

Revelation 12:10-17—The Basis of Antisemitism—Part 3

Revision

I have titled Revelation chapter 12 as, “The Basis or Mystery of Antisemitism” Antisemitism means the hatred of the Jews and the nation of Israel.

I'd like to remind you that Revelation chapters 6-19 describe the 7 year tribulation period from start to end, with some chapters moving the story forwards, and others simply describing the people, events and organisations that are a part of, or play a role in, the 7 year tribulation period. Chapter 12 is one of those descriptive stories or vignettes that takes a step back and gives us the big picture concerning Satan and his ongoing war with, and persecution of, Israel, starting at the time of Christ's first coming and then moving forward to the 7 year tribulation period, which is still future. Yet as we know, Satan has been attacking Israel ever since God called Abraham.

Also, just as a reminder, John writes the book of Revelation using signs and symbols that any Christian who reads their bible can figure out. Each sign or symbol has a literal meaning. It's like a code that just needs to be unlocked or deciphered before it can be read. That way, the message would be clearly understood by sincere believers in the church who use the correct method of interpretation. However, the message remains hidden from the world. This was especially important at the time it was written, during the time of the Roman Empire, because if they understood what it meant—God overthrowing the rule of the final Roman Empire—they would have killed them.

A part of what we studied last week was Revelation 12:10.

Revelation 12:10 NKJV

Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, “Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down.

We learned that, even presently, Satan has access to God's presence and spends much of His time condemning or accusing us. We learned that we are saved by the blood of Jesus. We were reminded that a true believer is someone who has repented of their sins. We learned that Jesus is our defence lawyer in heaven, who defends us from Satan's constant attacks. The basis of His defence is that the penalty for our sins, which is spiritual death or eternal separation from God, has been paid in full. Therefore, we are declared innocent. We are justified, Just-if-I'd never sinned. We have permanent right standing with God because Jesus paid the penalty for all our sins when He died in our place on the cross. It's like being found guilty of drunk driving but then set free because your fine had been paid in advance. You just walk out of the courtroom as a free man or woman. This is the case for everyone who has repented and asked God to forgive them. They are then adopted into God's family and belong to God.

We also learned that, at the half way point of the tribulation, Satan is cast out of heaven, permanently. Then, for the last 3 1/2 years of earth history as we know it, with human government, Satan will be allowed to overcome the saints and will cause havoc. But at the end of the 7 year tribulation Jesus returns to set up His kingdom and Satan is bound for 1,000 years.

The second main point from last week was that teaching or ideas have consequences. When we don't correctly interpret scripture, we often come to the wrong conclusions and therefore wrong applications.

Think about what the bible says our attitude towards the Jews should be. Consider Paul's example in:

Romans 9:1-5 NLT paraphrase

With Christ as my witness, I speak with utter truthfulness. My conscience and the Holy Spirit confirm it. ² My heart is filled with bitter sorrow and unending grief ³ for my people, my Jewish brothers and sisters. **I would be willing to be forever cursed—cut off from Christ!—if that would save them.** ⁴ They are the people of Israel, chosen to be God's adopted children. God revealed his glory to them. He made covenants with them and gave them his law. He gave them the privilege of worshiping him and receiving his wonderful promises. ⁵ Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob are their ancestors, and Christ himself was an Israelite as far as his human nature is concerned. And he is God, the one who rules over everything and is worthy of eternal praise! Amen.

Notice that Paul interprets prophecy literally. He still considers the Jews as God's chosen people. He has a deep concern for them, that they would be saved. He loves them. He would do anything for them. He is grateful to the nation of Israel because it is through the Jews that we have the Scriptures or bible, and the Messiah, Jesus.

Now remember how the well meaning theologians in the 3rd and following centuries stopped interpreting prophecy literally and invented "replacement theology." They falsely taught that the church has replaced Israel because God rejected Israel when they rejected Jesus as their Messiah. Their attitude toward the Jews radically changed. The Jews were now seen as the Christ killers, rejected by God and done away with forever. What was the result of this new antagonism towards God's chosen people?

