

PRESENT TRUTH

(God's First Fruits)

*For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in **the present truth**.*

II. Peter 1:12

All truth is not the same *kind* of truth. There is a difference between historical truth (which remains true in the present time), and what Peter calls *present* truth. Present truth concerns what God is doing *now*, not what He has done in the past. Present truth can be hard for many people to hear and accept because at times it can be radically different than historical truth which is presently true.

For instance, when Jesus came on the scene in Israel, all the Jews who were living at that time had been established in some historical truths that were (at that time) still current and relevant. These truths included the existence of the one true God, the Law that God gave the nation, and its history as His chosen people. To the Jews of Jesus' day, these truths were not just historical truths, they were present truths. However, even though these things were presently true at that time, they were not present truth; for present truth is much more than historical truth which remains true in our day. Present truth has to do with what God is doing *right now*. For those Jews in Jesus' day, the truths they knew (while still being true and relevant) were no longer present truth, for God was doing something *new* at that particular time. Present truth was the reality that Israel's Messiah was now walking among the people of Israel.

Moreover, at that point, present truth came into *direct conflict* with historical truth. The historical truth the Jews had been established in *was* the truth, and it remained the truth because it came from Moses. But *present* truth was coming from Jesus, and this truth was different than what came from Moses. The result was, many who had been thoroughly established in historical truth were totally incapable of hearing or accepting *present* truth.

The same is true today of many Christians—and I'm not talking about people who think they are Christians but really aren't—I'm talking about *real* Christians. I know people who are truly born again and love the Lord, who have spent years studying the Bible and walking in obedience to what is written. Some of them know the Scriptures like the back of their hand. They understand the time we are living in. They see we are in the last days; they understand we have entered the time of the great falling away (apostasy); they know Jesus is returning soon and they are anticipating His return.

Yet, even though they are committed believers who have been *thoroughly established* in the truths of the New Testament, even though they have gained a great deal of spiritual insight over the years, they have *no idea* what God is doing *right now*. They are incapable of hearing or receiving *present* truth, especially if that truth conflicts with the historical truth they have been so thoroughly established in all these years.

God is not static. Neither is His eternal plan. He is not like us. He doesn't get into a rut, doing the same thing over and over again, year after year. As history progresses, His eternal plan continues to unfold—and that plan is to gather a people from all the nations of this earth, save them, sanctify them, and bring them to a state of sinless perfection so they will be a suitable wife for His Son. So today, God is *not* doing the same thing He did in the days of the Early Church. Today, He's *not* doing the same thing He did during the years of the Protestant Reformation. He's *not* doing the same thing He did when He brought forth the Holiness movements of the early

1800's. He's *not* doing the same thing He did when He restored the Baptism of the Holy Spirit at the time of the Azusa St. outpouring in 1905. He's *not* doing the same thing He did when He raised up healing Evangelists in the 1940's and 1950's. He's *not* doing the same thing He did when He raised up deliverance ministries in the 1960's. He is doing something different—and the ability to understand what He is doing *right now* is tied directly to the ability to hear and receive present truth.

We talked about some of this present truth in our the last two chat sessions. One of things God is doing right now is calling a remnant of His people to be part of the coming ministry of judgment. This is present truth. But many people cannot receive it because it seems to conflict with other truth that is found in the New Testament. It seems to conflict with the truth that we are to love and forgive our enemies. It seems to conflict with the truth that God wants us to evangelize the unsaved. It seems to conflict with the truth the Scripture says about God's character, which is that He is ever merciful and gentle and forgiving and kind. It seems to conflict with the truth that we are told to pray for all men, especially those who are of the house of God. Indeed, there are all kinds of truths contained in the New Testament which *seem* to conflict with *present* truth.

Another truth which is *present* truth—which may seem to conflict with other New Testament truths that God's people have been established in—has to do with the manchild in Revelation chapter 12. We are going to go through this chapter tonight. As we read it, keep in mind that there are 4 *different groups* of Christians referred to in this chapter: (1) the Woman clothed with the sun; (2) the manchild which comes out of her; (3) the stars of heaven, a third of which the Dragon casts to the earth with his tail; (4) the remnant of the Woman's seed.

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

Revelation 12:1-2

Before we go any further, we need to establish once and for all that John is not referring here to the historical event of Jesus being born out of National Israel. The Woman is not National Israel; it is the Church. The manchild is not the historical, individual, Jesus; it is a remnant of victorious saints who are part of the Church. That this is not a picture of Jesus coming out of historical, National Israel is very clear if consider the following points:

~ ***The Woman travails in birth.*** Where in Scripture do we find National Israel *travailing in pain* to bring forth Messiah? The simple truth is, we don't. In fact, we find that the Scripture states just the opposite!

