

## Chapter 12

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Thus far in Johns' vision, we have been taken through seven thousand years of earth's existence. We have been shown the dispensations of Enoch, Noah, and Moses. We continued through the meridian of time and clear through to the second coming of Jesus Christ. Chapter twelve can cause some confusion to the reader, in that it, in a sense, starts the vision all over. The first part of the vision, that was shown to John, included only events that occurred during the telestial existence of man, from the fall of Adam to the second coming of Christ. It did not offer much explanation as to why things occurred, or what their purposes were, only that they occurred or were to occur. It was a history from a temporal perspective. This part of Johns' vision starts with the pre-mortal existence of man. It explains how Satan came into existence, and defines his goals and objectives. The rest of Johns' vision covers the section of time that has already been covered in the first part of his vision. It continues with the great millennium and the final exaltation of the righteous. The second section of John's vision looks at mankind's existence from a more spiritual perspective.

**Verse 1:** *"And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars:"*. Before we actually study this verse, it is important that we note that the prophet Joseph Smith corrected this verse in his inspired translation of the Bible. He rewords the verse as follows; *"And there appeared a great sign in heaven, in the likeness of things on the earth; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars (Inspired Joseph Smith Translation of the Bible, Revelations 12:1)"*. First, let us recognize that this is not the first time that John has used the symbolism of the sun, moon and stars together. In the Book of Revelations chapter 6 verses 12 and 13, John speaks of the great apostasy (see commentary on page 35) and says, *"...the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood; And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind"*. The sun can take on several symbolic meanings, all of which are closely related. It often represents the Son of God, or the Celestial Kingdom (Gods' glory), or the Power of God (The Priesthood). Black is usually used to represent unrighteousness; however it can also be a symbol of mourning or sadness. Sackcloth of hair was worn anciently as a sign of mourning or sadness (2 Samuel 3:31). After great warning, the priesthood and glory of God, were taken from the earth, leaving men in a state of mourning. The moon is used the represent the light and knowledge of the gospel which became as blood, symbolizing its adulteration. As we all know the great apostasy brought



about the loss of many plain and precious truths. Throughout the book of Revelation, John uses the symbol "stars" to refer to church leaders and Gods' servants. Here we find that the leaders of the ancient church would fall to the earth. This represents the fact that they did die. He compares their deaths to a fig tree casting her untimely figs. This suggest that their lives were cut short. As we know most of the ancient leaders were martyred. The earth is now left without the priesthood authority, without the gospel knowledge, and without the direction of Gods' servants. There is a definite contrast between the use of the symbolism in chapter six and the symbolism in this passage. This passage says that "*a woman*" was "*clothed with the sun*". The word woman is often used to symbolize the organization of the church here on the earth. Christ often referred to the church as his bride, and himself as the bridegroom. They have the relationship of husband and wife, or man and women, as Christ is the head of the church, so is the man head of the women. "*Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, which took their lamps, and went forth to meet the bridegroom (Matthew 25:1)*". The fact that John says that the woman, or the in reality the church, was clothed with the sun would indicate that she had the true gospel of Jesus Christ along with all the power and authority associated with it. There are many churches on the face of the earth, even in the time of Christ there were different factions of the Church. There were the Pharisees and the Sadducees just to name two. The real question is whether or not they have the gospel and priesthood of Jesus Christ. In this passage of scripture also speaks of the moon, or the knowledge of the gospel, as being at the feet of the woman, or the church. The symbolism of being at ones feet symbolizes control, ownership, and submission. The fact that the knowledge of God is at the feet of the church would say that the church has at its' disposal all of the knowledge, unadulterated, necessary to return to our Father in Heaven. Finally, we find the symbol of the stars used. This passage says that the church, or as John says "*the woman*", has "*upon her head a crown of twelve stars*". Like the passage in chapter six, the stars refer to the leaders of the church. The crown likewise refers to leadership. The fact that there are twelve leaders on the crown, which sits on the head of the woman, would also symbolize that these twelve leaders sit at the head of the church. It is almost elementary at this point to realize that these twelve stars represent the twelve apostles of the church, who as we have read in the previous chapter, were given the keys to the kingdom of God here on earth. We can easily see that the two passages, the Book of Revelation chapter six (6), verses twelve through thirteen (12-13) and the Book of Revelation chapter twelve (12), verse one (1), that refer to the symbols of the sun, moon, and stars, refer to the same thing; however under different circumstances.

The passage in chapter six refers to the great apostasy, while this passage obviously does not refer to a time of apostasy, but rather a time of restoration. The next question we must ask is which restoration is John speaking of? Probably a few eyebrows raised at the asking of that question; however, there is another restoration, other than the obvious restoration of the church in these latter days through the prophet Joseph Smith. Nephi indicated that the Lord will restore his kingdom to the earth twice. He said speaking of the latter day restoration, *"And the Lord will set his hand again the second time to restore his people from their lost and fallen state. Wherefore, he will proceed to do a marvelous work and a wonder among the children of men (2 Nephi 25:17)"*. When Christ came to earth at the meridian of time, he restored many of the things lost by apostate Israel. He restored the kingdom of God on earth. Both restorations clothed the woman (the church) with the sun (the power and authority of God). Both placed the moon (the knowledge of God) at her feet. And both were lead by twelve stars (twelve apostles) called of God. To understand which period of time John is referring to, we need but reference the upcoming verses, for they speak of apostasy. The latter day restoration, was the last and final restoration of all things. In other words, there will not occur another global apostasy. This leaves us with but one conclusion, John is speaking of the church in the meridian of time.

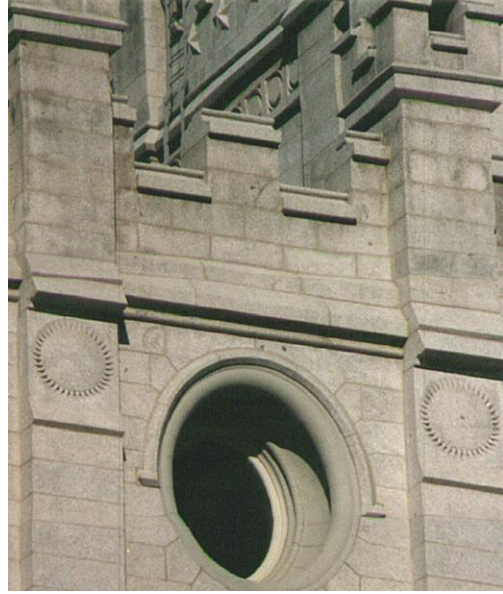
Now that we have established the meaning behind the woman and the symbols associated with her, we can better evaluate the first part of the scripture. John says, *"And there appeared a great wonder in heaven"* or *"And there appeared a great sign in heaven, in the likeness of things on the earth (JST)"*. Throughout the ages, the Lord has referred to His work as a wonder, a sign to man that they might know Him. The prophet Isaiah prophesied, speaking for the Lord, *"Therefore, behold, I will proceed to do a marvellous work among this people, even a marvellous work and a wonder: for the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their prudent men shall be hid (Isaiah 29:14)"*. What might we ask is this marvelous work and a wonder? Quiet simply it is the work and glory of the Lord. *"For behold, this is my work and my glory--to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man (Moses 1:39)"*. The Lord performs this work through worthy servants here upon the earth. The fact that there was a great sign in heaven would be to say that there was a great command or direction given from the heavens. Its results were in the likeness of things on the earth. In other words, the work of the Lord comes from the Heavens, or from the Lord Himself, and it will be carried out here upon the earth by mortal men acting under divine direction. Apostate Israel could not understand this principle and *"The Pharisees also with the Sadducees came, and*

