

Revelation 12

by Edgar F. Parkyns

Edgar F. Parkyns explores the profound themes of Revelation 12, highlighting the cosmic battle between good and evil and the Church's ultimate victory through Christ.

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Scripture: 2 Peter 3:13, Revelation 22:16, Revelation 22:20

Topics: "Eschatology", "Prophecy"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker explores the identity of a woman mentioned in Revelation chapter 12. Through careful analysis of the text, it is revealed that the woman is a mother with many children. These children are described as those who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. The speaker emphasizes the importance of understanding this prophecy as it is due to begin fulfillment soon and points to the return of Jesus as the ultimate goal.

Transcript

It is my privilege to be permitted to share the word with you this morning. I'm glad to be with you. Thank God for His presence with His people.

I was traveling the other day with... I'll drop these lines out. I remember one of the men, the fellowship from Epsom, and we were talking a little bit about... Who is the sun-cloned woman? It's easy to ask a question like that, but it takes a long time to answer it. Quite a witness of peace in my heart that I should try and answer that question.

You'll have to use a lot of patience in this lecture. It's very important. So let's turn to Revelation.

God intends His people to read and know, but it seems it's a bit released to do so. Gracious leading and understanding. He's dealing with me inwardly on certain very, very important matters.

From the bridegroom. It starts off with a portrait of the bridegroom, and it leads on to the marriage supper, and gives us a picture of the heavenly home prepared. It is from the bridegroom.

In fact, some of the hymns we were singing this morning drew their very material and word from the book of Revelation. And that wonderful phrase about the blood of the Lamb comes from this last book. So the people's spirits respond to the book of Revelation, even though their minds have been put off by all sorts of strange and conflicting opinions.

There is nothing new which responds to the theme of the blood of the Lamb. Hallelujah. Instinctively you know it's the voice of the bridegroom to this bride.

And that is basic, I'm sure, to the understanding before we venture very far, groundwork. Intense. A little bit of groundwork here.

Yes, it is a love letter from the Lord. Have sent for an angel to testify these things in the churches. That's how he puts it, not just in the first chapter, but also in the last chapter.

And he makes it plain that he is writing to the church, for the church, and concerning the church. Now the Reformation brethren understood this very well. That the Jesuits were so alarmed at the impact of the book of Revelation on the errors of their great Roman church that they tried every means to break it up.

They tried. Some, the Dominicans, tried to quench the testimony of those who loved the Lord by torture and inquisition and fire and death. But the Jesuits were wiser.

They saw that for every Christian you burned, a dozen would rise up to take his place. And so the Jesuits were much wiser than they. Education.

And they began to try and change the Scripture around. And they eventually, in the 17th century, came up with the brilliant idea that Revelation didn't work. And with amazing ability, he spun his web of clever thinking.

And alas, it has diverted the attention of the church in these end times from the basic intent of the book. It was to the church, for the church, and concerning the church. To show to his servants, says Jesus, things which must shortly come to pass.

And if you want to know who his servants are, Revelation chapter 1, verse 1, gives you the perfect definition. The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to show to his servants things which must shortly come to pass. And he sent and signified it by his angels.

It was John the Apostle, the man who loved the Lord Jesus. And there's your key. So when you find a reference to servants in the book of Revelation, they are people like John, who loved the Lord, and served him.

So simple, isn't it? The book is simple, really. If only you had a simple heart. It's when you get all complicated, and you get people shouting weird doctrines into your ears and stuff, and talking about a computer in Brussels, or somewhere, and things like that, that you can all put on.

But basically, this is from Jesus, to his church. And in a little while, we'll hit the door in verse 3 of that lovely introduction. Blessed is he that readeth, that's the man who would stand up in the assembly at Ephesus or Smyrna, and readeth to the rest of the company, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep the things which are written therein.

There was a blessing for reading it, and a blessing for listening to it. But the reason for that blessing in the early church was this, the time is. That is, this wonderful prophecy was due to begin to find fulfillment very, very soon.