*Hear the word of the LORD, ye that tremble at his word; Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake, said, Let the LORD be glorified: but he [ie: Messiah] shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed. A voice of noise from the city, a voice from the temple, a voice of the LORD that rendereth recompence to his enemies. **Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child.***

Isaiah 66:5-7

~ ***The Woman is clothed the Sun.*** This is symbolic of the Lord Jesus. He *Himself* is the sun. He is the light of the world. The sun also stands for the righteousness of Jesus—and it's the Church, not National Israel, which has been clothed with Christ and His righteousness. It's the Church, not national Israel, which has been given the revelation (light) of Jesus.

~ ***The Woman stands on the Moon.*** The moon is symbolic of the Old Testament economy. Just as the Moon has no light of its own, but borrows its light from the Sun, so the Law and Prophets were not the light of the New Testament, but a mere reflection of it. All the types and shadows of the Law and the Jewish ceremonies are fulfilled in Christ and realized by the Church. The light of the Old Covenant is under the feet of the Woman; it is in subjection to her. But she covered with the light of Jesus and the New Covenant. This *cannot* apply to Israel, either now at the birth of Jesus.

~ ***The Woman has a crown of twelve stars.*** Stars are symbolic of the saints, and the number twelve is the number of government. A crown is symbolic of glory, honor, and spiritual authority. The twelve apostles hold a special place of honor in the Church, for to them was given the authority and the power (by Jesus and the Holy Spirit) to establish the Church.

~ ***The manchild is immediately caught up to heaven.*** There is no gap here. Jesus Christ was not caught up to the throne when He was born. There was a considerable interval.

~ ***The result of the manchild's ascension.*** Immediately after the manchild is caught up to the throne there is war in heaven, and the Dragon is cast into the earth. This did not happen when Jesus ascended to the father. We see that *after* the ascension of Jesus, the Scripture *still* calls Satan the "prince of the power of the air" (*Eph. 2:2*); and his "principalities and powers" are *still* in "heavenly places" (*Eph. 3:10*).

~ ***The Woman goes into the wilderness for 3½ years.*** This is a clear reference to the *last* 3½ years of this present age. National Israel has been in her wilderness for over 1900 years.

~ ***This whole vision is part of sixth trumpet.*** A careful examination of the text will reveal that there are three "woe's" spoken of by the angel. These three woe's are actually the last three trumpets (fifth, sixth and seventh).

*And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise. And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, **Woe, woe, woe,** to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of **the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!***

Revelation 8:12-13

Now, listen carefully. The last three woes (or trumpets) run from Revelation chapter 9:1 to chapter 11:19. The *fifth* angel sounds in Rev. 9:1. This trumpet opens the bottomless pit and releases a swarm of locust-like creatures. Rev. 9:12 says: "*One woe is past; and, behold, there come two*

woes more hereafter”.

In Rev. 9:13 the sixth angel sounds, and everything from that 9:13 to chapter 11:14 makes up the sixth trumpet. So the sixth trumpet includes:

(1) The loosing of the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men.

(2) A mighty angel who is clothed with a cloud, a rainbow on his head, his face like the sun, his feet like as pillars of fire, comes down from heaven with a little book in his hand, which tells John to eat the book, and that he will have to Thou must *prophesy again* before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings. The angel has his right foot on sea his left foot on the earth, and when he cried with a loud voice, seven thunders uttered their voices.

(3) The ministry and martyrdom of the Two Witnesses company.

Immediately after the Two Witnesses are raised from the dead and ascend up into heaven, the angel says: “*The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly*” (Rev. 11:14). Then, in the very next verse (Rev. 11:15) we see the *seventh angel* sounding his trumpet. This trumpet is the *last* trumpet. It is the trumpet Jesus and Paul referred to:

*Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: **And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven:** and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels **with a great sound of a trumpet**, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.*

Matthew 24:29-31

*Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, **at the last trump:** for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.*

I. Corinthians 15:51-53

*For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. **For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven** with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, **and with the trump of God:** and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain **shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air:** and so shall we ever be with the Lord.*

I. Thessalonians 4:15-17

Please notice what the Scripture says will happen when the seventh or last trumpet sounds:

And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven, And swore by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer: But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.

Revelation 10:5-7

Then the angel I had seen standing on the sea and on the land raised his right hand to heaven. And he swore by him who lives for ever and ever, who created the heavens and all that is in them, the earth and all that is in it, and the sea and all that is in it, and said, "There will be no more delay! But in the days when the seventh angel is about to sound his trumpet, the mystery of God will be accomplished, just as he announced to his servants the prophets."

Revelation 10:5-7 NIV

And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God, Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned. And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth. And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.

