

THE MANCHILD

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"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.

Read the twelfth chapter of Revelation. You can almost understand it, by reading it through. There may be different applications of some portions of Scripture; but there can be only one interpretation of any portion. Therefore, most of the interpretations of this chapter are incorrect and out of harmony with the rest of the Word of God. My discourse on this subject will fall into two parts - First: Who this manchild is not. Second: Who he really is. The book of Revelation was written about 69 AD. The first verse declares that its contents should come to pass after that date. Bear this in mind in studying this twelfth chapter.

SEVERAL BACKGROUND FACTS

In this chapter, we read of three wonders or signs. The Greek word "semeion" is sometimes translated "wonder," and other times "sign." First: "A woman clothed with the sun" is called "a great wonder" or sign. Second: "Another wonder ... a great red dragon." Third: "A man child" which is also a wonder or sign, though not so termed; for if the woman who gives birth to the child is a wonder woman, then her child also must be a wonder child. That is plain logic. This is my meaning: The woman is not actually a woman, five feet tall, weighing one hundred and twenty-five pounds, and wearing a calico or silk dress, with a spring bonnet on her head. She is a wonder woman, a sign woman. She is a company of people likened to a woman - even as Jerusalem and Israel are likened to a woman (Isaiah 54:6), and the Church to a virgin (II Cor. 11:2). Her child also is a company of people, as intimated by Rev. 12:10-11. John did not see a crocodile or an alligator in heaven. He saw "That old serpent, called the devil and satan, which deceiveth the whole world." In the vision, John beholds him as "a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his head." Thus, he was a sign or wonder. I mention this, because some folks give a wrong interpretation to this wonder. Now let us notice a dozen proofs that -

THE MANCHILD IS NOT JESUS CHRIST

1. Jesus was not a sign or wonder child when He was born. He was actually a Jewish child, born in a stable in Bethlehem.
2. Jesus was not caught up to heaven as soon as He was born; but He was carried into Egypt. The sign child of our chapter was caught up to heaven as soon as it was born.
3. Jesus was born about sixty-nine years before this vision was given to John, which means that the birth described in Revelation 12 can have no reference to His birth in any sense.
4. Jesus' mother also fled into Egypt with her Babe; but when the manchild was taken up to heaven, the woman fled into the wilderness alone. John saw the facts of Revelation twelve from the Day of the Lord; hence, he expressed them as past, though they are still future.
5. Both Jesus and His mother returned from Egypt after some months. But the manchild is not seen returning from heaven, nor the woman from the wilderness.
6. Jesus went up to heaven, not as a child, but when He was thirty-three years old. The sign child goes to heaven as soon as it is born, while it is yet a child.
7. Mary was not in heaven - neither before, nor after, her Babe was born. The sign woman of our text chapter was first seen in heaven, then on earth also. There is not the slightest reference to Mary in this chapter.
8. We do not read that Mary cried with travail pain. No doubt, the birth of Jesus was lively and painless, as we read of the Hebrews in Exodus 1:19. This sign woman "cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered."
9. Mary was not a great wonder woman, but a simple Jewish maiden attracting no special attention even after her Child was born.
10. Mary was not sun-clad, with the moon under her feet. She wore no crown of twelve stars. She was simply a favored Jewish woman, whom God chose to be the mother of the Messiah. But the wonder woman will be sun-clad, moon-honored, and star-crowned.
11. Immediately after the birth and ascension of the manchild, war is seen in heaven; but we read of no war, neither in heaven nor on earth, at the birth of Jesus.
12. Satan was expecting the birth of the manchild; for he "Stood before the woman which was

ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born." But the birth of Jesus was a surprise to Satan. He did not stir up Herod against Him until after His birth - after the wise men from the East had inquired of him where the Christ should be born. Next, let us note, that -
THE MANCHILD IS NOT THE CHURCH