And that's why it would be such a blessing to a man who read it, and those who heard it. Isn't that very nice? We know that when it began. And we also know the goal to which it is leading.

For all the way through the book there is a recurrent end theme. Not merely the new heavens and the new earth, but the return of our Lord Jesus. So that the closing phrases of the book include this sort of exhortation.

Revelation 22, verse 16, I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. What things? Just chapters one to four? No, the whole book. For this is in the last chapter.

To testify these things in the churches. I am the root and offspring of David, linking with the Old Testament. The bright and morning star, linking with his second coming.

And then, let me miss out a few verses. He that testified these things said, Surely I come quickly. Amen.

Even so, come, Lord Jesus. So then it was a book, a letter which was to begin with blessings on those who first heard it in those seven churches, including us. When Daniel was receiving his revelations, and the question was asked, when would these things be? He was given an answer.

The angel said, Seal up the words of this prophecy, for the time is not right. But when John was given his revelation, he was told, Seal not the sayings of this book, no gap here, for the time is at hand. This book was to go into action, not like some of Daniel's visions, which would be delayed, but right away.

So the early church rightly found their guidance and strength against the persecutions that were coming from this book. And the saints of God down through the ages understood their way in the midst of darkness and tribulation because of the book that the heavenly bridegroom had sent to guide his church through the long years of her suffering. If you've got those basic things right, one of the best things to do, if you don't know much about it, but one of the best things to do, if you're not good at it, is to get in the outside frame first, the pieces with the straight edges, put them all together, and when you've got the frame, you can fill in the rest.

But if you don't get the frame right, you'll have a bit of a job doing the rest of the thing. And here if we can get the frame right, this is from the bridegroom to the bride, to the church, for the church, to guide her in the midst of deception and trouble, we shall be able to fill in some of the pieces. And so now we'll turn to Revelation.

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. And she, being this child, cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered. And there appeared another wonder in heaven, and behold a great red dragon having seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns upon his head.

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. And she brought forth a man-child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron and her child was caught up to God and to his throne.

And the woman fled into the wilderness where she had the place prepared of God that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and three score days. And there was war in heaven, Michael and his angels fought against the dragon and the dragon fought and his angels and prevailed not. Neither was their place found any more in heaven.

And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent called the devil and Satan which deceived the whole world. He was cast out into the earth and his angels were cast out with him. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, And 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. 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. Don't you think that beautiful verse belongs to the church of course.

Why it's tempt with it. You don't need a lot of the exegesis to realize that this belongs to the church of God. Therefore rejoice ye heaven and he that dwell in them woe to the inheritors of the earth and of the sea for the devil is come down unto you having great wrath because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.

And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man-child. And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle that she might fly into the wilderness into her place where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time from the face of the serpent. And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood.

And the earth helped the woman and the earth opened her mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth. And the dragon was wroth with the woman and went to make war with the remnants of her seed which keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus. This is not literal.

It is a divine cartoon. The woman is not a literal woman. The son with which she is clothed is not a literal son.

The moon beneath her feet is not a literal moon. It is a divine cartoon. Chapter 1 we read He sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John.

Revelation is a book written in signification or sign language. S-I-G-N He signified it. The Greek has the same connotation.

It is a book of signs. The language of Revelation is sign language. Some time ago I saw in an American paper a cartoon of the Ayatollah Khomeini riding an unwilling donkey and holding a carrot before its nose.

The unfortunate donkey had the eager and frustrated feet of a peasant of America. It was a cartoon which could easily be translated by those who knew the facts. But if you don't know the facts you can't translate it.

And God was the first cartoon designer. Why, even when he designed the tabernacle it was a picture of heavenly things. Detail by detail, measure by measure the perfect cartoon in three dimensions.

