, wound or afflict (as distinct from earthly rulership, itself).

Seiss: *Horns are the weapons of animals, their means of inflicting injury. The "four horns" in Zechariah's vision, were the powers which devastated Palestine, "scattered Judah," and injured, oppressed, and destroyed the people of God. (Zech. 1:18-21.) And such are the horns of this Dragon. The number of them is ten, the number of worldly completeness, especially in the line of worldly evil. All the tyrannies, oppressions, and hard inflictions that have tortured mankind, from the beginning to the end of them, are thus ascribed to Satan. They are his horns, with which he gores, and wounds, and scatters, and destroys. Every manifestation in the world, in the line of violent and oppressive injury or mischief, is from the Devil. And whatever the persons, combinations, or powers, whether governmental or otherwise, by which the damage is inflicted, they are the Devil's horns, which he has been*

using with mighty effect in every age, and is still using, and will use, till the great judgment sits, and he is put out of the way.

***And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth:
- Rev. 12:4(a)***

These are different from the stars in the crown of the Woman - those stars were her coronal gems (which may represent the angels, or messengers, of the churches throughout time – as were the 7 stars in the hand of Christ at Rev 2); these are ‘the stars of heaven’ — or particular stars. They are not literal stars, as this is still part of the ‘wonder,’ or sign. I believe that what is being spoken of here are *the angels*. These are truly ‘the stars of heaven.’ When God laid the foundation of the world, we are told that ‘the morning *stars* sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy’:

Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof; When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy? – Job 38:4-7

These were the angelic hosts. They are called *stars* because of their beauty and glory; and they are ‘the stars of heaven,’ as they pertain to heaven, and are the ornaments by which God decorated the celestial world.

And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day. – Jude 1:6

I believe, beloved, that this descriptive clause of the second wonder is recounting the fall of Satan as an attribute of his greatness – the power and pervasiveness of his ambition – his tail sweeping many angels into his cause. This wonder is speaking of *him*, though many angels followed after him. They were angels, too, and yet the rebellion is attributed to *him*, as the clear leader – it being driven by him. The fall of Satan, and that host of rebellious angels – though actually occurring prior to (some say well prior to) the fall of Adam, is now being recounted, not as re-telling the story, but as an attribute of that great wonder – the scope, devastation, and awesome wickedness of it.

Seiss: A time there has been when evil got in among these heavenly orders, infected many of these shining sons of light, soiled their robes, tarnished their crowns, silenced their songs, dislodged them from their glorious seats, and ate out of them every noble impulse and holy affection. How the sorrowful disaster came about, is suggested in various places, and distinctly indicated in the picture before us. Satan, one of the brightest and mightiest among them, was the cause and author of it all. Abusing his moral liberty, he dared to lift himself up against his Maker, and instituted a revolt against the throne and majesty of God. By his example, instigations, and persuasions, he infected others, imbued them with his spirit, and made them co-partners in his plot. Here then was this dragon exerting his strength in the heaven, insinuating his coils about the sons of light, and drawing them along with his presumptuous cause. These were “cast to the earth” — not the literal earth, for we are contemplating “a sign,” and we must interpret accordingly. Contrasted with the visible heavens, the earth is simply the lowest place — the ground — the base. For a star to be cast down to the earth, is to be plucked out and thrown down from its setting as a star. And so these rebel angels have been plucked from their places, dethroned and abased. Hence we read of them as “reserved in chains, under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day.” (Jude 1:6.) Having failed voluntarily to keep to their proper place, they are now kept against their will, in the power and purpose of God, for a doom not yet fully executed. They lost their heavenly principality (or, the third heaven referred to in a sermon preached from this pulpit on 11/29/2015). In place of their starry brightness they are now darkness, which clings to them, as chains to a prisoner, and holds them for eternal punishment. They still roam at large, particularly about our earth, and in the atmosphere which surrounds it; for the devil “goeth about” to do mischief. But, like tethered cattle, or chained dogs, their liberty is bounded, and they can go no further than that tether’s length. And this is the casting down and disability which the picture before us symbolizes.

and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. -Rev. 12:4(b)

This is the last clause of the two great ‘wonders,’ in Rev. 12. The posture and state of each, as expressive of enduring throughout the ages, is a powerful component of the signs, here.

Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. – Ps. 2:1-3

Seiss: And yet one feature more is given in this picture, to wit, **his attitude and bearing toward the Church of God**. How intensely does this sum up the whole history of the case in all the ages of time! The Church and the Devil, the kingdom of heaven and the powers of darkness, have ever been the two great antagonizing forces on the earth. The one is the spirit of mercy, embodied in the work of man's deliverance; the other is the spirit of malignity, going about to crush and kill every tendency, power, or prospect of man's salvation. We go back to the beginning of the world, and contemplate the excellent sacrifice of Abel, "by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts" as of an heir to a blessed immortality. But the Dragon is there, enraged that such a seed should come from among men. Envy, hate, and fratricide he stirs up in the sullen heart of Cain, till murder's hand is put forth for the first time in our world, and the meek and holy believer's blood is shed by his own brother, for no other reason than that in him was brought forth a child of eternal life and princehood. With the seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob was lodged the promise of spiritual sonship and glorious dominion. Out of them was to be developed a seed to redeem and rule the world. But as the time approached for them to take their place according to the covenant, lo, the claws of this same Dragon were upon them, clenching them tighter and tighter to keep them down, and giving forth imperial edicts for the slaughter of all their infant sons, to defeat what God had spoken. We recur to Bethlehem, as the great Head and chief of all this divine seed appears. We hear the angels sing and the shepherds rejoice. We see the stars giving unusual indications, mighty sages of a far-off land coming to lay their royal treasures at his feet, and everything aglow with a sense of the wonderfulness of the event. But the Dragon is there, with rage inflamed, and eager to devour. In Herod he inquires, and plots, and sends his executioners to slay all the children in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, to make doubly sure of reaching this child's life, and destroying this whole seed forever. So has it also been in all succeeding time. While Jesus was going up and down among the villages of Palestine, fulfilling the prophecies and maturing God's plans for begetting a people for Himself, the earthly powers about him were ever prowling and plotting to destroy both him and his work, and finally seized him, killed him, and sealed up his mangled body in the sepulcher. When, by the Spirit of God, he rose again, and gave new commissions and endowments to his apostles, threatening and slaughter pursued them, and the sword, the cross, and the stake awaited them. Ten mighty persecutions fell on Christians throughout all the jurisdiction of the Caesars. The earth was repeatedly deluged in martyr blood. And what was it all but this seven-headed and ten-horned Dragon confronting the travailing woman, determined to make an end of her royal seed! And even to this day and hour, the old serpent lies coiled in the Church's path, and in the forms of a pretended superior science, a false philosophy, a perverted Gospel, and

many an ugly persecution, still strikes, assails, and mightily struggles to crush the meek Galilean's power from the earth, and keep the God-child from his royal destiny and dominion. So true is it, that the dragon (ever stands) before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.

Beginning at verse 5, we are no longer looking at the two 'wonders'. Whereas the descriptors of them in the first 4 verses involve the historical posture of both the woman and the dragon – in order to shape these two wonders or signs in our minds, I believe that verse 5 starts a new oracle – or a sequence of actual occurrences that follow in line with other future occurrences of the Revelation described as part of '*shew(ing) unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass*' (Rev. 1:1), rocketing toward the restitution of all things.

And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne. And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days. – Rev. 12:5,6

At verse 5, the woman births her man child - the rapture of the (up until that moment) invisible church that has existed within the visible (God's true elect), and they are taken up to their throne. From then forward the visible church consists of only the sealed Jews, which then flee to the wilderness in verse 6 - they now becoming the only possible object of Satan's rage and mission to devour, as the man child, or God's elect glorified, is no longer available to him in any way (because of the war that begins in verse 7).

And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. – Rev. 12:7-9

I look at this passage far differently than I used to. Most mainline expositors view this as a recounting of Satan's fall from his first estate. The more I have looked at this, beloved, the more I am convinced that this is not simply a restatement of Satan's original fall from third heaven that is characterized in verse 4. This is a new oracle – that helps contextualize the former oracle of verse 5 and 6, and which further sets the stage for Satan's desperately wicked persecution of the sealed Jews as he is now literally grounded to

earth, without a shred of access to any others of God's true elect. I believe this is a pronouncement of a war in heaven (the heavens, not third heaven), that must shortly come to pass – that is, at or around the time of the birth of the man child.