The three anti-Jewish policies:

1. Conversion — stop calling yourself a Jew and convert to our religion or move out.
2. Expulsion — Jews have no right to live among us at all.
3. Annihilation — Jews do not even have the right to live.

This repeating cycle has gone on for almost 2,000 years, and unfortunately, the church was responsible justifying the many horrors committed against the Jews over the years. Remember that in Germany, at Hitler's rally's, they were holding copy's of Martin Luther's 65,000 word treatise called, "On the Jews and Their Lies". In it Martin Luther condemned and denouncing the Jews. Hitler, by waving this book around, was basically saying, "hey look, we are only doing what the bible tells us to do — destroy the Jews. Luther, the great man of God wrote it down in black and white." But how wrong Martin Luther and the other church fathers were, all because they didn't interpret the bible correctly. In particular they didn't interpret prophecy literally.

Getting false teaching into the church is one of Satan's favourite tactics, and he has been very successful. Remember, ideas have consequences. There is a reason why the bible places such an emphasis on truth and eliminating false teaching—because it hurts people. It either destroys them, or, it leaves them as baby christians all their lives—they never learn to feed on the meat of the word. They never mature in their relationship with God. They never make a real difference in this world. They never learn to overcome sin. They will get to heaven and not have much to show for their time spent down here on earth.

The solution to this is to not only go to a church that teaches thought the bible, and interprets it literally, but also read and study it for yourself. In the end, you are responsible for what you believe, how you live, and how much you enjoy your relationship with God. Consider:

2 Timothy 2:15-19 NLT paraphrase

¹⁵ Work hard so you can present yourself to God and receive his approval. **Be a good worker, one who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly explains the word of truth.** ¹⁶ Avoid worthless, foolish talk that only leads to more godless behaviour. ¹⁷ **This kind of talk spreads like cancer**, as in the case of Hymenaeus and Philetus. ¹⁸ They have left the path of truth, claiming that the resurrection of the dead has already occurred; in this way, they have turned some people away from the faith. ¹⁹ But God's truth stands firm like a foundation stone with this inscription: "The Lord knows those who are his," and "All who belong to the Lord must turn away from evil."

The secret to not being ashamed before God is two things:

1. Read and know your bible.
2. Obey what you know—put it into practice.

Reading your bible and growing in your understanding of it will show you what God expects of you. Then, it becomes your your logical or reasonable service or sacrifice, to give up living according to what the world considers good and right, and, instead, live according to what God, in His Word, says is good and right.

Let's read through Revelation chapter 12, quickly summarising what we have already covered, and then spend the majority of our time looking at the remaining verses, verses 12 - 17. But before we do, let's quickly go through the signs and symbols that are introduced in chapter 12. Remember that in the bible, signs and symbols are pictures or types that give meaning and insight to something.

The signs and symbols in Revelation chapter 12 explained:

- **The woman — representing Israel**
- **The dragon — representing Satan**
- **The man child — referring to Jesus**
- **The angel Michael — head of the angelic host**
- **The offspring of the woman — representing Gentiles who come to faith during the Tribulation**

Revelation 12:1-10 NKJV

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. ² Then being with child, she cried out in labor and in pain to give birth.

³ And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads. ⁴ His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born. ⁵ She bore a male Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. And her Child was caught up to God and His throne. ⁶ Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days.

⁷ And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, ⁸ but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. ⁹ So the great dragon was cast out, that

serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

¹⁰ Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, “Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down.

We talked about verse 10 last week. There is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus. Praise God.

The Tribulation Martyrs

Revelation 12:11 NKJV

And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.

Notice that the believers during the tribulation overcame Satan by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death. What this means is that when they were given the ultimatum, worship God or worship Satan, they were given the grace and courage they needed to boldly stand up for the truth that they believed—that if they died, they would go to be with Jesus in heaven. They made the ultimate sacrifice to remain faithful to God, they gave up their lives.