Permit some preliminary remarks before discussing the subject. We consider that the fulfillment of Revelation from the fourth chapter to the nineteenth chapter will be within seven years, which is called a "week" in Daniel 9:27. The Old Testament prophets speak frequently and profusely of that time, calling it a period of judgment upon the world and of chastisement upon Israel. With this, the New Testament writers agree. That period is called "the hour of temptation (or trial), which will be world-wide, in Revelation 3:10; and, "great tribulation," in Revelation 7:14. This time of trial, or tribulation, must not be confounded with the "great tribulation" of Matthew 24:21, 29. This latter will be localized to Palestine, and refers to the Jews only. This is a very important distinction and must be observed. The hour of trial or time of tribulation, named in Revelation three and seven, will cover nearly the whole of the seven years of gloom and judgment; but the tribulation of Matthew twenty-four will cover less than the latter half of the seven years. This Gentile Age will close before that seven years of trial will begin. Those days will be the beginning of the Millennium. Because Jesus will be due to reign then; but the nations will refuse to acknowledge Him. They will be usurpers; therefore, His dire dealings with them in wrath will be absolutely just.

Exactly what time in that week of seven years will the manchild be born? The answer to this question will help us greatly to determine his identity. Our text chapter contains the clue to the answer. Immediately after the birth of the manchild we read of war in heaven between Michael and Satan, and the latter is hurled down to the earth. No doubt, that war will begin near the commencement of the seven years. Satan's descent to the earth will occur shortly before the middle of the week, because he must come down and empower and enthrone the anti-Christ who shall reign three and a half years - Rev. 13:5. Hence, the manchild will be born a brief time - two hundred and fifty days - before the middle of the week of seven years.

Now we shall proceed to prove that the manchild is not the church, nor the bride of Christ. The same facts prove both to be impossible.

1. He is only a child. But the Body of Christ must be fully developed and grown as a body. "For we being many are one bread, and one Body: for we are all partakers of that one bread" I Cor. 10:17. Adam, a type of Christ in mystery, was a full-grown man. The bride will be composed of full-grown saints. Christ will not marry a child company, nor any children in the Body. Eve was not a child, but a woman "bued" of a rib taken from the man - Genesis 2:22 margin. She is a type of the Bride of Christ - Ephesians 5:30-32.

2. The birth and ascension of the manchild are too late in the seven years to represent either the Church or the Bride. "The fulness of the Gentiles" (Romans 11:25) is due to come in at the close of this age and before the "great tribulation" commences. Some of the Body of Christ - the Bride - must be in heaven when He sets up His throne there - Revelation four. These are full overcomers, who are due in heaven before that period of judgment arrives.

3. If the manchild is the entire church, who are the overcomers of Revelation 3: 7-13? As plain as English can put it, we read that they shall be kept "from the hour of temptation". Jesus says, "Because thou hast kept the Word of My patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." How will He keep them? By taking them up through the door which is open in heaven - Rev. 3:8. Certainly the Philadelphia saints will not be among that manchild company. They will be off the scene about three years before the manchild is born. If the manchild is the entire church, then the Philadelphia saints will be compelled to be translated after the week begins and taken out of the tribulation. But, Revelation 3:10 declares that they will not even dip into the tribulation of Revelation 7:14 from which the innumerable company will be taken.

4. If the manchild is the whole church, who are the four living ones and the twenty four elders of Revelation four and five? Remember, John saw them in heaven long before he saw the sign child born. When he beheld the throne placed in heaven and One sitting upon it, he also saw those living ones and elders "in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne." You say that the living ones are Israel? No, not Israel, neither are they angels; for they themselves declare their identity, saying, "Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every

kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on (over) the earth" - Rev. 5:9-10. They are Jew and Gentile believers. A critical study of this book shows that they will have a more intimate and responsible place in heaven than any other company. They will be very closely associated with the Lord in executing His will in heaven and on earth. Most certainly, they represent a very vital portion of the church, and will be in the glory many months before the manchild will be born. We believe firmly that the Smyrna and Philadelphia saints - the overcomers of Revelation 2:8-11 and 3:7-13 - will be the living creatures and elders of Revelation four and five.