Who were the combatants? Michael and *his* angels fought against the dragon and *his* angels. There are those expositors who put forth arguments that Michael is none other than the Lord Jesus Christ. The concept of *arch angels* is well beyond the scope of this sermon, both in terms of scriptural analysis and length, so I will not give the evidence and arguments against Michael being Christ in this case. I will, however, present one piece of scriptural evidence that I believe gets right to the core that the two cannot be one and the same. The book of Jude refers to a small-scale prelude to this war in heaven at the end times:

Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee. – Jude 9

Here it is said of him that “*he durst not* bring against (the devil) a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee.” This shows a clear distinction between Michael and the Lord; it also shows a limitation, or restraint upon Michael which would apply only to a creature and a subject, and not to the Almighty Son of God. Christ could and did say, “Get thee behind me, Satan,” but Michael dared not, calling for the Lord's rebuke instead. The dispute centered around the body of Moses; this contention, here between Michael and Satan (which, remember – literally means ‘accuser’), is that there is reason to believe that Moses is not dead. While he did “die in the mount,” (Deut. 32:50) according God's commandment, he was seen alive in the days of Christ's ministry on the mount of the Transfiguration, seen “*in glory*,” and hence in resurrected, or translated form. He must therefore have been raised again from the state of being asleep in Christ and his body in the grave; raised in advance of the general resurrection of the saints, as Enoch and Elijah were translated before the general translation of saints at the sounding of the last trump. And if there is scriptural merit to this belief, the dispute between the archangel Michael and the Satan - the accuser - “about the body of Moses,” was a contention about his resurrection. The holy combatant stands for the recovery of that body from death – the fulfillment of scriptural promise, and the wicked stands resisting, or accusing, perhaps either of: 1) Moses' lack of worth in receiving that promise; or 2) the efficacy of God to deliver upon it; or 3) in building a case that faith of Moses was self-serving and counterfeit (as he did precisely in the case of Job). Whatever the case, it was a powerful forensic contention – nothing like we frail humans can imagine in the form of a mere ‘debate club.’

This was for *real* – for all the marbles. The exact parties are named in this prelude, and a fierce contending over the same subject in one individual case, also ends up being the case of the saints in general. Moses’ resurrection and glorification was the subject of combat then, and now the resurrection and glorification of the saints in general is the cause of the war here. It is in immediate connection with this birth of the man-child, and its being ‘caught up unto God, and to his throne,’ that this ‘war in heaven’ comes on.

Seiss: It is Michael again, joined now by all his angels, that here stands up in behalf of the true people of God emerging into resurrection life and glory; and it is the same Old Serpent, stirring up now all the power of his kingdom to hinder and prevent the sacred seed of faith from attaining their promised exaltation. There is also every reason why the whole strength of the great adversary should be interposed to prevent this glorious coming forth of the children of God to immortal glory and power. With the dominion of death broken the whole empire of darkness breaks with it, the reign of hell is dissolved, and the victory of redemption is complete. With the curse of mortality and corruption thus swallowed up of life, the devil’s sway is (nearly) gone, his kingdom mutilated, and all his malignant hopes against the Church overwhelmed. To yield here without the most stubborn resistance would be to give up the aim of all his plans and endeavours since he first tempted man in Paradise, to let his whole empire collapse, to permit the chief power of his dominion to go by default. Hence his rallying of all his forces. Hence his most determined resistance just at this point. And hence this “war in heaven.”

While it is the fiercest of wars – no death occurs; these are immortal beings, engaged in perhaps the most intense spiritually-informed and driven forensic battle ever. The object of this war, for Satan, is continued access to the ether and outer space in accusing the brethren, and thereby a desperately wicked hope of continuing every device – temptation, doubt, bitter *accusations* - against their liveliest of hopes, which are now being fulfilled: he wants to devour the man child.

Seiss: Every saint of God embraced in this Man-Child was born a sinner, and by sin forfeited the favour of God and a blessed immortality. How can the Almighty be just and true to His nature, laws, and threatenings, and yet lift these people in honour and glory from their graves, receive them to His throne, and give them place in the heaven of His holy administrations? Here is the devil’s strong point, with which he ever assails men, and with which he here assails all the celestial powers. His line of battle is shown in the statement that he accuses the brethren, the saints, by day and by night. The great thunder of his tremendous (barrage) is, that these people are not fit for and not worthy of such honours; that God disowns His holiness, and casts dishonour on His throne by awarding to such a

people such a portion and such a destiny; that all reasonable being and intelligence is set at nought and outraged by such a proceeding. This is “the dismal hiss of fiery darts,” flying “in flaming volleys,” and vaulting either host. Accusation, accusation — keen, daring, deep, and clamorous accusation, subtly insinuated, and with infernal rancour hurled, is the artillery which belches forth with all the desperate energy of hell.