*tempting desired him that he would show them a sign from heaven. He answered and said unto them, When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather: for the sky is red. And in the morning, It will be foul weather to day: for the sky is red and lowering. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times (Matthew 16:1-3)"?* The great signs of heaven surround the Lord's church; however, because they are often perceived to be in the likeness of earth, they are often disregarded by those that do not follow the prompting of the spirit. In the case of John's account, he might be referring, quite literally, to the Son of God. He could easily have been the great sign from heaven in the likeness of things on earth. For though he was deity, and possessed all of the rights, authority, and privileges that accompany such, he was a man. In the likeness of things here on earth, he felt pain, anguish, and suffering. He passed the test of mortality and left behind His restored church, holding the divine knowledge of Him and His divinity, and left behind leaders that were special witnesses to that fact.

One interesting note in relation with this passage, is the fact that the Salt Lake City temple of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints bears the same symbols as the woman that John described. Though the symbols, on the temple, of the Sun, the Moon and the Stars are often thought of as referencing the three degrees of Glory, I have often questioned this symbolic interpretation in that the temple which represents the House of the Lord can only be compared with celestial glory. True, we learn in the temple the path we must take to pass through the different degrees of Glory in order that we might reach the celestial kingdom; however, I don't believe that one could compare the House of The Lord to any other degree of glory other than the highest. If one were to use the same symbolic definitions applied to John's writing in the defining of the symbols on the temple, one might see a quite different picture.

### ***The Great Salt Lake Temple***

*The symbol of the Sun represents the power and authority of God.*



*The Symbol of the Moon represents the knowledge of God.*

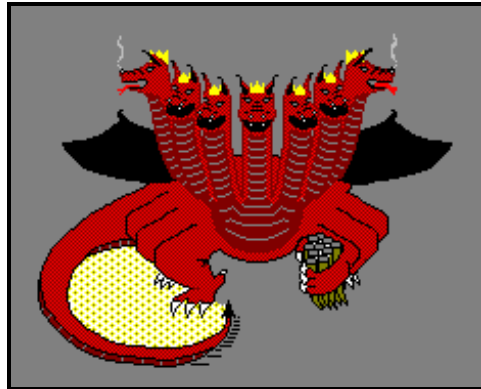


*The Symbol of the Stars represent divine leadership.*

**Verse 2:** *"And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered"*. John now uses the metaphor of a woman (with child) in labor to bring across the condition of the church. As stated in the previous verses commentary, the woman represents the church. Child birth is an excruciating process, that can easily be equated with suffering, pain, anguish, and torment. It can also be equated with joy, satisfaction, completion, and love. In the Book of Mormon we read, *"He shall see the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied; by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities (Mosiah :11)"*. Here we see a similar situation, where pain and anguish brings forth satisfaction and joy. In Johns' metaphor we are led to believe that John is associating it with pain rather than the joy. He uses the metaphor that she cried, indicating sorrow, sadness, and possibly a call for help. He says that the woman was travailing in birth. The word travail is defined as painful work or exertion, typically associated with hard labor. Anyone that has been through child birth, or even witnessed it, can understand when John says *"pained to be delivered"*. After several minutes of contractions, the pain of labor focuses all thought on the desired goal of delivery. *"A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world. And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you (John 16:21-22)"*. In this case I might speculate that the woman, though burdened with labor, does not deliver a man child, but is rather delivered by him. *"Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child"*. In the Book of Revelations chapter twelve (12), verse five (5), we are given an idea of whom the man child is, *"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"*. Unmistakably, the child spoken of is the King of Kings, Christ, the deliverer. To explain Johns' metaphor in layman's terms one might say that the church, or the children of Israel, was faced with much torment, persecution, and iniquity. Its' leaders and followers did cry to God for deliverance from their labors, that they might be relieved of their burdens. For centuries the house of Israel looked forward to the day when their Messiah would come.

**Verses 3-4:** *"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 (Verse 3). And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to*

*devour her child as soon as it was born (Verse 4)".* Joseph Smith combined these two verse into one verse under the inspired version of the Bible which reads, *"And there appeared another sign 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. And the dragon stood before the woman which was delivered, ready to devour her child after it was born"*. Like most of John's writing, this passage is for the most part symbolic. Let us break down the individual symbols to understand the passage. We will first start with the *"great red dragon"*.



In this day and age dragons are considered for the most part myth. They find place only in fairy tales and fiction books. Few would accept that there is or was ever such thing as dragons on the earth. They are commonly thought of as fire breathing, loathsome creatures that rob cities of wealth, kill humans, and live in fiery caves in high mountain tops. One might wonder, when reading in several passages in the Old Testament, if there was, once upon a time, actually dragons on the earth. Whether there were such creatures or not, John adopts the symbol of the dragon in this passage. The dragon represents greed, worldly wealth, destruction, evil, power, and dominion. Similarly, the word red brings forth the symbolic meaning of death, sin, and wickedness. The fact that this red dragon is great, would indicate stature. Later in this chapter, John himself defines this symbol. He says, *"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 (Revelation 12:9)"*.