5. If the manchild is the entire church, who are the innumerable company of Revelation 7:9-17? John declares distinctly that, after seeing the living ones and elders in heaven, he saw that "a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands." These are another company and have a different place, a lesser place, than those in Revelation four and five; but they will be in glory before the manchild is born. Nothing can be clearer than this. Now who is that vast throng, if the manchild is the church? If he is the entire church, then that great multitude is the larger part of the manchild; which cannot be, if they are already in heaven when he is born. Someone replies that they are the tribulation saints, that they come out of the great tribulation after the church is in heaven. How unreasonable and unscriptural! That makes the greatest revival ever known take place during those days of darkness and sorrow. Instead, the repeated statement is that "they repented not" - Rev. (9:20-21; 16:9-11. If there should be a great revival then, none of them will get to heaven. Comparatively few will believe, which constitute the souls under the altar (Rev. 6 and 15) and the woman in the wilderness and her seed (Rev. 12:14, 17), The innumerable throng is the vast bulk of the church. The simplest most natural and reasonable way to view these different companies is as John has recorded them. The living ones and elders appear in heaven first; a little later, the innumerable multitude; and, finally, the manchild. This is not farfetched, but most logical and harmonic.

6. If the manchild is the church, whose is the "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"?- Rev. 12:10. Is that not the voice of the four living ones and the twenty four elders whom we hear in the preceding chapters again and again, and of the vast throng of Revelation 7:9-17? Note Rev. 4:8-11; 5:8-10; 6:1-5; 7:13; 8:2, 7, 8, 12; 10:7. Who are those termed "our brethren," in Revelation 12:10? Of course, they are the manchild, whoever he is; but, they are not the whole church, because two particular companies are seen in heaven before these arrive there and one or both of these two calls the third company "our brethren." For the same reason, they are not the bride of Christ.

7. If the manchild is the whole church, who is the sign woman or mother of the sign child? Who is the mother of all the saints whom John saw in heaven, including the living ones and the elders and the countless throng? Solve this problem, please. Someone answers, "Israel." If that be true, then the child is vastly larger than his mother. When I was an urchin, a riddle was put to me. What is bigger than its mother? Vinegar was the answer. Most views of this chapter are vinegar interpretations sure enough. If Israel constitutes the mother entirely, how and when does she get to heaven. What is she doing in heaven anyway? I thought that Israel was God's earthly people! For the wonder woman is seen first in heaven. If the innumerable company of chapter seven will be saved during the tribulation days as some claim and, hence, be Jewish; then, like with vinegar, the mother is formed after the child is born. Do you see into what dense fog some interpreters land us? One fellow dares to say that the bride of the Lamb is the mother of the manchild. This is almost too silly to be considered. The marriage of the Lamb and His bride will not take place until about two and a half years after the manchild is born; and births are not considered legitimate until after marriage. Neither will the bride be on earth at that time nor afterward. The church is not a part of the bride; but the bride is a part of the church. She is a rib company, divinely taken out of the church and builded into a bride.

The manchild cannot be the bride of the lamb. We have already given some reasons against it. Here is the chief reason. The bride company is due in heaven before "the week" of judgment, the seven years "hour of temptation" (trial, or tribulation), begins. Who should be the first to meet the Lord in the air, if not the bride? Who can more fittingly represent the bride group than the

Philadelphia overcomers? To them are made two unique promises: First: "I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and has kept My Word, and hast not denied My Name"- Rev. 3:8. Second: "Because thou hast kept the Word of My patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth" - Rev. 3:10. That no one may mistake our Lord's meaning, the next verse adds, "Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown." The Philadelphia saints, the overcoming bride rank, will be caught away into heaven without any travail pain. Walking now as "the children (sons) of light, and the children (sons) of the day," and being awake, watchful, and sober, they will depart to glory while it is yet day before the night and darkness and "sudden destruction" shall arrive. Consider very carefully these verses - "When they are saying, "Peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall in no wise escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief: for ye are all sons of light, and sons of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness; so then let us not sleep, as do the rest, but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep sleep in the night; and they that are drunken are drunken in the night. But let us, since we are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for a helmet, the hope of salvation" - I Thess. 5:3-8 Revised Version. If the manchild were the bride group, his birth would take place before the period which is called "darkness and ... gloominess," "the hour of temptation," and "travail." Instead, it is clear that he is born near the middle of that period, and just before satan is ejected from heaven. The manchild is of Israel, as we shall certainly see.

