

Revelation 12:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

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

Analysis

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

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

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does Revelation 12:5 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

καὶ	ἔτεκεν	υἱόν	ἄρρενα,	ὃς	μέλλει	ποιμαίνειν	
And	she brought forth	child	a man	who	was	to rule	
G2532	G5088	G5207	G730	G3739	G3195	G4165	
πάντα	τὰ	ἔθνη	ἐν	ῥάβδῳ	σιδηρᾷ	καὶ	ἡρπάσθη τὸ
all	G3588	nations	with	a rod	of iron	And	was caught up G3588
G3956		G1484	G1722	G4464	G4603	G2532	G726
τέκνον	αὐτοῦ	πρὸς	τὸν	θεὸν	καὶ	τὸν	θρόνον αὐτοῦ
child	her	unto	G3588	God	And	G3588	throne her
G5043	G846	G4314		G2316	G2532	G2362	G846

Additional Cross-References

Revelation 19:15 (References God): And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

Revelation 12:2 (Parallel theme): And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.

Isaiah 7:14 (Parallel theme): Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.

Revelation 11:12 (Parallel theme): And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them.

Matthew 1:25 (Parallel theme): And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS.

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.