Now the dragon, or rather Satan, is symbolized with *"seven heads"*. The head can represent the following; **1.)** the mind or intelligence, **2.)** a leader or ruler, **3.)** place of leadership or rule, or **4.)** direction. Later in John's text, we find that he gives us a hint as to the meaning behind the seven heads. He says, *"And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains (Revelation*

17:9)". It is improbable; however, not impossible that John would define one symbol with another. We might assume that Satan's main area of control upon the earth is built upon seven mountains. That is to say that the city, or country by which the Adversary brings to pass most of his works will be built around seven mountains. Going by the time line in which chapter twelve has led us to at this point, we see that Christ's birth into the world is about to happen, and the Lords' children are under great persecution. The country or city by which the adversary brought to pass most of his desires during this time was the Great Roman Empire and the city of Rome. Coincidentally, the city of Rome is built upon seven mountains. If John defined the symbol of the "head", with another symbol, we can offer the following as possible symbolic meaning. The word mountain often refers to the wicked, individually or collectively. It can be used to symbolize a strong hold of a group, much like the temple is referred to as the mountain of the Lord. It can be used to refer to wicked nations. The prophet Ezekiel was told to prophesy against the wicked when the Lord said, *"Son of man, set thy face toward the mountains of Israel, and prophesy against them (Ezekiel 6:2)"*. He was also told by the Lord that the nations of the earth will create much violence with their wickedness as he said, *"And I will call for a sword against him throughout all my mountains, saith the Lord GOD: every man's sword shall be against his brother (Ezekiel 38:21)"*. If John was defining the symbol of the "head", with another symbol, "mountain", we might conclude that Satan will perform much of his work through seven wicked nations. Given the current time line in chapter twelve it would seem improbable that seven nations are involved; however, if the symbol is prophetic in nature, then the seven nations might yet arise.

Satan is also symbolized as having ten horns. Horns can be used in the symbolization of righteous and wicked people. In psalms we read of the Lord promising, *"All the horns of the wicked also will I cut off; but the horns of the righteous shall be exalted (Psalms 75:10)"*. What then is the meaning behind the horn? The symbol of the horn can be used to symbolize strength and power in the physical and spiritual sense. In the Old Testament the symbol of the horn is used by the prophet Ezekiel to symbolize a king. As we studied previously in this commentary, Ezekiel spoke of the last days and the final rulers of the wicked world in symbolic fashion when he said, *"And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings (Daniel 7:24)"*. John likewise defined the symbol of the horn as being kings, *"And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no*



*kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast (Revelation 17:12)".*

Finally, Satan is associated with seven crowns. Using word association, the word crown usually brings to mind royalty. And rightfully so, one symbolic definition for the use of the crown is rulership, royalty, dominion, and power. In the Old Testament, we find the crown used to symbolize the change of Kingship with all of the power and dominion associated with it. *"And he brought forth the king's son, and put the crown upon him, and gave him the testimony; and they made him king, and anointed him; and they clapped their hands, and said, God save the king (2 Kings 11:12)".* The crown can also refer to the top of one's head. In the famous story of Job, Satan was allowed to bring heavy trials upon Job, to prove whether Job would follow the Lord under any circumstances. One of the trials was recorded as follows; *"So went Satan forth from the presence of the LORD, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown (Job 2:7)".* Here we find that the crown is used to reference the top of the head. Since a crown sits on the crown of the head the meanings behind both symbols are useful. Interestingly enough, the crown is often thought to be associated with the symbol of the horn. This relationship is thought to happen because of the ray like spikes that are usually found around the crown. *"And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space (Revelations 17:10)".*

The number seven is used in this passage of scripture, and it too has a symbolic inference. The word seven in Hebrew is *sheva*, and could also be translated as "to take an oath". Often this number is used to symbolize it's alternative translation. It can represent covenant making, or quite simply the devotion or dedication to something. As previously stated in this commentary, the number seven can also symbolize completion and perfection in that the earth was created in seven days, the temporal existence of the earth is seven dispensations. In the case of this passage, the number seven could imply the devotion to Satan and/or the fact that the symbols used by John represent Satan's complete and entire forces.

**Verse 5:** *"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".* She, or rather the church, brought forth a man child. In order to understand the full meaning of Johns' passage, we need to first understand the significance of a man child. In ancient societies, a male child was considered a choice blessing unto the parents. Not only was that male able to carry on the family name and wealth, but males were the strength of the family. Families looked to the males to provide essential elements of life as well as leadership. Some cultures

have even taken it as far as killing female infants to insure a male domination in the family. The fact that the church brought forth a man child is highly significant. The man child would represent preservation, strength, deliverance, and the supply of essential elements. It is probably not too difficult to see that the Savior of the world is the only person in the history of the church that could fulfill that role to its full measure.

The rest of verse five reinforces that the Savior is the man child spoken of by John. John explains that the man child shall rule all nations with a rod of iron. Isaiah had long since prophesied of the day when Christ would rule the nations. He said, *"Who raised up the righteous man from the east, called him to his foot, gave the nations before him, and made him rule over kings? He gave them as the dust to his sword, and as driven stubble to his bow (Isaiah 41:2)"*. Likewise the prophet Ezekiel said concerning the Kingdom of God, *"It shall be the basest of the kingdoms; neither shall it exalt itself any more above the nations: for I will diminish them, that they shall no more rule over the nations (Ezekiel 29:15)"*. There is no doubt that there is and shall be only one that shall rule over all the Nations. The prophet Nephi spoke concerning the manner by which the Savior will rule the nations. He wrote, *"Know ye not that there are more nations than one? Know ye not that I, the Lord your God, have created all men, and that I remember those who are upon the isles of the sea; and that I rule in the heavens above and in the earth beneath; and I bring forth my word unto the children of men, yea, even upon all the nations of the earth (2 Nephi 29:7)"*? At first read through one might get the impression that John's description of the man child ruling with an iron rod and Nephi's description of the Lord ruling with his word, are opposites. An iron rod usual carries the connotation of force, and abuse; however, that is not necessarily the case here. The word iron symbolizes being unmovable, unchanging, and strength. The word rod represents straightness, exactness, and correction. Keeping this in mind, Nephi wrote, *"And it came to pass that I beheld that the rod of iron, which my father had seen, was the word of God, which led to the fountain of living waters, or to the tree of life; which waters are a representation of the love of God; and I also beheld that the tree of life was a representation of the love of God (1 Nephi 11:25)"*. We can now see the beautiful correlation between the symbols that John chose to describe the rule of the Lord and the actual way by which the Lord will lead his people.

John ends the verse by saying that the child was caught up to God and His throne. This was fulfilled after Christ was resurrected and returned to his disciples. After a period of instruction, he once again was taken from them, as it is written. *"And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received*

*him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven (Act 1:9-11)".*

It is interesting that though most scholars agree that the man child is Jesus Christ, Bruce R. McConkie suggest that the man child is actually the priesthood. He says that it is the priesthood, or the power of God, that shall rule all the nations. He also said that since the priesthood was taken from the earth at the great apostasy, the representation of the manchild being caught up to God is fitting. I would not protest to Elder McConkie's theory, but add that the relationship between Christ and the priesthood are almost one and the same. I would also add that when symbolic terms are used in an accounting, they can often reference more than one thing. Hence, John might have chosen the word man child to symbolize both the Savior and the priesthood. Either way, the significance between the differences in the use of either symbol is probably negligible.