WHO ARE THE 144,000

It is claimed by some that the 144,000 represent the bride of Lamb. This, too, is very unscriptural and unreasonable. They are wholly of Israel - 12,000 being taken out of each of the twelve tribes of Israel - Rev. 7:4-8. In Rev. 14:1-5 we see them in heaven "before the throne, and before the four beasts (living ones), and the elders." Observe that the living ones and elders are nearer the throne than the 144,000. They are "the firstfruits (of Israel) unto God and to the Lamb." See Jeremiah 2:3 and James 1:18. Their song is the song of Moses, because they are not of "every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation" like those recorded in Revelation four and five and 7:9-17. They "follow the Lamb" - 14:4. They cannot be the bride; for a real bride does not follow her husband, but moves by his side as one with him. The 144,000 cannot be the bride company, because they are not seen in heaven until near the middle of the week of seven years; while the living ones and elders and the innumerable company are there long before - Revelation four, five, and seven. The living ones assist in the very activities of those seven years.

THE WONDER WOMAN

Before we identify the wonder child, let us consider his mother - the wonder woman. Jerusalem, representing Israel, is likened to a woman in Isaiah 54:6 - "For the Lord hath called thee as a woman forsaken and grieved in spirit, and a wife of youth, when thou was refused, saith thy God." The church is compared to a woman in II Corinthians 11:2 - "I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ," said the apostle Paul. Hence, we believe that this sign woman figures a vast company of God's people. All those who scripturally believe the gospel "are the children of Abraham" and constitute "the household of faith" - Galatians 3:7; 6:10. These include believers before Christ came and since He came. These are called "the household of God" and "the whole family in heaven and earth" - Ephesians 2:19; 3:15; 4:12. Believers on Jesus during this age are called out to His Name and constitute "the body," or church of Christ, or "My church," as Jesus said - Matthew 16:18.

Observe who will be in heaven when the manchild is born. Enoch and Elijah and Moses are already there. Many Old Testament saints, whose bodies came out of the graves when Christ was raised and appeared to people in Jerusalem, are also there - Matthew 27:52-53. They obtained "a better resurrection," and are "just men made perfect"; that is, they have glorified bodies - Hebrews 11:35; 12:23. The living ones and twenty four elders, representing the Philadelphia overcomers, will be there - Revelation four and five. They are likely the "ten thousands of His saints," which Enoch saw - Jude 14. The great multitude of Revelation 7:9-17 will be in heaven then. All these individuals and groups of believers, Old Testament and New Testament saints, will form the great wonder woman in heaven or "the whole family in heaven" - Ephesians 3:15.

The dazzling raiment of the woman indicates this interpretation. She is clothed with the sun, adorned by the moon, and crowned with stars. All the glorified saints in heaven at that moment will constitute the sign woman, even as an entire assembly on earth is often called "a mother assembly." Though the majority of the members of an assembly be babes and children, yet its full-grown and spiritual members give it the character of a mother. Certain individuals, by their constant and bright shining, crown it with splendor and honor. With this simple illustration before us, let us look closely at the woman's regalia.

She is "clothed with the sun," the beauty and character of Christ and His bride - the mystical Christ. In Malachi 4:2, our Lord is termed "the sun of righteousness"; and all believers "have put on Christ" - Galatians 3:27. Clothing speaks of character, station, and wealth, as well as of adornment. As Jesus Anointed is the bright array of individual believers, indicating their high position and righteous nature, so Christ and those saints whose bodies shall "be conformed (fashioned) to the body of His glory" will invest the sign woman with heavenly lustre and splendor - Philippians 3:21. They will co-operate with Jesus to finish the resurrection and translation of the saints. The interest of the glorified will be so deep, and the tension so great, and the activities so untiring during the first part of those seven years, that we read of "silence in heaven" for only half an hour - Revelation 8:1. Satan and apostatized Christendom will strive to the uttermost to keep the manchild company from being translated.

Who is the manchild? You have waited long for the answer. We believe that the 144,000 of Revelation seven and fourteen are that very manchild. Isaiah gives us the clue to the answer, for he also speaks of the same "man child" - Isaiah 66:5-9. He exclaims. "Hear the Word of the Lord, ye that tremble at His Word .. 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 man child." The fact that Isaiah wrote of the birth of a man child is proof positive that the manchild is of Israel, and not Gentile at all.

Someone may object to them being the same, because the one which Isaiah saw was born without any travail pain but the one which John records was with great pain. Remember, that Isaiah wrote only of kingdom matters. He knew nothing of the church whose sphere is world-wide. He was concerned for the Jews then gathered into and around Jerusalem. John saw the wonder woman in heaven and on earth; but Isaiah saw only God's chosen people Israel, and as related to the promised land. He had no vision of the activities which shall then obtain in heaven, and of the travail pain of the sign woman that takes place in heaven.

