

Revelation 12:14

‘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.’

This verse is a key verse in the understanding of the end-time. For many years some of us believed that this represented ‘the place of safety,’ during the last 3 ½ years before God’s Kingdom is established here on earth, where the church would be protected until Christ’s return, at a place called Petra in Jordan.

This understanding failed to consider and include quite specific scriptures that explain **where two quite separate groups of God’s people are** during this period before Christ’s return, eg. Revelation 15:2, *‘And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God.’* 14:1, *‘And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father’s name written in their foreheads.’* cf. Hebrews 12:22, *‘But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels.’*

These scriptures are quite clear that the resurrected Saints are taken to the Sea of Glass, in Heaven.

At first glance the words in Revelation 12:14 seem to indicate a period equivalent to that mentioned in verse six of the same chapter – 1260 days, or 3 ½ years. A similar period of time is indicated in Daniel 9:27, where a week (7 prophetic days of one year – 7 years in total) and half a week are mentioned. *‘And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.’*

Notice that in the midst of this week, *“The sacrifice and the oblation,”* cease. This is caused by *“the abomination that makes desolate,”* which we read of in Daniel 12:11, *‘And from the time that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days.’* (There is then a gap of 30 days till the resurrection.)

Luke 21:20 explains that this event is brought on by armies which surround Jerusalem. *‘And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh.’* It also marks the end of the church’s work, or sacrifice, which can no longer continue.

Jesus Christ Himself places this event, which we now know from Daniel 12 to be just over 3 ½ years before **His final** return to establish his Kingdom, **to just before the resurrection.**

How can we prove that?

Matthew 24 describes the first 5 seals of Revelation 6, in verses 1-15. These are not to be confused with the Great Tribulation, the seventh seal, which starts shortly after the armies surround Jerusalem in verse 15, *‘When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand).... ‘For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.’* (verse 21).

Notice then, that the first 5 seals must be the ‘tribulation of those days,’ because they are followed by the heavenly signs, in verse 29, *‘Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken’,* just as they are in Rev 6:12, *‘And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood.’*

Notice too that it is just **after** the ‘tribulation of those days’ and during the heavenly signs, that Christ arrives to gather in His Saints at the resurrection, Matthew 24:30-31, *‘And then shall appear the sign of the*

Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.'

This event is the sixth seal of Rev 6:12-17, '*And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and 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. And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and **hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?**'*

So, putting all these scriptures together, we can see that the abomination of desolation, Matthew 24:15, and soon after that, the resurrection, will take place roughly 3 ½ years before Christ finally returns from Heaven with His Saints to establish His Kingdom!

Now, back to Revelation 12:14. We **now** know that this verse includes the resurrection or changing of the Saints into spirit beings, if they are then alive, along with the resurrected dead, when they are taken to the sea of glass, where they are spiritually nourished for 3½ years, protected from Satan. Being spirit, this means the imparting of spiritual knowledge.

However, we can add more information from the actual Greek. Revelation 12:14, '*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.'*

The normal Greek word for time is *chronos*. Vines Expository Dictionary of N.T. words states, under 'Seasons,' page 333, "Broadly speaking, *chronos* expresses the duration of a period, *kairos* (the Greek word for time used in Rev 12:14) stresses it *as marked by certain features*." Those "features" are the Greek words used here for time(s). Greek interlinear translations render those words as "seasons" or "appointed times."

Sounds familiar? It should be. Serious Bible students recognise those words as the equivalent of the Hebrew word 'moed' – the "appointed times" or "seasons" of Genesis 1:14, that is, the Holy Days of God as listed in Leviticus 23.

Essentially then, the message of Revelation 12:14 is that the Saints are taken to a place where they are nourished [prepared spiritually] *for the space of time marked by the Holy Days which occur* during the 3 ½ years leading up to Christ's final return, to establish His Kingdom at the Feast of Trumpets!

Counting back from that point brings us to the Feast of Unleavened Bread, and to the time of the Wavesheaf Offering in Leviticus 23:11. This day marks the beginning of the firstfruit barley harvest in Israel, when we really should expect the Resurrection of God's spiritual Firstfruit Harvest, the full meaning of Rev 12:14, when we put all these scriptures together, '*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.**'*

What is this wilderness, where God's saints seem to be nourished for roughly 3 ½ years? The actual implication of the Greek is that "she might fly *through* [Greek 'eis'] the wilderness, *to* her place " **where she is nourished ...**" Strongs, 1519 'eis', a preposition denoting entrance into, in, to, towards, among, till, for. Now notice that the word "wilderness", is the Greek word **eremos**, which, used as a noun, has the same meaning as **eremia**, a place of solitude, uninhabited. She has to fly through the uninhabited place, to her place where she will be nourished.

It's interesting to see that God's prophets are often carried to such a place to see their vision eg. Isaiah

21:1-2, *'The burden of the desert of the sea. As whirlwinds in the south pass through; so it cometh from the desert, from a terrible land. A grievous vision is declared unto me; the treacherous....'*

Isaiah's vision is viewed after a whirlwind experience to a place in the future, where he views terrifying events. There is a reference in my King James margin here to a similar occurrence in Zechariah 9:14 and Revelation 17:3.

In Revelation 17:3, the Apostle John is carried into the future to witness specific end-time events, once again experiencing this "wilderness", or empty place, *'So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns'*.

In Zechariah 9:14-17 God arrives in a whirlwind to save His people, *14 'And the LORD shall be seen over them, and his arrow shall go forth as the lightning: and the Lord GOD shall blow the trumpet, and shall go with whirlwinds of the south,'* – actually it is the very same event as Rev 12:14, where God's saints are then carried to the sea of glass (Rev 14:1-5, 15:2), before the throne of God in heaven.

Travel **to and from** God's throne, seems to involve a "whirlwind experience", such as we have seen in films about time travel, crossing into parallel worlds, or different dimensions. Obviously the prophets knew nothing of such things and used their own experiences of awesome desert whirlwinds to depict that travel across empty space and time. This whirlwind experience through a vast empty place may be the "wilderness" through which the journey must be made to reach the "place where she is nourished" on the sea of glass, in heaven.

This verse could also have a dual meaning, in that, of those who flee from Jerusalem as the Beast's armies arrive, not all are actually qualified to take part in the First Resurrection, and will afterwards continue on, across the Jordan, where the Scriptures indicate they are protected and provided for, in the desert wilderness of Petra, or Bozrah, in Edom, modern Jordan, during the last 3 ½ years, eg. *'He shall dwell on high: his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure.'* Isaiah 33:16.

To understand more, read the article, 'The Resurrection – When?' and the End Time series.