



Class 3

The Great  
Red Dragon

vs

The Woman

Part 2

**The Beasts of Revelation**

# Why Study Revelation 12?

- It outlines dramatic, earth-quaking events of extreme importance in the divine plan, that would forever re-shape the course of history
- It contains practical exhortation and warning for disciples living during those events and for disciples today
- It explains how the “Man of Sin” of 2 Thess. 2 would be revealed
- It is the source of false beliefs in Christendom



# The Key Players



**The Dragon**

**The Woman**

**The Man-Child**

# The Great Red Dragon – Pagan Roman Empire

- The Dragon shares many similar features to that of Daniel's 4<sup>th</sup> Beast (Symbolizing the Roman Empire)
- The language is also used by both Peter & Paul to describe pagan Roman Empire
  - Compare Rev. 12:4,9,10 with 1 Pet. 5:8 & Eph. 6:8-9
- Dragon – Ezek. 29:3 – used initially of Egypt, later conquered by Roman Empire & used as symbol of R.E.
- Serpent – Gen 3:15 – Pagan R.E. bruised Christ's heel
- Red = fiery – pagan generals carried fire ahead of them into battle as offering to the gods
- 7 heads – location identified as Rome (Rev. 17:9-10)
- Heads Crowned – (rather than 10 horns) Symbol of kingly or imperial dignity

# The Woman of Revelation 12

**Woman: Representative of the Christian Community  
(both true & False)**

## The Woman in Glory (12:1):

- Clothed with the sun
  - Clothed with imperial favour
- Moon under her feet
  - Pagan religious system under her subjection
- Crown of 12 stars on head
  - Awarded political ascendancy and honour through her military achievements





# The Woman of Revelation 12

Rev 12:2,5

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

“And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron...”

- Christian community pregnant with iniquity (2 Cor. 11:2)
- Gives birth to a man-child



# Who Is The Man-Child?

- He is to rule all nations with a rod of Iron (v5)
- He is caught up to God and to his throne (v5)
- He is given the name Michael (meaning: Who is like God) – v7
- He commands angels (v7)
- He wages war against the dragon (pagan Rome) and casts him to the earth (i.e. out of the political heavens) – v7-9
- He conquors in the name of Christ (v11)
- He establishes a Kingdom of God on earth (v10)

**CONSTANTINE**

# CONSTANTINE

Full Name: Flavius Valerius Aurelius Constantinus

AKA: Constantine the Great, Constantine I, Saint Constantine

Born: Feb. 27, 272

Father: Constantius Flavious

Death: May 22, 337 (66yrs)

Mother: Helena



## Notable Achievements:

- First Christian Roman Emperor
- Overthrew Pagan Rulers in name of Christendom
- Reversed Persecutions of Diocletian
- Signed Edict of Milan (313) giving religious toleration
- Re-united the Empire under one head
- Transformed Greek colony Byzantium into new imperial residence, Constantinople

# Constantine's Rise to Power

- V2 – Pregnant woman travailing in giving birth and pained to be delivered
- V4 – Dragon stands ready to devour woman's child when it was ready to be delivered
- V5 – Woman gives birth to the man-child
- V5 – Child caught up to God and to His throne
- *V6 – Woman flees into wilderness*
- V4 – Dragon's tail draws 1/3 of stars of heaven and casts them to the earth
- V7 – War in Heaven: Michael vs The Dragon
- V9 – Dragon cast out of Heaven into the earth