**Verse 6:**

*"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".* We are now symbolically shown that the church, or the women, fled into the wilderness. The word fled carries the idea of being chased after, or running from danger. The wilderness is defined literally as a uninhabited region, or an area where there is no man. From this we can conclude that the church was driven from mankind, hence *the Great and Global Apostasy*. The place she was driven, we are told, was prepared for her of God. Was not the Apostasy prophesied of for centuries? Was is not Paul that said, *"that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first...(2 Thessalonians 2:3)"*. How might we say that the Lord prepared a place for her? The laying of the Plates of Mormon into the Earth, and the preservation of the truths in the Bible are clear evidence that the Lord prepared a place for the church to hide during the great apostasy, for it's long awaited emergence. John says that the church will be withdrawn from man for the space of 1,260 days. For some reason, the scripture often used the term day to refer to a year. If this was the case, and the Apostasy really began in the year 400 AD when Moroni buried the record of the Nephites in the earth, that would mark the start of the restoration in the year 1,660 AD or during the age of what the scholastic world calls the beginning of the spiritual enlightenment which carried through the 1700's.

**Verse 7:**

*"And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels".* Again,

Johns' accounting deviates from the story at hand and the Lord educates John of things from the past that will help him and us to better understand chapter twelve.

Long before the world was created, we were intelligences. The Lord told Joseph Smith that, "*Man was also in the beginning with God. Intelligence, or the light of truth, was not created or made, neither indeed can be (Doctrine and Covenants 93:29)*". It is difficult to understand, but before we were mortals, and even before we were spirits, we were intelligences. Such intelligences are not created, but somehow have always been. The Lord organized these intelligences. Abraham said, "*Now the Lord had shown unto me, Abraham, the intelligences that were organized before the world was; and among all these there were many of the noble and great ones (Abraham 3:22)*". From these intelligences God created the spirits of men, and became a literal Father in Heaven. What is this thing that we call the spirit of man? The spirit of man is a body of much more refined substance than the body of flesh. The spirit appears as the body of flesh; however, lacks capability due to its refined nature. It is not some haze of matter or cloud of mist, but rather a body of elements far less tangible than that which we gained upon coming to this earth. Before Christ came to this world in the flesh, he appeared to the Brother of Jared and explained, "*Behold, this body, which ye now behold, is the body of my spirit; and man have I created after the body of my spirit; and even as I appear unto thee to be in the spirit will I appear unto my people in the flesh (Ether 3:16)*". This might help us understand that the creation of our spirits was just a step in the progression of our obtaining a body like the Fathers' which is an immortal, body of flesh and bones in full perfection. This progression is made possible by the Father, who is literally the father of our spirits. In the Old Testament we read, "*.....O God, the God of the spirits of all flesh,.....(Numbers 16:22)*". In a letter to the Hebrews, Paul asked a rhetorical question that illustrates this point, when he asked, "*Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live (Hebrews 12:9)*"? This might help many better understand their relationship to deity, as God is the Father of our spirits, God's relationship with us should be one of loving father and offspring. Is it not written, "*For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring (Act 17:28)*". We need but accept his love and guidance, for his divine intervention in our lives.

After Father created us spiritually, as he did with all things before they were created temporally (Moses 3:5), he taught and nurtured us. The Doctrine and Covenants teaches us, "*Even before they were born, they, with many others, received their first lessons in*

*the world of spirits and were prepared to come forth in the due time of the Lord to labor in his vineyard for the salvation of the souls of men (Doctrine and Covenants 138:56)". The Lord assured the prophet Jeremiah of his pre-mortal existence when he said, "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations (Jeremiah 1:5)". This tells us that our Father is very aware of us individually, not only does he love us, but he prepared us quite adequately for this mortal life. The prophet Alma taught in the Book of Mormon "And this is the manner after which they were ordained--being called and prepared from the foundation of the world according to the foreknowledge of God, on account of their exceeding faith and good works; in the first place being left to choose good or evil; therefore they having chosen good, and exercising exceedingly great faith, are called with a holy calling, yea, with that holy calling which was prepared with, and according to, a preparatory redemption for such (Alma 13:3)".*

To recap to this point we might summarize that we were all once intelligences. God, the Father, organized these intelligences and created spirits. These spirits, who were very literally a part of, are the offspring of Deity. Like a good earthly father, our Heavenly Father prepared us for our future. We were taught and prepared for a time when we would leave his tender arms, and find our selves left with but the skills and talents that we gained while in Fathers' presence.

As we neared the point in our progression that we were required to leave Father, and use the things that he had taught us, Father called all of his children together. This "Family Council", as one might call it, was one of enormous size. All of the spirits of men were involved. At this council, plans for our future were presented. It was shown to us that a earth would be provided, and upon this earth we would be sent, without a remembrance of our previous life, that we could grow and progress. It became apparent that Father knew we could only achieve the full measure of our potential if we were spotless, and perfect in our dealings during earth life. He also knew that we could not achieve this by ourselves. Part of the grand plan required that some heavenly help would be sent to aid us in our development. In the book of Moses we read of a conversation between the Lord and His prophet in which the Lord explains the first option presented to the spirit children of the Father. *"And I, the Lord God, spake unto Moses, saying: That Satan, whom thou hast commanded in the name of mine Only Begotten, is the same which was from the beginning, and he came before me, saying--Behold, here am I, send me, I will be thy son, and I will redeem all mankind, that one soul shall not be lost, and surely I will do it; wherefore give me thine honor (Moses 4:1)".* It would seem that when Father showed us

the need for divine intervention in order for us to successfully complete this life, one of his elder sons came forth. This son, who must have been quite intelligent and even great in the sight of the Lord, was known as "*the son of the Morning (Isaiah 14:12)*". The Doctrine and Covenants teaches that this, "*.... angel of God .... was in authority in the presence of God, (Doctrine and Covenants 76:25)*". This spirit or angel, who is known as Lucifer, presented a plan in which all of the children of God were to be forced to live through earth life in a perfect and spotless fashion. He would see to it that no one would stray from the course of life. We would not be free to chose our own path. And since Lucifer would see to this, he required of the Father that he receive all the Glory, Power, and Dominion of the Father.