Application:

When your life is at stake, God will give you the strength to stand for Him, to be faithful unto death. If you live your life to glorify God, then in death you will also glorify Him. If you are faithful in life, then you will be faithful in death — God won't let you down. This doesn't just apply to the millions who will be martyred during the 7 year tribulation period, but also to the millions who have been martyred up to the present day, and the tens or hundreds of thousands of Christians who are martyred each year at the present time.

Revelation 12:12-17 NKJV

Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time.”

¹³ Now when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male Child. ¹⁴ But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent. ¹⁵ So the serpent spewed water out of his mouth like a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood. ¹⁶ But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth. ¹⁷ And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Satan is Judged—no more access to Heaven

Revelation 12:12 NKJV

¹² Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time.”

We previously learned in verses 7-9 we learned about this battle that happens at the half way point of the 7 year tribulation. Michael and his angels fight with Satan and his angels and Michael wins. This is a battle that happens in the heavenly realms. Satan has been permanently barred from having access to Heaven.

So, what does it mean when it says, “**he knows that he has a short time.**”? A short time until what? What would make him so angry? Matthew 8:29 gives us a big clue.

Matthew 8:29 NKJV

²⁹ And suddenly they cried out, saying, “What have we to do with You, Jesus, You Son of God? Have You come here to torment us before the time?”

Notice that even the devil and his demons know that there is a time when they will be judged. They already know that they only have a limited time before they lose their freedom to cause chaos and destruction, before they will be cast into the Lake of Fire where they will be tormented forever and ever. Did you realise that the Lake of Fire was never prepared for people, but rather only for the fallen angels or demons?

Matthew 25:41 NKJV

“Then He will also say to those on the left hand, ‘Depart from Me, you cursed, into **the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.**”

The need for repentance

People only go to Hell because they want to. God has paid in full the penalty for every man’s sins. People only go to Hell or the Lake of Fire because they refuse to repent of their sin. Please bear with me as I talk about repentance. It is my desire that people do not unnecessarily spend eternity in the Lake of Fire prepared for the devil and his fallen angels because they didn’t have a proper understanding of repentance. This is something that is not taught on much so I feel led to touch on it now. We’ll start with:

John 3:18-21 NLT paraphrase

¹⁸ “There is no judgment against anyone who believes in him. But anyone who does not believe in him has already been judged for not believing in God’s one and only Son. ¹⁹ And the judgment is based on this fact: **God’s light came into the world, but people loved the darkness more than the light, for their actions were evil.** ²⁰ All who do evil hate the light and refuse to go near it for fear their sins will be exposed. ²¹ But those who do what is right come to the light so others can see that they are doing what God wants.”

I think it’s important to give some examples of what repentance looks like and how it fits into a person’s salvation. Consider what Jesus asked of people. The rich young ruler wanted to receive eternal life. He even asked Jesus what he needed to do to receive it. But Jesus knew that he had an idol—money. Jesus asked him to give all his money away but he refused. His money was more important to him than his eternal salvation. Remember what John 3:19 says, “**people loved the darkness more than the light, for their actions were evil.**” He seemed like a great guy, but Jesus looked into his heart and saw evil.

Then, in contrast, there was Zacchaeus, the tax collector who was ripping people off. He too was seeking Jesus. But unlike the rich young ruler, he willingly and joyfully changed the way that he lived. To those who he had ripped off he gave back four times the amount in addition to giving away half of everything he owned. I don’t think that there would have been much left. What did Jesus say about him in Luke 19:9, “Jesus responded, “Salvation has come to this home today, for this man has shown himself to be a true son of Abraham.”

Giving half of his money away and changing his ways didn't save him, but it was evidence that his salvation was genuine. The hard thing for some is to know if their profession of faith is real or not. You will know if it's real if you are willing to give up the old life to live the new life. Christianity is not just about adding Jesus to your life.

