

*May 5, 2013*

## **The Two Witnesses, The Woman and The Child By Bryan Hodge**

The book of Revelation is a book of symbols. Admittedly, some of these symbols are difficult to discern. However, there are certain points that seem clear. Let's consider...

### The Two Witnesses (Revelation 11)

The reference to two witnesses, no doubt, relates to the need of adequate evidence (Num. 35:30; Deut. 17:6; 19:5; Matt. 18:15-17; 1 Tim. 5:19-20, 22). Note: Evidence could be counted as a witness (John 5:33, 36; 10:25; 1 John 5:8).

The exact identity of these two witnesses is one of those symbols difficult to discern. Foy Wallace Jr. suggests, "The two witnesses are representatives of the prophets and apostles" (The Book of Revelation p. 217). He connects the following passages with Jerusalem and the witness of these men (Matt. 23:31-37; Matt. 24:14; Acts 7:52).

They were empowered by with olive oil, which represents the Holy Spirit (Rev. 11:4 cf. Zech 4:6-10, 11, 14). This is what fuels their lampstands. Foy Wallace, Jr. connects the following passages : Matt. 10:18-20; Mark 13:11; Luke 12:12).

They were protected by God until they had finished their testimony (Rev. 11:7). Jesus declared, "this gospel of the Kingdom will be preached in all the world" (Matt. 24:14).

After this, they are killed and disrespected, but in time resurrected and taken to heaven. Wayne Jackson commented, "This symbolizes the ultimate victory of truth over error" (p. 188). John Kachelman Jr. commented, "The message – remain faithful to God; when the time is completed reward is assured" (Revelation, p. 66).

### The Woman and Child (Revelation 12)

The characters: (1) The woman. (a) some see her as Mary. (b) Some understand the woman as Israel, which would include Mary (cf. Gen. 37:9-10; Isa. 26:17; 66:7-8; Mic. 5:2-3). (2) The child – the child is Christ (Rev. 12:5; cf. 2:27 cf. Psalm 2, cf. Acts 13:33). (3) The dragon is Satan (cf. Rev. 12:9).

The dragon tried to destroy the child (Rev. 12:4). (a) If the woman is Mary, the reference is obvious (Matt. 2:13). (b) If the woman is Israel, then this may include other attempts to destroy God's plan (cf. Ex. 1:16-22).

The woman was protected in the wilderness. (a) If the woman is Mary, the reference is to the flight into Egypt. (Matt. 2:13-14). (b) If the woman is Israel, then included may be other things, such as the Exodus. It may also include how faithful Israel was protected by God when Jerusalem fell (Matt. 24:15-16; Luke 21:20-21).

The dragon, unable to prevent the birth or ascension of the child went after the woman and her offspring. This clearly better fits faithful Israel. John Kackelman, Jr. commented, "Having failed to destroy Christ...Satan focused his attack upon faithful Israel. The flood seems to refer to persecution" (p. 73).

They were a part of a great spiritual war. The key to victory – “They overcame by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death” (Rev. 12:11).