And this book is stated to be written in sign language. And in the woman and the moon and the sun and the other features of this chapter we have a divine cartoon with certain meanings. And so many have puzzled and said, who is this woman? Even the most literal of the literalists will concede that she cannot be literal.

Well, of course she can't. Well, we shall have to be detectives and try and find out who she is. And I propose that we start off with the last verse and have a look at her children.

Verse 17 Here we are, the spiritual Sherlock Holmes is all harmed with mankind's love. At the sea the dragon was wroth with the witch keep the commandments of God. So she is a mother with many children.

Alright. She is a mother with many children. And let's have a look at her seed.

They keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. The same kind of description as is given in chapter 14 and verse 12. Here is the patience of the saints.

Here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. Obviously the same sort of people are referred to here. These are your clues in which finally you can find out who her children are.

And then when you find out who her children are you may begin to find out who the mother is. Look at, say, 1 John 5 verse 3. John writing to the children of God says in verse 3 For this is the love of God that we keep his commandments and his commandments are not grievous for whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world. So the keeping of the commandments of God is a mark of truly born again believers.

How's that? Do you know anybody else who can keep the commandments? It just doesn't work. They know what they should do but they can't do it. But those who are born of God and love him and know his love keep his commandments and his commandments are not grievous.

Hallelujah. Oh we're moving in along the line of divine clues. Let's have a look at the remnant of her seed.

That's in verse 17 and note the following references in Revelation chapter 1 verse 9 John says I was in the I was your companion in tribulation. Hello John. And in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ was in the isle that is called Patmos for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ.

So John has the second part. The testimony of Jesus Christ. Oh someone then who's thinking and witness is like that of John.

Have another look in chapter 6 and verse 9. I saw the salt of them that were slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. There it is the commandment of the slain prince. Have a look at Revelation 2 and 13.

I know thy words. Where Satan's seat is. Conflict with Satan.

He that overcometh and keepeth my works unto the end. To him would I give. 3 verse 8. I know thy works and I have set before thee.

Has kept my. 10. Because thou hast kept the word.

From thee. Pray to lead us not into temptation. By and large then her children are people like John who love God.

Who is your father? These are believers. These are brethren. These are suffering.

And they have an elder brother. For the first one that was born of the woman was her first born. The man child.

Some people have tried to make a weird theory out of man. Male child is the correct translation. Male child.

Who was. Who is destined to rule all nations with a rod of iron. Have you ever heard of the first born among.

When you get all the scripture into your bow. Here we are back on to basics. We know who they are.

Their elder brother. Who is the mother? Well we know she's a symbol. Some say that she's the church.

I don't think that will exactly do. But you're not born of the church I hope. People who are born of the church are not born again.

They've merely signed the register. Is she Israel? Well that looks a bit more like. But you're not born of Israel.

Who is your mother? Is she Sarah the wife of Abraham? Not bad. Is she Jerusalem? Oh. Is she Jerusalem which is above? Now we're nearer still.

Galatians 4. Verse 26. But Jerusalem which is above is free. Which is the mother of us all.

So we're getting a little bit nearer aren't we? We've now given her a name. And we have called her Jerusalem which is above. Now just a minute.

Who is she yet? Look a bit closer. For it is written. Verse 22.

Abraham had two sons. The one by a bondmaid. The other by a free woman.

But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh. But he of the free woman was by promise. Which things are an allegory? We're dealing with allegories aren't we? That is with symbols which represent truth.

This is an allegory. These two women are the two covenants. Galatians 4 and verse 24.

Two covenants. The first at Sinai which produced children under bondage. The second in Christ the heart and reality and core and nature of the New Testament.

The new covenant which is the whole gospel of Jesus Christ. That's why Peter says. You were born again not of corruptible seed but of incorruptible by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever.

For all flesh is as grass and the glory of man is the flower of grass. And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you. I was born of the gospel.

That was my mother. And whenever I hear the gospel my spirit finds itself right upon. Back at mother's skirts.