“For the true Christian who is truly born again Jesus becomes your life, and anything that keeps you from Jesus must go. Sin and compromise must be dealt with.”

There are many nice people around, just like the rich young ruler in Matthew 19:6, Mark 10:17-27 and Luke 18:18-27, who are religious and are interested in spiritual things, but are unwilling to give up their idol, the thing in their life that is more important to them than God. God will not take second place in a person's life. A true confession is when a person confesses Jesus as their Lord (Philippians 2:11). Remember that “Lord” means “master”.

“If Jesus was never your master, then He was never your Saviour”

Thoughtfully consider the following verses:

1 Corinthians 6:9-11 NKJV

⁹ Do you not know that **the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived.** Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, ¹⁰ nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. ¹¹ **And such were some of you.** But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

For many people, accepting Christ as their Lord and Saviour is a very difficult decision—**And such were some of you.** Letting go of your old lifestyle and attitudes is a very difficult decision—but it is so worth it. What God offers is so much better than what the world offers.

Unfortunately, there is a lot of false teaching going around today that says that, if you just say a prayer, then you are saved. But that false teaching didn't apply to the rich young ruler back then, and it still doesn't apply to us today. This false teaching has resulted in many false converts, people who say they are Christians, who may actually really believe that they are Christians, but are not Christians. Consider the following verses:

Matthew 7:21-23 NLT paraphrase

“Not everyone who calls out to me, ‘Lord! Lord!’ will enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Only those who actually do the will of my Father in heaven will enter. ²² On judgment day many will say to me, ‘Lord! Lord! We prophesied in your name and cast out demons in your name and performed many miracles in your name.’ ²³ But I will reply, ‘I never knew you. **Get away from me, you who break God's laws.**’

Notice that the people who thought they were saved but weren't, were the people who had never repented of their sins. They *continued to* break God's laws. So why did they think that they were saved? Because they had made a verbal confession of faith, “Lord, Lord.”

One final scripture to bring this point home. It's Jesus teaching on the cost of being a disciple or follower of Jesus.

Luke 14:25-30, 33 NLT paraphrase

A large crowd was following Jesus. He turned around and said to them, ²⁶ “If you want to be my disciple, you must, by comparison, hate everyone else—your father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters—yes, even your own life. **Otherwise, you cannot be my disciple.** ²⁷ And if you do not carry your own cross and follow me, **you cannot be my disciple.**

²⁸ “But **don’t begin until you count the cost.** For who would begin construction of a building without first calculating the cost to see if there is enough money to finish it?

²⁹ Otherwise, you might complete only the foundation before running out of money, and then everyone would laugh at you. ³⁰ They would say, ‘There’s the person who started that building and couldn’t afford to finish it!’...

