

# Revelation 12:2

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.

## Analysis

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**And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered....** This verse from Revelation's vision of woman, child, and dragon - cosmic conflict, satan's defeat, messiah's victory employs apocalyptic imagery rich with Old Testament allusions and symbolic meaning. The Greek text uses vivid apocalyptic language characteristic of Jewish prophetic literature, drawing heavily from Daniel, Ezekiel, Isaiah, and Zechariah.

The symbolism must be interpreted within its first-century context while recognizing timeless spiritual realities. The imagery would resonate powerfully with persecuted believers facing Roman imperial cult worship, providing hope that despite present suffering, Christ reigns sovereign and will consummate His kingdom. The apocalyptic genre uses symbolic numbers (seven, twelve, 144,000), colors, beasts, and cosmic imagery to convey theological truth rather than photographic descriptions.

Christologically, Revelation consistently exalts Jesus as the victorious Lamb, the faithful witness, the King of kings and Lord of lords. Every vision ultimately points to Christ's supremacy, His finished redemptive work, and His certain return to judge the living and dead and establish the new creation.

## Historical Context

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John received this revelation circa AD 95 during Domitian's persecution, exiled on Patmos for his testimony. The seven churches of Asia Minor faced increasing pressure to participate in emperor worship and pagan religious practices. Refusal meant economic hardship, social ostracism, and potential martyrdom. Understanding this context illuminates Revelation's encouragement to faithful endurance.

The apocalyptic genre was familiar to first-century Jewish and Christian readers. Rather than newspaper-style predictions, apocalyptic literature uses symbolic imagery to reveal spiritual realities behind earthly events, encourage the faithful, warn the unfaithful, and assert God's ultimate sovereignty over history. Parallels with Daniel, Ezekiel, and intertestamental apocalyptic writings would help original readers decode the symbols.

Rome's imperial cult demanded worship of Caesar as divine, placing Christians in impossible situations—compromise their faith or face persecution. Revelation identifies Rome as "Babylon" and assures believers that despite appearances, the Lamb conquered through His death and resurrection, and all earthly kingdoms will submit to His reign.

## Related Passages

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**Romans 10:9** — Confession and belief for salvation

**John 3:16** — God's love and salvation

## Study Questions

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1. How does Revelation 12:2 reveal God's character, particularly His sovereignty, holiness, and justice?
2. What specific encouragement or warning does this verse offer for maintaining faithful Christian witness amid cultural pressure?

3. How does this passage point to Christ's victory and the hope of new creation, and how should that shape your present priorities?

## Interlinear Text

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καὶ	ἐν	γαστρὶ	ἔχουσα	κράζει	ὠδίνουσα	καὶ
And	with	child	she being	cried	travailing in birth	And
G2532	G1722	G1064	G2192	G2896	G5605	G2532
βασανιζομένη		τεκεῖν				
pained		to be delivered				
G928		G5088				

## Additional Cross-References

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**Revelation 12:4** (Parallel theme): 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.

**John 16:21** (Parallel theme): A woman when she is in travail hath sorrow, because her hour is come: but as soon as she is delivered of the child, she remembereth no more the anguish, for joy that a man is born into the world.

**Galatians 4:19** (Parallel theme): My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you,

**Isaiah 53:11** (Parallel theme): He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.

**Galatians 4:27** (Parallel theme): For it is written, Rejoice, thou barren that bearest not; break forth and cry, thou that travailest not: for the desolate hath many more children than she which hath an husband.

**Micah 5:3** (Parallel theme): Therefore will he give them up, until the time that she which travaileth hath brought forth: then the remnant of his brethren shall return unto the children of Israel.

**Isaiah 54:1** (Parallel theme): Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the LORD.

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