After Lucifer presented his plan, another spirit came forward. This spirit was the eldest of our Father's spirits, even our oldest brother. He presented a plan of almost direct opposite to Lucifers' plan. It would seem that from the beginning Father had raised us to be agents unto ourselves. In other words we were allowed to make our own choices. Our eldest brother proposed that our progression continue to use that divine principle. The Father said, "*But, behold, my Beloved Son, which was my Beloved and Chosen from the beginning, said unto me--Father, thy will be done, and the glory be thine forever (Moses 4:2)*". He also proposed that a Savior be provided for mankind, so that as we made poor decisions in this life we might repent and retain our unspotted garments. Our Older brother also volunteered for the job of Savior. Note; however, that though he presented that plan, and offered himself as the Savior of mankind, the Glory was to be the Fathers. Was this plan not that which was taught from the very beginning? No one taught the plan of the redeemer better than Jacob. It is written, "*Wherefore, thy soul shall be blessed, and thou shalt dwell safely with thy brother, Nephi; and thy days shall be spent in the service of thy God. Wherefore, I know that thou art redeemed, because of the righteousness of thy Redeemer; for thou hast beheld that in the fulness of time he cometh to bring salvation unto men. And thou hast beheld in thy youth his glory; wherefore, thou art blessed even as they unto whom he shall minister in the flesh; for the Spirit is the same, yesterday, today, and forever. And the way is prepared from the fall of man, and salvation is free. And men are instructed sufficiently that they know good from evil. And the law is given unto men. And by the law no flesh is justified; or, by the law men are cut off. Yea, by the temporal law they were cut off; and also, by the spiritual law they perish from that which is good, and become miserable forever. Wherefore, redemption cometh in and through the Holy Messiah; for he is full of grace and truth. Behold, he offereth himself a sacrifice for sin, to answer the*

*ends of the law, unto all those who have a broken heart and a contrite spirit; and unto none else can the ends of the law be answered. Wherefore, how great the importance to make these things known unto the inhabitants of the earth, that they may know that there is no flesh that can dwell in the presence of God, save it be through the merits, and mercy, and grace of the Holy Messiah, who layeth down his life according to the flesh, and taketh it again by the power of the Spirit, that he may bring to pass the resurrection of the dead, being the first that should rise. Wherefore, he is the first-fruits unto God, inasmuch as he shall make intercession for all the children of men; and they that believe in him shall be saved. And because of the intercession for all, all men come unto God; wherefore, they stand in the presence of him to be judged of him according to the truth and holiness which is in him. Wherefore, the ends of the law which the Holy One hath given, unto the inflicting of the punishment which is affixed, which punishment that is affixed is in opposition to that of the happiness which is affixed, to answer the ends of the atonement-- (2 Nephi 2:3-10)". Truly, we are agents unto ourselves through the great plan of the redeemer, our elder brother Jesus Christ. He satisfied the purpose of this earth life as the Lord said, "And we will prove them herewith, to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them; (Moses 4:4)", while at the same time provided us a way to overcome the fact that we cannot do all things whatsoever the Lord our God shall commands us.*

After the two plans were presented, one was chosen. *"And the Lord said: Whom shall I send? And one answered like unto the Son of Man: Here am I, send me. And another answered and said: Here am I, send me. And the Lord said: I will send the first. And the second was angry, and kept not his first estate; and, at that day, many followed after him (Abraham 3:27-28)".* The plan of the Redeemer was accepted and the plan of Satan was rejected. Because of this rejection, Lucifer rebelled against God. He convinced many of Fathers spirits to follow him. The kept not their first estate. An estate is a large possession. In this case, it was what the lord had to offer them with earth life. They rejected the offer to come to earth and gain a body, for they did not accept the generous terms by which it was offered.

Though long in coming, this brings us up to speed on the topic for which John is addressing in the Book of Revelations chapter 12, verse 7. John says that there was a war in heaven. This war was over the plans presented in the grand council. It was not a mortal war, but rather spiritual. Though we were all involved, our earthly veil hinders us from remembering just how this war was conducted. I would not imagine warfare of guns and swords but rather a war of souls. Each side fighting over the spirits of the Father. Heading the battle for the

Lord was another of his elect spirits, Michael, whom we have previously come to know as Adam. Michael and others who were devoted to the plan of the redeemer, taught and pleaded with the spirits of the Father to follow the plan of salvation. Lucifer, likewise fought to gain the support of the spirits of the Father, that they might boycott the Fathers' plan and somehow force Father to use the plan of the adversary.

With this history in mind, one can more clearly see the meaning behind John's writing when he says, "***And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels***".

**Verse 8:** "***And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven***". Like any boycott or strike, there are two options. Either the owners or leaders recognize your petition as valid and accept it, or the owners and leader reject your petition, and even are forced to cut the ties between those petitioning and themselves. The later was the case with Lucifers' following and the Lord. Let us not suppose that this was a happy event, for even though the Lords' plan prevailed and in that case was a joyous victory, the Father had just lost one of his favored sons in Lucifer, and many others in those that followed him. From that day he and his followers were known as Perdition "***And was called Perdition, for the heavens wept over him--he was Lucifer, a son of the morning (Abraham 4:26)***". Though we in no way can understand the sadness that must have come over Father, those of us that have raised children, and have been forced to let them follow their own wayward plans, might have a glimmer of understanding of what Father when through.

The severing of ties meant that the rebellious following be removed from the presence of the Lord. "***And they were thrust down, and thus came the devil and his angels (Doctrine and Covenants 29:37)***".

**Verse 9:** "***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***". Satan is known by many names. Prior to his fall, he was known as Lucifer, the son of the morning. He was also called the Light Bringer. Both of which were titles of greatness. The name Lucifer, if translated, literally means the shining one. After his fall from grace he became Satan. He is also known by many other names. In the biblical text he is called the devil. The word devil is the translation from Greek words like slanderer, demon, and adversary. In Hebrew it is usually translated from the word spoiler. He is called the father of all lies, the deceiver, and the serpent. He is known as the great dragon, the man



of sin, and perdition. The Indians called him the evil spirit, while we call him the enemy. Here is a list of the names used in relation to the Devil;

