

A Woman Clothed With the Sun

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If a physical woman was literally clothed with the sun, she would die immediately. Therefore the language in the title of this study is understood to be figurative, and it conceals various truths that are revealed to God's faithful and obedient servants according to His will (cf. Dan. 12:4). Not only is this woman clothed with the sun, she also has the moon under her feet and a garland of twelve stars on her head,

Now a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars (Rev. 12:1; NKJV used throughout unless otherwise noted).

The word "woman" is used to describe God's people, primarily spiritual Israel, and the Apostle Paul stated that this is a great mystery,

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it (her)²⁶ that he might sanctify (set her apart) and cleanse it (her) with the washing of water by the word,²⁷ that he might present it (her) to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish (Eph. 5:25-27; Ed. notes in parentheses).

For we are members of his (Christ's) body,³¹ 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.'³² **This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church** (Eph. 5:30-32; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

As a man leaves his father and mother to live in unity with his wife, so Christ left his heavenly Father for the purpose of marrying his future bride, the church. By Christ's sacrifice on behalf of repentant sinners, they can become "one mind" with him (Php. 2:5). Paul compared this spiritual relationship to a marriage in the physical realm. It is important to note that the word "church" means those who are called out of this present evil age by Almighty God (Gal. 1:4; Rom. 2:4b). It does not refer to a physical building, or religious organization,

This is that Moses who said to the children of Israel, 'The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from your brethren (through a descendant of Judah).'³⁸ This is he (Moses) who was in the **congregation** (SGD 1577; **called out ones; assembly of people**) **in the wilderness** with the Angel who spoke to him on Mount Sinai, and with our fathers, the one who received the living oracles to give to us (Ac. 7:37-38; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

The assembly of the nation of Israel is referred to as the "church in the wilderness" because it was a nation that made a marriage covenant with the Angel of God at Mount Sinai (Ex. 19:8). Unfortunately, they broke this agreement through their spiritual adultery with the pagan nations,

Then I (the Lord who married the nation of ancient Israel) saw that for all the causes for which backsliding Israel had committed adultery, I had put her away and given her a certificate of

divorce; yet her treacherous sister Judah did not fear, but went and played the harlot also (Jer. 3:8; Ed. note in parenthesis).

So the woman mentioned in Revelation 12:1, was clothed with the sun, which is a metaphor describing the “brightness” associated with the righteous acts of God’s obedient servants,

And to her (the woman representing God’s church) it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and **bright** (SGD 2986; **shining, brilliant**; cf. Ac. 10:30; Rev. 15:6), for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints (Rev. 19:8; Ed. notes in parentheses).

No human being could exhibit acts of righteousness unless the “sun of righteousness” gave himself as a ransom for every repentant sinner (Mk. 10:45),

But to you who fear My name The **Sun of Righteousness** (Jesus Christ) shall arise (SHD 2224; shine forth; dawn) with **healing in his wings** (ref. to the 6 wings of the seraph that healed Israel; cf. Nu. 21:8-9; bronze serpent – SHD 8315; *seraph*) (Mal. 4:2; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

But he (Christ) was wounded (pierced through) for our transgressions, he was bruised (crushed) for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon him, and **by his stripes** (blows that cut in) **we are healed** (Isa. 53:5; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

Therefore, the connection can be made between the Sun of Righteousness and repentant sinners who are pictured figuratively as being clothed with the sun. Next, the woman had the moon under her feet. This symbolism is used to show how she is supported, and it has to do with “faith” because the moon is used figuratively to describe faithfulness,

It (the throne of King David) shall be established forever like **the moon**, even like **the faithful witness** in the sky (Ps. 89:37; cf. Jn. 5:31-37; 8:18; 10:25; Ed. note in parenthesis).

The ultimate example of faithfulness is attributed to Jesus Christ. Consequently, the church is supported and strengthened by Christ who proved himself faithful to his heavenly Father, despite the many sorrows and suffering he experienced,

And from **Jesus Christ, the faithful witness**, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To him who loves us and freed us from our sins in his own blood (Rev. 1:5; emphasis added).

Though he (Christ) was a son, yet he learned obedience by the things which he suffered (Heb. 5:8; Ed. note in parenthesis).

It is Christ who provides the faith that is often lacking in the church of the Living God (1Tim. 3:15),

And the apostles said to the Lord, **‘Increase our faith’** (Lk. 17:5; emphasis added).

In fact, when Christ returns, it appears that faith among those loyal to Almighty God will be waning, just like the moon waxes and wanes as it goes through its phases every month,

...Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, **will he really find faith on the earth?** (Lk. 18:8b; emphasis added).