In Satan’s original fall, he and the angels who were persuaded to take up his cause and follow him were cast out of *third heaven*; that is, out of the heavenly realm reserved for Almighty God and his holy angels. Those wicked angels, along with their leader, have had from that time until the time of this future war, free reign and dominion in second heaven (the space below the waters separating third heaven from all that is below it), the earth’s atmosphere *and* earth. (For a more in-depth scriptural explanation of the ‘three heavens,’ you can, again, refer to the sermon preached on 11/29/2015). Now Satan is literally being *cast down onto the earth*; thereby having no access to those who have now been changed and have been lifted into the air to meet their Betrothed - the air that they now inhabit, and through which Christ will shortly come, is free of the dragon’s access to them. And shortly to come, he will be cast down even further by Christ at Armageddon, into the bottomless pit, to be on complete lock down – and utterly without influence - during the entirety of Christ’s millennial reign.

And there is scriptural evidence, right after the announcing of the war, that this war is not the same event, or simply a restating of Satan’s fall (as I submit to you that the ‘wonder’s’ descriptor, given at verse 4, was).

And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. – Rev. 12:10

This had to have been ‘post-fall.’ And the rejoicing now done in heaven, and the warning of woe pronounced toward them which are still upon the earth, lend even more evidence to this effect.

Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time. – Rev. 12:12

For now, at his defeat in the firmament by Michael and the holy angels, and subsequent casting down, Satan's only recourse is to turn all his attention, however vain, toward the hot persecution of the only visible church left to which he has access (literally *on* earth): the sealed Jews (who are now seen as the Woman, or visible church in the earth). Millions of times more vicious, ravenous and dangerous than the strongest, fiercest and most rabid of junk yard dogs, Satan has now no other object of his rage than that church on earth, and makes war with *her* – incensed and mad with bad intent, as that same junk yard dog would be – oblivious to the thick chain that tethers him to a distance.

And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child. And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent. And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. – Rev. 12:13-17

This cluster of verses really is deserving of its own full sermon analysis, but time fails here (perhaps one of our brothers will undertake that great help at a time). The woman is helped greatly by the Lord, in this time of hot persecution – given wings (supernatural help) to fly from him, temporal nourishment that would no longer be otherwise available to her, and spiritual nourishment that is the real sustenance of God's. The timeframe of a time (one year), times (two years) and half a time (a half year) is roughly the timeline (3.5 years) left until the battle of Armageddon, where Satan will be completely stripped, by Christ, of all power, influence or even participation in the affairs of men and angels for a thousand years. The water cast out of the serpent's mouth – as a flood after the woman – is obviously an assault or assaults, perhaps even military. Egypt rising against Babylon was described thusly in scripture:

Who is this that cometh up as a flood, whose waters are moved as the rivers? Egypt riseth up like a flood, and his waters are moved like the rivers; and he saith, I will go up, and will cover the earth; I will destroy the city and the inhabitants thereof. – Jer. 46:7,8

And Nebuchadnezzar coming against Tyre and Sidon was described in similar fashion by the Lord:

Thus saith the LORD; Behold, waters rise up out of the north, and shall be an overflowing flood, and shall overflow the land, and all that is therein; the city, and them that dwell therein: then the men shall cry, and all the inhabitants of the land shall howl. – Jer. 47:2

In this same wilderness, when God's anger was visited upon Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, for their rebellion, it is written:

And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods. – Nu. 16:32

The Lord has made the earth swallow large amounts of stuff up in his providential dealings. So the woman is supernaturally sustained and protected from a great flood of persecutions at Satan's fever pitch of desperation. The stage is now set for the rise of Antichrist and Satan's energizing, harnessing and commandeering of all his remaining resources and devices to make war with the remnant of the Woman's seed.

Thank you for this opportunity to speak with you on these pressing matters of Christ's revelation of Himself. It is the joy and rejoicing of our hearts to meditate on such things.

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. – Ps. 1:1,2

The word 'law' there, is the Hebrew word *torah* (to-law), which is commonly used by the Jews to mean the law given unto Moses at Mt. Sinai (also the books of Moses, or first 5 books of the Old Testament), but the definitions given for this word in Strong's start with:

- instruction, direction (human or divine)
- body of prophetic teaching
- instruction in Messianic age

I love you all.