<i>Names for the Adversary</i>	<i>Reference</i>
<i>Lucifer</i>	Isaiah 14:12
<i>Satan</i>	Revelation 12:9
<i>Devil</i>	Doctrine and Covenants 29:37
<i>Adversary</i>	1 Peter 5:8
<i>Prince of this World</i>	John 12:31
<i>Beelzebub (prince of devils)</i>	Mark 3:22
<i>Wicked one</i>	Matthew 13:38
<i>The Enemy</i>	Matthew 13:39
<i>Prince of the Power of the Air</i>	Ephesians 2:2-3
<i>Perdition</i>	Doctrine and Covenants 76:26
<i>Son of the Morning</i>	Doctrine and Covenants 76:26-27
<i>Old Serpent</i>	Doctrine and Covenants 76:28
<i>A Murderer from the Beginning</i>	John 8:44
<i>A Liar from the Beginning</i>	Doctrine and Covenants 93:25
<i>The Accuser</i>	Revelation 12:10
<i>The Avenger</i>	Psalms 8:2
<i>Apollos</i>	Revelation 9:11
<i>Abaddon</i>	Revelation 9:11
<i>Oppressor</i>	2 Nephi 13:12
<i>Destroyer</i>	Doctrine and Covenants 61:19
<i>The Great Red Dragon</i>	Revelation
<i>Offender</i>	Matthew 16:23
<i>Enemy</i>	Acts 13:10
<i>Foe</i>	Acts 2:35
<i>Wicked One</i>	Doctrine and Covenants 93:39
<i>Enemy unto God</i>	Moroni 7:12
<i>Father of Contention</i>	3 Nephi 11:29
<i>Evil One</i>	Helaman 8:28
<i>Author of All Sin</i>	Helaman 5:12
<i>Evil Spirit</i>	Mosiah 2:32
<i>Father of All Lies</i>	2 Nephi 2:18
<i>Devourer</i>	Malachi 3:11
<i>Tempter</i>	Thessalonians 3:5
<i>Mammon</i>	Matthew 6:24
<i>Star fallen from Heaven</i>	Revelation 9:1
<i>Angel of the Bottomless Pit</i>	Revelation 9:11
<i>Master Mahan</i>	Moses 5:49
<i>Belial</i>	Deuteronomy 13:13

**Enemy of all Righteousness**

Moroni 9:6

This verse continues with the commentary from the previous verse. Here we find that Lucifer, who answers to many names, was cast down to the earth with those spirits that chose to follow him. They came to the earth with out obtaining a physical body, or passing through a veil of forgetfulness. Consequently, they continue their efforts to lead away the spirits of Father. As John says, they are here to deceive the whole earth. The important thing to remember here, is that this was actually part of Fathers' plan. Father knew that there must somehow be opposition for us during our mortal probation, so that we might prove ourselves. Does not the Book of Mormon teach, *"For it must needs be, that there is an opposition in all things. If not so, my first-born in the wilderness, righteousness could not be brought to pass, neither wickedness, neither holiness nor misery, neither good nor bad. Wherefore, all things must needs be a compound in one; wherefore, if it should be one body it must needs remain as dead, having no life neither death, nor corruption nor incorruption, happiness nor misery, neither sense nor insensibility (2 Nephi 2:11)"*. Is it not incredible that the Lords' plan seems to only be benefited by the attempts of the adversary to destroy it? *"For behold, this life is the time for men to prepare to meet God; yea, behold the day of this life is the day for men to perform their labors (Alma 34:32)"*. The temptings and persecution of the Adversary prepares us to be worthy to return to God, if we but follow the teachings of the Savior.

**Verse 10:** *"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"*. The spirits of God must have gloried greatly to know that their freedom to choose their eternal destiny was theirs. They must have had great joy to know that the glorious plan of the Savior won over the plan of the accuser, or the devil, for were it not so, they could in no way achieve the final and desired goal of becoming as the Father.

**Verse 11:** *"And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death"*. The Joseph Smith Translation corrects the verse to say, *"For they have overcome him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; for they loved not their own lives, but kept the testimony even unto death. Therefore, rejoice O heavens, and ye that dwell in them"*. This scripture, though short, contains the secret to passing our mortal probation and returning to the Father. In order for us to overcome the influences of the adversary in this life, the

atonement sacrifice of Jesus Christ is our first and key element. Without the Saviors' gift we would all find that "...all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23)". We are then told that overcoming the accuser is also accomplished by the word of our testimony. The Doctrine and Covenants says, "*Nevertheless, ye are blessed, for the testimony which ye have borne is recorded in heaven for the angels to look upon; and they rejoice over you, and your sins are forgiven you (Doctrine and Covenants 62:3)*". Our testimonies, and the sharing of them, seem to be a key element in the partaking of the great blessings brought through the atonement. Last, but not least, we are to put the Lord and his word before that of our own lives. The Savior taught, "*For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul? For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works (Matthew 16:25-27)*". I don't think that the Lord means only that we should be willing to die for Him, but that we will also devote all of our time, assets, and talent for Him. Often, mortal men find it can be easier to die for the Lord than to actually devote our life to him. An event in the life of the Savior illustrates this point nicely. "*And, behold, one came and said unto him, Good Master, what good thing shall I do, that I may have eternal life (Matthew 19:16)*"? This question is probably one asked by every man at one point or another during his probation of mortality. How do I achieve the blessings of heaven? The Savior asked the man several questions, of which he answered correctly; however then "*Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me. But when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowful: for he had great possessions (Matthew 19:21-22)*". We must be willing to follow the Savior in all aspects of life for us to truly overcome the adversary. And once we accomplish that, then and only then can we find joy with the host of heaven.

**Verse 12:** Because the plan of the Father and the Savior was accepted and Satan and his host were cast out of heaven, the proclamation is issued, "***Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them***", for salvation and exaltation shall be made possible for all of the children of the Father. With this great, rejoicing proclamation comes also a warning, "***Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you***". The prophet Nephi explained that because Satan "*had fallen from heaven, and had become miserable forever, he sought also the misery of all mankind. Wherefore, he said*

unto Eve, yea, even that old serpent, who is the devil, who is the father of all lies, wherefore he said: Partake of the forbidden fruit, and ye shall not die, but ye shall be as God, knowing good and evil (2 Nephi 2:18)". After Adam and Eve fell "they have brought forth children; yea, even the family of all the earth (2 Nephi 2:20)", and Satan continued to work his plan of misery. He wishes every living creature on earth to fail their mortal probation. He wishes that all the inhabitants of the earth and sea will follow him and reap eternal misery. Like the old saying says, "Misery loves company".

Unlike us, Satan is well aware of the pre-mortal existence. He is also aware of the shortness of his time; for his time on earth is limited. Once the earth has completed it's probation, Satan will be bound. His time will be over and all his works will cease. It is for that reason that the Lord warns mankind that Satan is here "**having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time**". "*And thus he has laid a cunning plan, thinking to destroy the work of God (2 Nephi 2:27)*". Unto Satan and those that follow him, great shall be their disappointment when they see that the work of God cannot be destroyed and the Lord turn their works "*to their shame and condemnation in the day of judgment (2 Nephi 2:27)*".