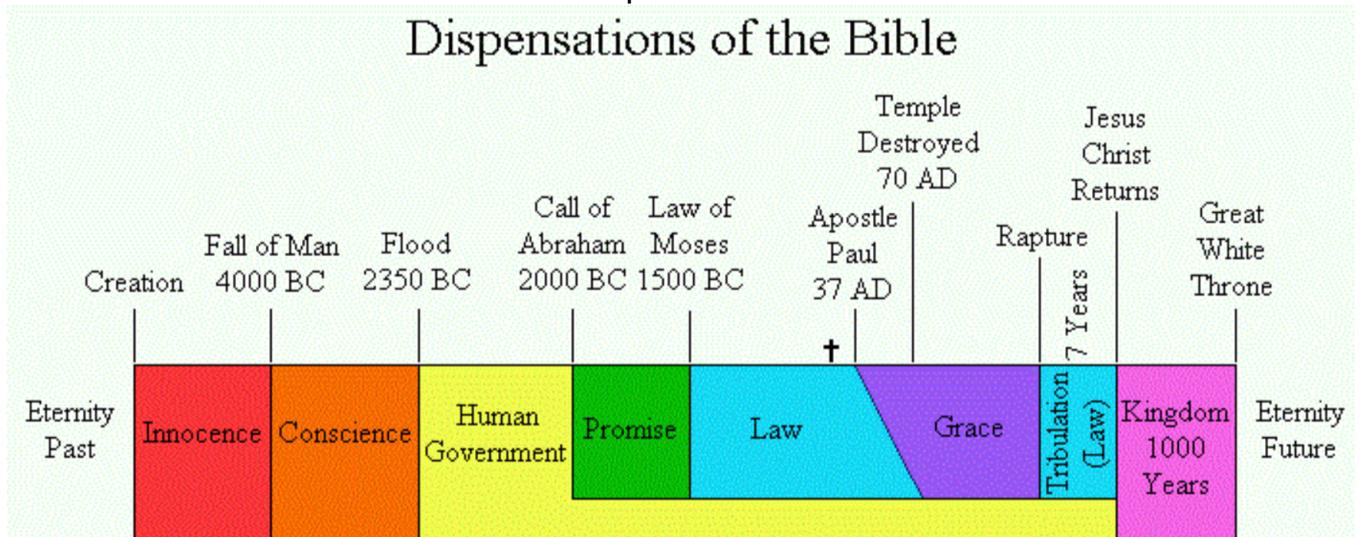
³³ **So you cannot become my disciple without giving up everything you own.**

Can you see that the decision to become a Christian is not an easy one to make. To repent means to make Jesus number one, Lord of your life. What He says goes. It’s a complete surrender. There is no half way. You are either in or you are out. It’s like you are either pregnant or your are not. **Either you are willing to make Jesus number one in your life or you are not. You must be willing to get rid of anything that is contrary to His will (that is wrong), and surrender everything else to Him, being willing to leave it behind. This is what it means to repent.** I pray that the Lord will give you understanding.

Satan’s fate is sealed

So, back to Revelation 12:12. Unlike us humans who have a choice, Satan knows that his fate is sealed. There is nothing he can do. From the time he loses the battle with Michael he has 3 1/2 years before he gets locked up for 1,000 years. After this time he is briefly released where he gathers his faithful who have rejected Christ during the 1,000 year rule and reign of Christ.

** Show dispensation chart



So, during the last 3 1/2 years, because Satan knows that his time is short, he is like a trapped snake, striking again and again. He is like a frightened, cornered, horse, extremely dangerous, and ready to attack out of fear. He is not just a lion, but an angry lion, looking for those that he can devour (1 Peter 5:8).

God will give Satan great leeway or freedom to have his way and to rule the earth. During that last 3 1/2 years, Satan will be given authority to explicitly demand that he be worshipped as God, and will kill anyone who doesn't comply. It's not just taking the his mark that condemns you, it what goes along with it—the worship of the antichrist and Satan who possesses him. If you take the mark, then you are a Satan worshipper. This is the choice every person will be forced to make—worship the true God, Jesus, or, worship the false god, the false messiah, the antichrist, who represents Satan. This is what it means in Revelation 13 when it says:

Revelation 13:7-10 NKJV

It was granted to him [the antichrist] to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation. ⁸ **All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.**

⁹ If anyone has an ear, let him hear. ¹⁰ He who leads into captivity shall go into captivity; he who kills with the sword must be killed with the sword. **Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.**

The Great Tribulation—the last 3 1/2 years

Revelation 12:13 NKJV

Now when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male Child.

v 13 **The Woman:** the believing remnant of the nation of Israel. God will protect them.

The important thing to notice here, is that the dragon, or Satan or the devil, persecutes the woman (Israel), *because* she gave birth to the male child (Jesus). Satan's plan has always been to disrupt God's plan of Salvation.