And if you're born of God you'll find the same thing. The gospel which scares other people draws you close. The gospel which offends the proud and the righteous will bring tears to your heart.

The gospel which brings condemnation and distress to the ungodly is comforting a soul. You know where your mother is. Don't get far from mother.

Feel alright. Never depart from the simplicity which is in Christ Jesus. It's the good news that Christ came and died for our sins.

According to the scriptures was buried. He was crucified for our sins. Raised again for our justification.

This is your mother. You were born of God. God said in Jeremiah.

I will write my laws in their hearts and on their minds will I write them. They shall be my people. I will be their God.

They shall all know me from the least to the greatest. And their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. That's where your mother is.

And that's Jerusalem which is above. For a city has two realities. The building and the people.

You dwell in this Jerusalem which is above. I hope you do. I hope you're rooted and grounded in the gospel of Christ.

Otherwise you'll be in a very shaky condition. You'll get as close to mother as you know how. Sing in the depths of your heart.

Yes Jesus loves me. The bible tells me so. You're getting back to mother then.

Hallelujah. Oh let your spirit find rest right there. Yes and she is like Jerusalem was for Israel.

A city with towers and bulwarks. And you're safe inside her. Stay there.

Stay within the gospel. Limitation. Actually it's liberty not limitation.

But it looks like limitation doesn't it. When you cut yourself down to a one track mind and love Jesus completely. Hallelujah.

What a glorious limitation. What glorious liberty. But not only is Jerusalem which is above the mother of us all.

And she is that city in which we dwell. But eventually the people and the city are one. So that at the end of Revelation you see the new Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God.

And you and I can enter in through her open gates. They were once closed. The gates of a limited election of the twelve tribes of Israel.

But now they're swung right. Hallelujah. It's glad to be within the city.

Glory to God. As weak shall be as ten. And how's it go? Shall be as David.

Strong in the strength of our blessed Jerusalem. Mother and Father. Isaiah 54.

Paul picks up this lovely passage. Say no barren that did not bear. Break forth into singing and cry aloud.

Thou that didst not prevail with child. For more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord. Enlarge the place of thy tent.

And let them stretch forth the curtains of thy habitations. Spare not. Lengthen thy cords.

Strengthen thy stakes. Thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left. Fear not.

Thou shalt not be ashamed. Thou shalt not be confounded. Thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth.

And not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more. For thy maker is thy husband. The Lord of hosts is his name.

The Redeemer and the Holy One of Israel. The God of the whole earth shall he be called. When Paul picks up this chapter, he says it belongs to the gospel.

You read it in Romans 10. This is the gospel here, which is in this anagram of the woman. And that blessed promise was made, wasn't it, to concerning Eve and her seed? It was very definitely made to Abraham.

In thy seed shall all the factors of the earth be blessed. And that promise looked as though it was neglected in the intervening years. In the meantime, the law came in and began her children.

Children unto bondage. And the poor gospel had to wait, age after age, until at last, in the fullness of time, God sent his Son, made of a woman, born of a woman, made under the law. To redeem those that were under law, that we might receive the adoption of sons and become younger brothers of him who was gone before.

Hallelujah. Your elder brother is there. He's reached the right hand of God.

And he's expecting you to join him. And already, even now, sharing his fellowship and sharing a measure of his reign. Glory to his lovely name.

In Hebrews 12, 22. Ye are not come unto Mount Zion. No, I'm sorry.

From verse 18. Ye are not come unto the mount that might be touched and burned with fire, blackness, darkness, and tempest. And now in verse 22.

But ye are come unto Mount Zion, unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and to the church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood that is sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel. Why, that's what Revelation language is meant of. See that you refuse not him that speaketh.

Psalms 48. Ever and ever. And he will be our guide even over death.

Thus in Psalm 49, 15. God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave. Well, the next thing to be looked at in this passage is the dragon.