Whatever the terrible conditions that will obtain on earth generally then, Isaiah was occupied only with the "great tribulation" of nearly three years duration which will engulf the Jews in Palestine - Matthew 24:15-21. It is well known among them as "Jacob's trouble" and "the indignation" - Jeremiah 30:7; Isaiah 26:20. It is a part of the forty two months of treading under foot of Jerusalem by the Gentiles - Revelation 11:2 The travail pain of Zion of which Isaiah speaks here refers directly to that time of tribulation, trouble, or indignation. That was all the travail he beheld; and yet, he beheld with astonishment a birth, a brief time before. Zechariah records that "in that day shall there be a great mourning in Jerusalem," because of the iron heel of the nations gathered around her - Zechariah 12:11; 14:1-2. Moved by the out-poured "Spirit of grace and of supplications," the Jews will cry out to God for deliverance. As a result, Isaiah in amazement exclaims, "Shall a nation be born at once? For as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children" - Isaiah 66:8. But that birth will occur nearly three years after the birth of the manchild. Thus, there will be two births distinct from each other.

The time of the birth of the "manchild" and that of Zion's "children" also proves that the manchild of Isaiah's prophecy and that of John's are identical. Both Isaiah and John wrote of the period in which Jehovah shall deliver His people Israel. They both wrote concerning Israel. To Isaiah, the identity of the mother of the manchild is veiled. He says only "Before she travailed, she brought forth," without stating who "she" is: but he shows plainly that Zion is the mother of "her children" - Isaiah 66:7-8. It was left for John to tell who "she" is, even the wonder woman, as "a great wonder in heaven" - because the same woman should be seen first in heaven, then later on earth. In heaven, she is partly Jewish and partly Gentile, including all the glorified saints. But on earth, she is Israel, at least what Isaiah saw of her; for he saw her in Palestine only. John saw her also on earth, as the woman in the wilderness; that is, in the world. This may include gentile believers also, who will accept Christ in that troublous time.

Evidently, the 144,000 constitute the manchild. It is clear that Revelation seven and fourteen refer to Israel. The sealing of Israel is recorded in Revelation seven. Their showing in heaven is recorded in chapter fourteen. Is it not significant that the birth of the manchild should occur between these two events? It is most natural and logical that the 144,000 should reach heaven as the birth of the manchild. The sturdy character of both indicates that they are identical. The sign child is termed "a man child," literally, "a manly strong son." The different expressions mean that the wonder offspring is unusually strong, vigorous, robust, and imposing, though called a "child." The company "our brethren" (named in Rev. 12:10-11), which answers thereto, is of the same sturdy nature. By faith in the blood of the Lamb which will mean much in that awful time and by their bold testimony, they overcame satan who will stir heaven, hell, and earth against them. They will be in great jeopardy; but "they loved not their lives unto the death"- Rev, 12:11. They will be manly, strong, and bold. The purity, devotion, and strength of the 144,000 agree with the above.

THE APOSTOLIC DYNAMITE

The apostles were men of unique courage, endurance, faith, and spiritual power. They wrought mighty miracles, signs, and wonders. Their equal has not been witnessed since Paul's day- II Corinthians 12:11-12. They suffered reproach, imprisonment, and finally death for their untiring zeal. We have no record that they grew up into the full matured stature of men in Christ Jesus according to Paul's gospel; but their might in Christ and for Him was phenomenal. The phrase "a man child," or literally "a manly son," describes them exactly. They were all Israelites, termed "the twelve apostles of the Lamb" - Rev. 21:14. They will not be the foundations of the wall of the city. Neither were the apostles organized or incorporated. They were simply joined, or added, to the Lord - Acts 5:13-14; 11:24.

Exactly so will be the unbending character and faith and the unique power of the manchild company, the 144,000. Bear in mind, that the apostles' career filled out the last of the "seventy weeks...determined" upon Daniel's people Israel. Six determined blessings crowned that week of seven years, which should have been the opening of the Millennium if the Jews had accepted Christ the Blessor. How fitting then that the same sort of men with similar zeal, self-sacrifice, and dynamite, should introduce the new age and link the King with heaven and earth. They will be caught up to the throne and attend His wedding on high.