There are many examples to point to. The Egyptians tried to wipe them out by drowning all the male babies. Haman in the old testament tried to wipe out the Jews at the time of the Mede and Persian Empire. Herod tried to kill Jesus and killed many baby boys. And in the last 2,000 years, the Jews have gone through multiple cycles of persecution and violence. But, all that pain and suffering will pale in comparison to the evil the antichrist will try to unleash on the Jews at this time.

What's important here though is that the immediate aftermath or consequence of Satan's being cast out of heaven is his persecution of the woman (Israel) which brought forth the man-child—Jesus. This is the beginning of the Great Tribulation of which Christ warned Israel in Matthew 24:15–22.

Matthew 24:15-22 NKJV

¹⁵ **“Therefore when you see the ‘*abomination of desolation*,’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place” (whoever reads, let him understand),** ¹⁶ **“then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains.** ¹⁷ Let him who is on the housetop not go down to take anything out of his house. ¹⁸ And let him who is in the field not go back to get his clothes. ¹⁹ But woe to those who are pregnant and to those who are nursing babies in those days! ²⁰ And pray that your flight may not be in winter or on the Sabbath. ²¹ **For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.** ²² And unless those days were shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect's sake those days will be shortened.

Notice what Jesus says about these times. He first references Daniel 9:27 —(**whoever reads, let him understand**)... hello, this is important! This verse describes the time when the antichrist goes into the temple to desecrate it by sacrificing a pig in the holy of holies and putting an image of himself in there as well. What's important here is that Daniel 9:27 tells us that this event takes place half way through the tribulation period. By this reference to the abomination of desolation referred to in Daniel, Jesus is effectively telling us exactly when these events would happen, and how long they would last. Let's have a look at:

Daniel 9:27 NLT paraphrase

The ruler will make a treaty with the people for a period of one set of seven [seven years], **but after half this time, he will put an end to the sacrifices and offerings. And as a climax to all his terrible deeds, he will set up a sacrilegious object that causes desecration**, until the fate decreed for this defiler is finally poured out on him.

Daniel 9:27 is important because it gives the time line for the tribulation. It tells us when the tribulation starts, what happens half way through, and what happens to the antichrist at the end.

For this to be fulfilled, Israel must become a nation again. This has happened. Through his amazing diplomatic skills, he promises a new era of peace, 7 years of it to be exact. But, half way through, the antichrist, apparently possessed by Satan, breaks his promise with Israel, enters the Jewish temple he negotiated to build, and stops the sacrifices and offerings by defiling or desecrating the most holy part of the temple. Daniel 9:27 then goes on to tell us that the temple will remain defiled or unusable for the rest of the 7 year tribulation (**until the fate decreed for this defiler is finally poured out on him.**") This is the last half or last 3 1/2 years of the 7 year tribulation where Satan persecutes Israel. Notice how Revelation 12:14 confirms this:

Revelation 12:13-14 NKJV

¹³ Now when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male Child. ¹⁴ But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, **where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time**, from the presence of the serpent.

A time is one year. Times (or double) is two years. Half a time is half a year. Add them up and you get 3 1/2 years. Parallel references are found in Daniel 7:25 and 12:7, which both referring to the same period of great tribulation.

Daniel 7:25 NLT paraphrase

²⁵ **He will defy the Most High and oppress the holy people of the Most High.** He will try to change their sacred festivals and laws, and **they will be placed under his control for a time, times, and half a time.**

God will look after and provide for Israel for the last 3 1/2 years (the Great Tribulation)

The nation of Israel will be trampled underfoot for the last 3 1/2 years. That's also what we learnt in Revelation chapter 11. But God will be gracious and will spare a number of His people by looking after them in a specified place which we will find out about soon.