Revelation 11:15-19

The point is simply this: Everything from Revelation 11:20 to chapter 19 folds back into the preceding chapters. If we were to read these chapter in chronological order, then next chapter after eleven would be chapter nineteen. There is no trumpet *after* the last trumpet. There is no more *delay* after the last trumpet. When the last trumpet (which is the *seventh* trumpet) sounds, the dead in Christ shall rise, the Lord will return in the air, we will be caught up to meet Him there, and we will all return with Him to begin the establishment of the Millennial Kingdom.

If this be true, then the vision of the Woman and the manchild in Revelation 12 is actually part of the *sixth* trumpet. Why do I say the sixth trumpet and not the fifth one? Because we are given the key to the timing through what John said about the Two Witnesses.

*And when they shall have finished their testimony, **the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit** shall make war against them, **and shall overcome them, and kill them**...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. And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven. **The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly.***

Revelation 11:7 & 12 -14

Again, the two Witness ministry is part of the sixth trumpet. The angel tells John that at the end of their ministry, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit will overcome them and kill them. The beast being referred to here is the *same* “beast” we see rising out of the sea in Revelation thirteen, and described later in Revelation chapter seventeen.

*And I stood upon the **sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns**, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy. And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.*

Revelation 13:1-2

*And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which **hath the seven heads and ten horns**. The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and **shall ascend out of the bottomless pit**, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.*

Revelation 17:7-8

*And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition. And **the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings**, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.*

Revelation 17:11-13

John is referring to the *same* beast in all these passages. He sees this beast rising up out of the sea in chapter *thirteen*. But it's this very beast which kills the Two Witnesses back in chapter *eleven*. So, a surface reading of these chapters leads one to believe the beast does not come into the picture till chapter thirteen, but in reality the beast has already been on the scene and killed the Two Witnesses, two chapters earlier!

Now, my point is this: the Two Witness ministry is part of the *sixth* trumpet. Thus, the beast who kills them is *also* part of the *sixth* trumpet. This means the vision of the Woman and the manchild also takes place during the sixth trumpet, for Satan brings this beast forth out of the sea *after* he has failed to devour the manchild, and *after* he has failed to carry the Woman away with the flood from his mouth. Do you see that?

*And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, 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 remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ...And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.***

Revelation 12:15-13:1

Satan tries to devour the manchild but he can't. Then he tries to carry the Woman away with a flood of deception but he can't. It is then that we see the beast rising out of the sea. This beast is brought forth by Satan specifically to *physically* destroy the Woman, the manchild, and the seed by locking them out of the global economic system. But since the beast has already been on the scene, what John saw in this vision actually happens in the preceding chapters. This is all part of the *sixth* trumpet.

Getting back present truth. We should be able to see that this Woman represents the Church, particularly as it is seen during the last days. She represents the people of God. She represents a corporate group of people. Thus, the manchild which is birthed by her will *also* be a corporate group of people. The Woman the manchild represent two different groups of believers in the last days. The destiny of one group is to rule and reign over the nations with Jesus, with a rod of iron.

*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.*

Revelation 12:5

This is *not* the case with the Woman. All it says of her is that she will be protected by God in the wilderness during the last days. She must be "fed" by someone. She must be taken care of. She is not walking in the heavenly realm, in victory. She is in the wilderness, and she had to be protected and fed. Next we see the result of the manchild being caught up to God:

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 deceiveth 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, 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.

Revelation 12:7-11

The ascension of the manchild company is the occasion for the dethroning of Satan. This is because there has finally come forth a people who are able and worthy to dethrone him. When John said "they" overcame the

Dragon by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death, he's talking about the manchild. He isn't referring to the Woman (who is in the wilderness being fed and protected), or the remainder of her seed (the outer court, given over to the Gentiles), or the stars that were brought down by the Dragon's tail. These are the overcomers John is referring to. He's talking about the manchild!

Those who are part of *the Woman* are still God's people. Those who are part of *the Remnant* of her seed are still God's people. We are not sure what will happen to *the stars* who are thrown to the earth by the tail of the Dragon; but one thing is for sure: at one time they certainly were God's people! Whether they end up eternally lost or vessels of dishonor in the kingdom, only God knows. The point is, *only one group* (the manchild) is referred to as *overcomers*. They overcome the Dragon. The Woman doesn't overcome him; the remnant of her seed doesn't overcome him; certainly the stars that were brought down didn't overcome him. Only the manchild overcomes him, and only the manchild will rule with Jesus, during the next age, but not only the manchild is "saved". To say the Woman and the remnant of her seed went to hell because they didn't overcome is folly.

Last point: *right now* we can still move from the Woman company to the manchild company. But the day is coming when this will no longer be possible. At some point, the two groups must *go their separate ways* and fulfill their different destinies. Once this final separation takes place, it will be *too late* to move from the Woman to the manchild. So it behooves us to make our calling and election sure *today*.