**Verse 13:** It would appear that John is returning to the figurative story of the dragon and the woman. As previously discussed the dragon represents the devil, the woman represents the church of God, and the man child represents the priesthood of God. John says, "**And when the dragon**", or Satan, "**saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman**", or the church, "**which brought forth**", or possessed, "**the man child**", or the priesthood of God. Let us ask this question, Why would the main focus of Satan be to go after the priesthood of God? Is not his goal the bring to pass of misery to all mankind? The answer is quite simple, Satan knows that without the priesthood of God, we cannot be saved. Without it we cannot return to Father, and thus we would face an eternity of misery. The Doctrine and Covenants teaches, "*And this greater priesthood administereth the gospel and holdeth the key of the mysteries of the kingdom, even the key of the knowledge of God. Therefore, in the ordinances thereof, the power of godliness is manifest. And without the ordinances thereof, and the authority of the priesthood, the power of godliness is not manifest unto men in the flesh; For without this no man can see the face of God, even the Father, and live (Doctrine and Covenants 84:19-22)*". Without the priesthood, and the ordinances thereof, we cannot fulfill our full measure during our earthly probation. To every one that bears the priesthood, which in reality is the power of God on earth, the Lord has covenanted with them. If they will be true and faithful to the priesthood, the Lord will bless

them with all that he has. In other words, the priesthood is the key to our exaltation. This promise is given in the Doctrine and Covenants, and is titled;

### ***The Oath and Covenant of the Priesthood***

***"For whoso is faithful unto the obtaining these two priesthoods of which I have spoken, and the magnifying their calling, are sanctified by the Spirit unto the renewing of their bodies. They become the sons of Moses and of Aaron and the seed of Abraham, and the church and kingdom, and the elect of God. And also all they who receive this priesthood receive me, saith the Lord; For he that receiveth my servants receiveth me; And he that receiveth me receiveth my Father; And he that receiveth my Father receiveth my Father's kingdom; therefore all that my Father hath shall be given unto him. And this is according to the oath and covenant which belongeth to the priesthood. Therefore, all those who receive the priesthood, receive this oath and covenant of my Father, which he cannot break, neither can it be moved. But whoso breaketh this covenant after he hath received it, and altogether turneth therefrom, shall not have forgiveness of sins in this world nor in the world to come. And wo unto all those who come not unto this priesthood which ye have received, which I now confirm upon you who are present this day, by mine own voice out of the heavens; and even I have given the heavenly hosts and mine angels charge concerning you (Doctrine and Covenants 84:33-42)."***

Understanding the oath and covenant of the priesthood gives us an understanding as to why the adversary would seek to persecute and destroy the woman and the man child, or the church and the priesthood. It represents the fulfillment of God's plan and Satan's downfall. Only the priesthood can bring to pass our eternal progression, and only the priesthood can bind Satan in the last days.

***Verse 14:*** ***"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"***. Again, we see the symbol of the wilderness in regard to the great apostasy. In speaking of the return of the church from the long spell

of apostasy the Lord told Joseph Smith, *"And to none else will I grant this power, to receive this same testimony among this generation, in this the beginning of the rising up and the coming forth of my church out of the wilderness--clear as the moon, and fair as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners (Doctrine and Covenants 5:14)"*. This scripture presents, rather nicely, the symbolic meaning behind John's figurative accounting. We see that the re-establishment of the church in these latter days is referred to as being *".....called forth out of the wilderness (Doctrine and Covenants 33:5)"*. This interesting choice of symbol is quite appropriate when relating to the children of Israel. Thousands of years ago the children of Israel were held in bondage by Pharaoh, who easily could be compared to the futuristic Gog, or the past Nero. The Lord took the children of Israel under his wing, so to speak, and lead them out of bondage. He used the prophet Moses to lead his people to a choice and chosen land; however, the Lord saw that his people were not prepared for the blessing of the promised land. They began to apostatize, and stray from the laws of God. The Lord had Moses lead the children of Israel into the wilderness rather than into the promised land. *"Now this Moses plainly taught to the children of Israel in the wilderness, and sought diligently to sanctify his people that they might behold the face of God (Doctrine and Covenants 84:23)"*. Likewise, the saints of the ancient church began to fall prey to the teachings of the adversary. *"And after they have fallen asleep the great persecutor of the church, the apostate, the whore, even Babylon, that maketh all nations to drink of her cup, in whose hearts the enemy, even Satan, sitteth to reign--behold he soweth the tares; wherefore, the tares choke the wheat and drive the church into the wilderness (Doctrine and Covenants 86:3)"*. This part of John's accounting, is hopefully plain to this point. The wilderness represents the removal of the church. More specifically, the absence of truth. *"Behold, that which you hear is as the voice of one crying in the wilderness--in the wilderness, because you cannot see him--my voice, because my voice is Spirit; my Spirit is truth; truth abideth and hath no end; and if it be in you it shall abound (Doctrine and Covenants 88:66)"*.

Let us now consider the other symbols used in conjunction with the church (the woman) fleeing into the wilderness (entering into the great apostasy). John uses the symbols of wings, a great eagle, flying, being nourished, times, and the face of the serpent. The symbol of wings is common in biblical accountings. Earlier, in the Book of Revelations, we saw four beasts before the throne of God that had wings. These wings represented power, action, and movement. If the same symbolic meaning were applied here, it would say that the Lord blessed the church with power, action, and movement. The symbol of wings have also been used scripturally to symbolize the

protection of the Lord. The Lord told ancient Israel, "*Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself (Exodus 19:4)*". In the Book of Psalms we read, "*He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler (Psalms 91:4)*". The symbol of the eagle closely related to the symbol of the wings. Eagles are considered to be the King of the Sky. They represent power, and strength. How fitting is it that the Lord's protection is associated with the eagle? The eagle is the ultimate sign of power and strength. "*And he shall be led in paths where the poisonous serpent cannot lay hold upon his heel, and he shall mount up in the imagination of his thoughts as upon eagles' wings (Doctrine and Covenants 124:99)*". The fact that the church flew into the wilderness, might indicate that it was entering the wilderness by choice. It might also symbolize that it was hastening or rushed into the wilderness. The word nourished, is defined as providing a living thing with the food required to live and grow. The resurrected Lord told the Nephite people, "*O ye people of these great cities which have fallen, who are descendants of Jacob, yea, who are of the house of Israel, how oft have I gathered you as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and have nourished you (3 Nephi 10:4)*".