The other reference I mentioned was:

Daniel 12:7 NLT paraphrase

The man dressed in linen, who was standing above the river, raised both his hands toward heaven and took a solemn oath by the One who lives forever, saying, **“It will go on for a time, times, and half a time. When the shattering of the holy people has finally come to an end, all these things will have happened.”**

God will supernaturally protect and feed the remnant of the nation of Israel who fled to the place where God will look after them. I’m going through all the scriptures so you can see that they all agree with each other, that they are all talking about the same thing, so you can get the big picture. These events are mentioned multiple times throughout the bible. When you can link the passages together, then you get a lot of detail and the picture becomes very clear.

Let’s go on to verse 14

Revelation 12:14 NKJV

But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent.

v 14 Literally... *the two wings of the great eagle*

v 14 **a time and times and half a time...** in Hebrew, they not only have a plural, but they also have a form that is called “double”. Therefore the times is double one, or two. Thus, one plus double one (two), plus a half, equals 3 1/2.

It’s interesting that God allows Satan to overcome the saints, that is the believing gentiles, but He goes to great lengths to save and protect the nation of Israel. There are some questions that need to be answered. Firstly, where will God protect and nourish the nation? We find part of the answer in Daniel.

Daniel 11:41 NKJV

41 He shall also enter the Glorious Land, and many countries shall be overthrown; but these shall escape from his hand: Edom, Moab, and the prominent people of Ammon.



These verses in Daniel outline the battle plan of the antichrist for the battle of Armageddon, the final battle that marks the conclusion or finish of the 7 year tribulation period when Jesus comes back to earth to rule and reign for 1,000 years. Notice that he will be unable to enter or conquer the countries of Edom and Moab.

Other verses that indicate the country of Moab is a part of the area where God will protect His people are:

Isaiah 16:4-5 NLT paraphrase

Let our [Jewish] refugees stay among you [Moab].

Hide them from our enemies until the terror is past.”

**When oppression and destruction have ended
and enemy raiders have disappeared,**

⁵ then God will establish one of David’s descendants as king.

He will rule with mercy and truth.

He will always do what is just
and be eager to do what is right.

Notice how this fits perfectly with Revelation 12:14. God protects the nation of Israel until He dispatches or deals with the antichrist. Then He, Jesus, the descendent of King David, rules the world with a righteous rule. Also, there are passages that hint that the place of refuge is Petra, referred to as Sela, meaning rock, in the Old Testament. Petra is located in the mountains of Moab. We also read in Matthew 24:16 that Jesus specifically told them to flee to the **mountains**.

So, into this scene of satanic persecution is injected the divine intervention of God. Here, the woman is described as being given two wings of a great eagle in order to enable her to fly into the wilderness into her place. This figure of speech seems to be derived from Exodus 19:4 and Deuteronomy 32:11–12 and similar passages where God uses the strength of an eagle to illustrate His faithfulness in caring for Israel. We’ll just read one of them:

Exodus 19:4 NKJV

You have seen what I did to the Egyptians, and how I bore you on eagles’ wings and brought you to Myself.

This is yet another evidence that woman is Israel, and not the church, because this is a reference that only Jews could relate to.

Revelation 12:14 also implies that there is some supernatural care of Israel during this period. I imagine that it will be like during the forty years when God provided manna in the wilderness.

Another question is; how many will God save? According to Zechariah 13:8-9, two-thirds of Israel in the land will perish, while one third will make it through.

Zechariah 13:8-9 NKJV

⁸ And it shall come to pass in all the land,”

Says the Lord,

“That two-thirds in it shall be cut off and die,

But one-third shall be left in it:

⁹ I will bring the one-third through the fire,

Will refine them as silver is refined,

And test them as gold is tested.
They will call on My name,
And I will answer them.
I will say, 'This is My people';
And each one will say, 'The Lord is my God.' ”

This fits with the description of the times of persecution. Two-thirds of the nation will be wiped out, but one third will make it. I think by looking at the scriptures we have already read, that it is the believing Jews or at least those who will believe that are rescued and protected in Moab.

Revelation 12:15-16 NKJV

15 So the serpent spewed water out of his mouth like a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood. 16 But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth.