And he is defined. No difficulty about him at all. The great dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, is defined in Revelation chapter 12.

Verse 9. The great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the devil and Satan. No doubt about it, is it? Is there? Which deceived it the whole. But he's a strange dragon.

He has, he's red, the color of war. He has seven heads and ten horns. You meet him in Daniel.

He comes at the fourth, he's the fourth great empire. Once again, a cartoon of the great Roman Empire. Any Bible student can tell you that.

And his seven heads are successive heads. His ten horns all stand up together. And they're all on the last head.

Actually, the divided head, the eighth head. But the seven heads represent the four, the rulers over Rome, over the great Roman Empire. Leading up to John's time.

For the angel said to John, five of them are fallen. One is, in John's time, the great pagan emperors. And one is yet to come, the last head of that great Roman system.

And you know that the pagan emperors were replaced by the Christian emperors. And he stood before the woman as she was travelling to bring forth her firstborn. Isn't that what happened? Didn't Satan move in the might of Rome, and particularly Rome's puppet, Herod, to try to destroy the firstborn? His malice was manifested there.

And all through Jesus' life, Satan was in the background from the temptations. And then it intervals onward time. And again, the archenemy of God and of our souls was at war.

Until at last, Jesus said, this is your hour. And the power of darkness. And Satan sought to destroy that blessed man-child.

And seemed to have overcome him. But the child was caught up unto God at his throne. And there was war in him.

Did you know there was war in heaven when Jesus rose? Chapter 2 and verse 15, 14. He blotted out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross. And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it, in his cross and resurrection.

Hallelujah. Jesus is victor. And when he rose from the dead, the mighty angels of God were in attendance.

And there was war in heaven. And Satan was cast down. Our foe has been defeated once for all, when Jesus died.

And that's the plain facts. Now he goes to receive, as our context says. But in reality, his power was broken by our blessed Lord Jesus, by our great elder brother.

Oh, when I was a boy, sometimes, a very small boy, that is, sometimes we small boys would start boasting. And when the, when, one against the other. And Jesus is that great elder brother.

And over principalities and powers, Satan had, that he came, he died, that he might destroy. Through death, he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil, and deliver those for all their lifetime. Hallelujah.

He is still a deceiver. And he still keeps his people in bondage by his lying system. When you know what Jesus has done, you can destroy the strongholds of Satan.

Hallelujah. You can be more than conqueror. Blessed be God.

Don't think that the defeat of Satan is still future. There's a consummation in future. That the great victory was won at Calvary.

Born and seated at the right hand of the Father. Principalities and powers being. And for every one of us in this room, there is victory here and now.

Every power of darkness can be destroyed. Jesus has won. He has taken our curse and his own body on the tree.

The child was called up, where to the throne? Revelation 3 and 20. To him that I overcome it, will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father in his throne. There it is, the whole thing ties together beautifully.

And if you're not out of it, you're in it. You're sharing the victories to you, for you, concerning you. Rejoice that Jesus Christ is victorious.

Oh my. And I heard the devil and Satan, they're still deceiving you see in that verse, but they're cast out of heaven into the earth. And I heard their 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. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives even until the death. The early church rejoiced in the victory of Jesus Christ.

They confessed him to be Lord of all. They denied the dominion of mammon and the dominion of men. They saw that Jesus Christ was Lord.

And they burned from him. Hallelujah. They loved not their lives even until the death.

And if you are still clinging on to your life, remember the warning here that love of this life shall lose it. There's too much comfortable Christianity in these days. It's no good.

It's lulling many into deception and compromise. God, bring us back to the clean-limbed Christianity of early years. And remember that if you belong to Jesus Christ, you will belong to one who suffered for you.

And if we have to live in the protection of a temporary little bit of peace, don't be lulled to sleep by that. There's danger ahead, and we should be facing danger and difficulty. They loved not their lives even until the death.