Below is a list of symbols and possible definitions that might aid in understanding this verse;

<b><i>Symbol</i></b>	<b><i>Possible Meaning</i></b>
<b><i>Woman</i></b>	<b><i>The Church of Jesus Christ</i></b>
<b><i>Serpent</i></b>	<b><i>The Adversary</i></b>
<b><i>Wings</i></b>	<b><i>Power, The Lord's protection</i></b>
<b><i>A Great Eagle</i></b>	<b><i>Power, Strength, and Protection</i></b>
<b><i>Wilderness</i></b>	<b><i>The Great Apostasy, Removal of Truth</i></b>
<b><i>Fly</i></b>	<b><i>Haste, protected movement</i></b>
<b><i>nourished</i></b>	<b><i>preservation, sustaining</i></b>
<b><i>Time</i></b>	<b><i>The period in which the priesthood was taken from the earth.</i></b>

**Verse 15:** "*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*". The serpent, or rather Satan, cast water out of his mouth. As stated in previous commentary, the representation of the mouth usually is symbolic of the person. In other words the water was issued from and by Satan. This water came after the woman, or the church, as a flood.

Water is used to symbolize purification and the essentials of life. In ancient Israel water was used to symbolize spiritual cleansing. In the Old Testament we read of many passages like this one from the Book of Numbers, *"And thus shalt thou do unto them, to cleanse them: Sprinkle water of purifying upon them, and let them shave all their flesh, and let them wash their clothes, and so make themselves clean (Numbers 8:7)"*. The symbolism of waters purification properties has been carried down to modern times, where we baptized in water for the remission of sins. The Savior taught that though water was an essential element to mortal life, the fulfilling of spiritual needs are essential for eternal life. *"Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life (John 4:13-14)"*.

In John's passage, he refers to Satan casting water from his mouth as a flood after the church, that the church might be carried away by it. Clearly, Satan would not purify the church, nor nourish it in any way. There must therefore be another symbolic meaning for the water. In the Book of Mormon, we read of Father Lehi's dream, where he saw a fountain of filthy water. *"And the angel spake unto me, saying: Behold the fountain of filthy water which thy father saw; yea, even the river of which he spake; and the depths thereof are the depths of hell (1 Nephi 12:16)"*. We can now see where water represents purification and goodness, dirty water represents wickedness, filth, and destruction. Moroni taught, *"For behold, a bitter fountain cannot bring forth good water; neither can a good fountain bring forth bitter water; wherefore, a man being a servant of the devil cannot follow Christ; and if he follow Christ he cannot be a servant of the devil (Moroni 7:11)"*. Based on this, we must conclude that the Adversary cast wickedness, iniquity, and the depths of hell after the church.

Not only did Satan come after the church, but he came after it as a great flood. The Lord has compared the numerous workers of iniquity, that war against the righteous, as coming as a flood. He said, *"So shall they fear the name of the LORD from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him (Isaiah 59:19)"*. The Lord used the flood in ancient times to destroy the wicked. The great flood has since been used to symbolize, mass destruction, and the all encompassing power of God. *"And, behold, I, even I, do bring a flood of waters upon the earth, to destroy all flesh, wherein is the breath of life, from under heaven; and every thing that is in the earth shall die (Genesis 6:17)"*. We might relate this symbolism to the attempts of the adversary to carry the church away.



Literally speaking, the Adversary sent forces of wickedness (water) in great numbers and in great power (as a flood) to rid himself of the church (carry it away). Isaiah spoke of the devil as a flood of mighty waters being cast down to the earth. *"Behold, the Lord hath a mighty and strong one, which as a tempest of hail and a destroying storm, as a flood of mighty waters overflowing, shall cast down to the earth with the hand (Isaiah 28:2)".* The wording, "carried away" might not immediately bring to mind destruction; however, look at the means by which the adversary was to carry away the church. He was sending a flood after the church, which symbolically stands for destruction, and through this destruction or flood, desired to carry away the church.

**Verse 16:** *"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".* The symbolism behind the earth opening her mouth and swallowing something is a representation of death. The Lord promised in many passages of scripture that death will follow those that act contrary to the commandments of God. In the Old Testament it is written of those that provoke the Lord, and says, *"But if the LORD make a new thing, and the earth open her mouth, and swallow them up, with all that appertain unto them, and they go down quick into the pit; then ye shall understand that these men have provoked the LORD (Numbers 16:30)".* The Book of Mormon prophesied, *"And they that kill the prophets, and the saints, the depths of the earth shall swallow them up, saith the Lord of Hosts; and mountains shall cover them, and whirlwinds shall carry them away, and buildings shall fall upon them and crush them to pieces and grind them to powder (2 Nephi 26:5)".*

**Verse 17:** John says that *"the dragon was wroth with the woman"*, in other words, Satan was angered by the church of God. What has the church done that would anger the adversary? It has led many of the Fathers' children, that he hoped lead astray, to a path in life that would lead to exaltation and eternal life. Because of his anger and frustration, John warns us that Satan *"went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ"*.

Let us not be deceived! The war that Satan has waged with the true and faithful is battling today, as strong as it ever was. Most of us picture war on battle fields with sword and guns; however the greatest war is the war for the souls of man. Peter wrote, *"Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul (1 Peter 2:11)".* Likewise, Paul wrote to the Romans and counseled, *"For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law*

*of sin which is in my members (Romans 7:22-23)". Satan would that he defeat the desires of our spirits. He knows that the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak, and it is therefore that he wages war against our souls. His weapons are not swords and rifles, but rather temptation, carnalness, light mindedness, and all manner of iniquity. He understands fully the misery and price that is associated with those that fall in the battle for the soul.*

As the Lord taught Joseph Smith, He unfolded a vision unto him. The prophet wrote, *"And while we were yet in the Spirit, the Lord commanded us that we should write the vision; for we beheld Satan, that old serpent, even the devil, who rebelled against God, and sought to take the kingdom of our God and his Christ-- Wherefore, he maketh war with the saints of God, and encompasseth them round about. And we saw a vision of the sufferings of those with whom he made war and overcame, for thus came the voice of the Lord unto us: They are they who are the sons of perdition, of whom I say that it had been better for them never to have been born (Doctrine and Covenants 76:28-32)".* Those entered into the covenants of the church of God and then fall during the great war for the soul face the greatest loss, in that they lose their eternal reward.

In the days of Rome, Satan waged a physical war with the saints, as he tried to whip their existence from the face of the earth. In the last days, it is prophesied that a great and evil king will come to power, *"And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practice, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people (Daniel 8:24)".* Though such wars bring about physical death, it would be far better to die a physical death in the battle against Satan than to die a spiritual death. We must remember that the only way that we can lose this war is to lose our testimony and conviction of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It is that which the adversary hopes to destroy.