Peter's faith waned shortly after Christ told him to walk on the water. Something got between Peter and Christ, which resulted in him sinking into the water,

And Peter answered him (Christ) and said, 'Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water.' ²⁹So he said, 'Come.' And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus (Mt. 14:28-29; Ed. note in parenthesis).

As long as Peter relied upon Christ's authority and direction, he was able to stay afloat. But as soon as he looked elsewhere, he sank. Therefore, unconditional faith in Christ's authority, to provide direction to God's true church, is a prerequisite for anyone seeking to serve Almighty God. Placing faith in a human leader, or religious organization, will result in "spiritual drowning,"

Whoever comes to me (Christ), and hears my sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like: ⁴⁸He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the **rock** (symbolically representing Christ). And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded (well built) on the **rock**. ⁴⁹But he who heard and did nothing is like a man who built a house on the earth without a foundation, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it fell (collapsed). And the ruin of it was great (Lk. 6:47-49; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

So the moon, which is used symbolically to represent Christ's faithfulness to his heavenly Father (Ps. 89:37; cf. Rev. 1:5), is also identified with the woman in Revelation 12:1, which is the church. This symbolism is to remind the woman to exercise faith in the only leader that was delegated to her, Jesus Christ (Mt. 3:17; 17:5; Mk. 9:7; Lk. 9:35). Of course it would be much easier to trust someone who can be seen in a physical form, which explains why human leaders hold so much influence in the churches of this world. However, Christ mentioned that there would be some who trusted him even though he could not be seen by them. A reminder of this truth is witnessed every month at the precise moment of the conjunction of a New Moon, which is one of Almighty God's Holy Days. It is at this point in time that the moon cannot be seen, just as Christ cannot be seen by those who faithfully follow his leadership in their lives,

Jesus said to him, 'Thomas, because you have seen me, you have believed. **Blessed are those who have not seen** (Christ) and yet have believed (Jn. 20:29; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

God's people are reminded of this blessing when they observe every New Moon of every month (Col. 2:16). Following Christ's return everyone will keep God's Sabbaths, New Moon, and festivals,

And it shall come to pass that from one New Moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, all flesh shall come to worship before Me, says the Lord (Isa. 66:23).

Finally, in the symbolism of Revelation 12:1, the woman has a garland, or crown, of twelve stars. As stars are a symbol representing angels, this crown had twelve angels

on it,

...The seven **stars are the angels** of the seven churches (Rev. 1:20b; emphasis added).

These twelve angels are leaders of the twelve “spiritual tribes/families” of Israel,

Also she (New Jerusalem) had a great and high wall with twelve gates, and **twelve angels at the gates**, and names written on them, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel (Rev. 21:12; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

Presumably these twelve angels have been responsible, under Jesus Christ, for serving the twelve families of Israel since the beginning of the nation. They may be the angels referred to in the following scripture,

Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who foretold the coming of the Just One, of whom you now have become the betrayers and murderers, ⁵³**who** have **received the law by the direction of angels** and have not kept it (Ac. 7:52-53; emphasis added).

To summarize so far, the woman in Revelation 12:1 is associated symbolically with the brightness of the sun, which is a reflection of Christ’s redeeming work on behalf of his bride-to-be, and his future wife’s righteous acts made possible through his sacrifice. The moon is a witness of Christ’s faithfulness to his heavenly Father, which is then seen in the faith of the church toward their only leader. The twelve stars are loyal angels who have been faithful in serving the twelve tribes of Israel despite every obstacle over an extended period of time.

Finally the woman, who is the church, experienced pain related to Christ’s death and resurrection (Rev. 12:2). Specifically, the disciples during the time of Christ’s ministry suffered great emotional stress and were soon scattered following his execution. Christ used the analogy of a physical woman giving birth to compare the heartache his disciples would experience,

Most assuredly, I (Christ) say to you that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice; and you will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned into joy (after Christ’s resurrection).²¹ A woman, when she is in labor, has sorrow because her hour has come; but as soon as she has given birth to the child, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world.²² Therefore you now have sorrow; but I will see you again and your heart will rejoice, and your joy no one will take from you (Jn. 16:20-22; Ed. notes in parentheses).

So Christ used many parables, analogies, and metaphors to describe events that he wanted his disciples of all ages to understand. Therefore, the language used in scripture must be examined closely, and in context, to understand the intended message.

This document is the collaborative work of individuals who believe God's truth should be given freely (Mt. 10:8; 1Cor. 2:12; 2Cor.11:7; Rom. 10:14-21) and the message of the one true God should be made available to all nations (Mt. 24:14) as a prerequisite to the return of Jesus Christ as King of kings (Mt. 17:10; 19:17; Mk. 9:11; Lk. 1:17; Rev. 19:11-16).

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