Birth means the coming into view of one actually alive some time before. The 144,000 are sealed a considerable time prior to the birth of the manchild. It may be known to God only that they are of Israel, because they are reckoned as a part of the Church. We believe that they are the wise virgins of Matthew twenty-five, because they are called "virgins" in Revelation 14:4. Hence, "at midnight (the middle of the week) there is a cry, if not the "two witnesses" of Revelation eleven? For they will be on duty during those days. Satan knows that the 144,000 virgin believers hope to be translated, even as the vision declares - "The dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born" - Rev. 12:4. He will hinder, if possible, their translation. That will occasion the travail of the wonder woman in Heaven.

We may think people persecute us now because of our experience of Pentecost. But, ah! During those days of man's stout rebellion, with the bulk of the Church in glory, saints will do some believing to keep things afloat. So terrible will be the time, that the foolish virgins will have to "buy" oil. That is, with great difficulty they will receive the Spirit, but will miss the translation. Is it any wonder that the redeemed host in Heaven will be in travail for the deliverance of the wise virgins, the 144,000? While the devil is moving men against them on earth, he is resisting Michael who engages to cast him out of Heaven.

THE 144,000 IN HEAVEN

The description of the 144,000 (Rev. 14:1-5) corresponds with these facts. They "were not defiled with women"; that is, they are not sectarian. "Women" here means religious organizations. "They are virgins"; that is, they have no earthly head or lord. Beyond doubt, they are the wise virgins of Matthew twenty-five, who have "oil in their vessels with their lamps." They are anointed, or sealed, with the Holy Spirit. "They ... follow the Lamb," which further explains their chastity and separation. The same virgins thus also follow the bride - Psalm 45:14. Theirs is a life of sacrifice and suffering, because Jesus alone is their official Head and Lord. It will be no small item to be wholly separated unto Christ in that day, when apostatized Christendom will be one gigantic corporation. It is so difficult now, that few saints can endure to be outside of organizations. How much worse it will be then!

The 144,000 are "the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb"; that is, the fruits of Israel. See Jeremiah 2:3. Also, James said to Israel, "Of His own will begat He us with the Word of Truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures" - James 1:18. Such the Hebrew Christians were at the beginning of this age. Likewise, the 144,000 will be the firstfruits of Israel at the opening of the next age. Hebrew believers were the link between the kingdom and the church at the first. Likewise, these will be the link presently between the church and kingdom. Believers on Jesus in Israel form the nucleus of the church when He went away; and Israelite believers in Christendom will form the nucleus of the kingdom when He is about to return. God sees them as Israel and seals them; that is, anoints them with the Holy Spirit. Lastly, "they are without fault before the throne of God." This agrees with the words about the manchild, that he is "caught up unto God, and to His throne." But neither one is said to be "in the midst of the throne," as is said of the living creatures - Rev. 4:6. The living creatures and elders are nearer the throne than the 144,000; hence, the latter cannot be the bride of the Lamb.

The manchild "was to rule all nations with a rod of iron." The promise to rule the nations is given to the overcomer in the church of Thyatira - Re.v. 2:26-27. God said to His Son, "Thou shalt break them (the nations) with a rod of iron; Thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel" - Psalm 2:9. This promise includes the entire church, or body of Christ; hence, it is made to Thyatira overcomers also. Paul asks saying, Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? ... "Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" - I Cor. 6:2-3. All who are members of the body of Christ will reign with Him in some measure; but, certain ones will reign in much closer fellowship with Him than others, even as they walk in more intimate communion with Him now. The manchild will rule with Christ in a higher sense than some others in the church.

Study Revelation 21:12-24. There we see the 144,000 as the wall of the holy city. Note, also, the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. "He measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel." Let no one think that the wall will be built of brick and mortar, man's products; but of "living stones" - I Peter 2:5 Revised Version. Saints will not simply be in that city. They will constitute the city. Likewise, saints will constitute the wall around the city. Now observe, that "the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it." Thus we see in what sense the manchild, the 144,000, will rule the nations.

We submit this interpretation of the manchild to every honest student of God's Word, as the simplest and most in harmony with the rest of the scriptures. I beg of you not to discard it and decry it, until you have investigated it thoroughly from A to Z.