Now has come salvation. That's marvellous. You know, the book of Revelations doesn't stand on its own.

It's all linked with the rest of the Bible. When Paul was writing 2 Corinthians, he came to that very same revelation. He's talking about Jesus, chapter 5 in 2 Corinthians, who was made to be sin for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

And then he quoted from Isaiah 42 and said, We as workers together with him beseech you also that you receive not the grace of God in vain. For he said, I have heard thee in an accepted time, and in a day of salvation have I sacred thee. That is, when the father heard the son's cry in his dying hour, I heard thee,

my son, in an accepted time, in a day of salvation have I sacred thee.

God raised him from the dead. And so Paul announces, Behold, now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation. When Christ is raised from the dead, seated at the right hand of God, sent forth the Holy Spirit into all the earth, now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation.

There was war in heaven, Satan cast down, Jesus raised from the dead, and we proclaim, now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation. And that's precisely what is revealed here in Revelation chapter 12. I heard a loud voice, excuse me being loud also, 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, he is defeated, he need not crush you down anymore, it's over, the victory's won. Praise God. He's just a deceiver, cast down to earth, working such damage as he can, before he is cast into the lake of fire.

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

Have you noticed how all the way through the New Testament the Christian era is spoken of as a short time. He that cometh will come. Has it? Yes, a little while.

And he that cometh will come and will not tarry. Short time. Behold I come quickly.

Short time. All the references to this age are a short time. One interprets the other.

I think that God so wrote it that way, not just because a day with him is a thousand years, and a thousand years is one day, but also because he wanted every generation of Christians to be ready and expecting the coming of their Lord. He wouldn't have been discouraged if they had thought that two thousand years of failure lay ahead. The early church, Confucian doctrine, disclosed the length.

And lamps trimmed as those that wait for their Lord. Praise the Lord. We too need to be ready in this our day.

Yes, he knows his time was short. And you have been born of that same mother promise. That blessed gospel promise.

Praise the Lord. And he is he was cast to the earth. He persecuted the woman that bore the man's child.

Same Satan, who warned against Jesus Christ on earth, who sought to accomplish his destruction when Jesus rose from the dead, began to turn his attention on the church of God. Isn't that right? Read in the Acts how Peter and John and Paul and the others were persecuted. Satan had another game now, bitter cruel persecution.

And under pagan Rome, hundreds and thousands died and suffered and were tormented and imprisoned and were robbed, cruelly treated, sent into exile. Satan warring against the remnant of the seed. And all down through the church age, the remnant of Christ's seed, that little flock, has suffered in country after country.

If you've read the sad story of church history, you will know how those who named the name of Christ thought they were doing the will of God in putting fellow believers to death. The story is ugly. Chapter after chapter, millions upon millions have suffered at the hand of those who have been called Christians.

Satan has his deadly work down through the years. And don't think that persecution is over, it's not. It wasn't many years ago when some of our brethren in Chad were buried up to the neck in Uganda, and we don't know the numbers.

In Russia the figures are uncounted. They say that in Maya's regime for the last 30 years, over 60 million have suffered. Satan is still destroyed, seeking persecute and destroy the remnant of the seed.

And especially his enmity is against those who keep the commandments. And has God down through the ages provided a measure of protection? Has the earth opened her mouth and swallowed the flood that has been sent after the woman? For time and again, men have sought to blot it, even in old land, the burning of the stake. Did old Mother Earth come? And when men have Mother Earth, the few who kept alive the gospel, attacks, wars made against them, they were sought to, men sought to exterminate them.

The Italian armies have always protected God's people. When they were being persecuted to the death, it was the highland territory and the mists of the hills that again and again protected God's children. Yes, it's the Christian age, a sad age unto salvation, ready to be redeemed.

So let's look inside. Who's your elder brother? Jesus, who shares his father's throne. Who are your brethren? All those who love the Lord in sincerity, and they are marked because by the indwelling spirit they keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

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