I don't think that the antichrist will literally spew water out of his mouth. It's another sign or symbol. Let's have a look at other scriptures to see what these symbols mean. We'll start with "Like a flood." The very word "like" gives us a big clue that it is a symbol. Our first reference is:

Isaiah 59:19 NKJV

19 So shall they fear
The name of the Lord from the west,
And His glory from the rising of the sun;
When the enemy comes in **like a flood**,
The Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him.

Jeremiah 46:7-9 NKJV

7 "Who is this coming up like a flood,
Whose waters move like the rivers?
8 Egypt rises up **like a flood**,
And its waters move like the rivers;
And he says, 'I will go up and cover the earth,
I will destroy the city and its inhabitants.'
9 **Come up, O horses, and rage, O chariots!**
And let the mighty men come forth:

Here, the mighty army of Egypt is described as rising up like a flood. And just like a flood destroys everything in its path, so does an advancing army. Therefore, I believe that the antichrist first defiles their temple, and then launches a military attack. Remember that Satan is really angry because he was just whopped by Michael.

Another reference to "a flood" being an army is Ezekiel 38.

Verse 16 then tells us how the advancing army was defeated. Some have suggested that this could refer to an earthquake. Or, it could be literal. I believe that it is very possible that the ground could very well open up and swallow the antichrist's pursuing army. It's happened before. The people of Israel were rebelling against Mose's leadership. This is the result.

Numbers 16:28-34

²⁸ And Moses said, "This is how you will know that the Lord has sent me to do all these things that I have done—for I have not done them on my own. ²⁹ If these men die a natural death, or if nothing unusual happens, then the Lord has not sent me. ³⁰ But if the Lord does something entirely new and the ground opens its mouth and swallows them and all their belongings, and they go down alive into the grave, then you will know that these men have shown contempt for the Lord."

³¹ He had hardly finished speaking the words when the ground suddenly split open beneath them. ³² **The earth opened its mouth and swallowed the men, along with their households and all their followers who were standing with them, and everything they owned.** ³³ **So they went down alive into the grave, along with all their belongings. The earth closed over them, and they all vanished from among the people of Israel.** ³⁴ **All the people around them fled when they heard their screams. "The earth will swallow us, too!" they cried.**

The earth opened up its mouth... is another Jewish reference.

Revelation 12:17 NKJV

And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

With Israel tucked away and untouchable, Satan then turns his guns on all the other believers, the Jews and gentiles who believe during the 7 year tribulation period. Heads will roll, most likely literally. Revelation 14:13 gives us good insight of just how bad it will get.

Revelation 14:13 NLT paraphrase

¹³ And I heard a voice from heaven saying, "Write this down: Blessed are those who die in the Lord from now on. Yes, says the Spirit, they are blessed indeed, for they will rest from their hard work; for their good deeds follow them!"

Here's a quote:

"It is precisely when Satan has lost the battle for the souls of saints in heaven that he begins the fruitless persecution of their bodies." (Farrer)

The following verse also helps us to see just how difficult life will be for the tribulation believers or saints during the tribulation, especially the last half.

Revelation 13:7 NKJV

It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to **overcome** them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation.

To overcome them: **Overcome** does not mean that the beast can overcome the faith of the saints, but that he can destroy their physical lives, and by all appearances defeat the cause of God's people on this earth.

This is a full fledged demonic war on believers. During the tribulation, for the believers, death will be a welcome relief from the intense persecution that the Satan filled antichrist will force on believers during this time. As Jesus said in:

Luke 21:34-36 NKJV

“But take heed to yourselves, lest your hearts be weighed down with carousing, drunkenness, and cares of this life, and that Day come on you unexpectedly. ³⁵ For it will come as a snare on all those who dwell on the face of the whole earth. ³⁶ Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man.”

All believers will escape the tribulation by going up in the Rapture. Jesus will come back to get His own before the tribulation starts. Don't be left behind.