# The Empire in the time of Constantine

< 285 AD

Emperor: Diocletian

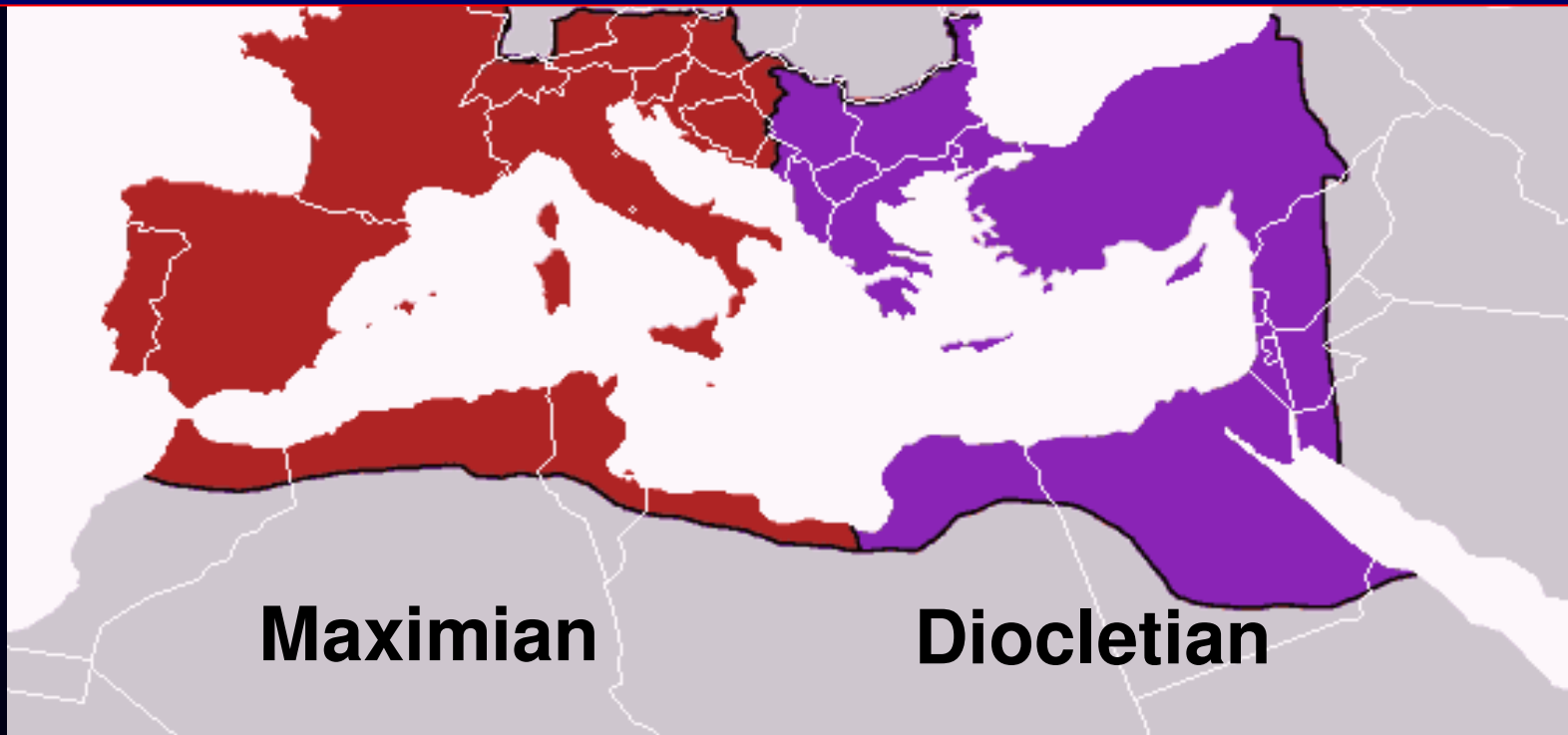


# The Empire in the time of Constantine

**285 - 293 AD**

**Emperor: Diocletian**

“Each emperor would have his own court, his own military and administrative faculties, and each would rule with a separate [praetorian prefect](#) as chief lieutenant. Maximian ruled in the West, from his capitals at [Mediolanum](#) ([Milan](#), [Italy](#)) or [Augusta Treverorum](#) ([Trier](#), [Germany](#)), while Diocletian ruled in the East, from [Nicomedia](#) ([İzmit](#), [Turkey](#)). The division was merely pragmatic: the Empire was called "indivisible" in official panegyric, and both emperors could move freely throughout the Empire.”



# The Tetrarchy – Rule of 4

293 AD

Emperor: Diocletian



**Augustus:**  
Senior  
Emperors

**Caesar:**  
Junior  
Emperors



# The Tetrarchy – Rule of 4

293 AD

Emperor: Diocletian

**Great Persecution of Christians, immediately prior to Constantine's Political Birth:**

**Rev 12:2**

“And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.” (KJV)

“She was pregnant and cried out in pain as she was about to give birth.” (NIV)

**Augustus:**  
Senior  
Emperors

**Caesar:**  
Junior  
Emperors



Constantine went to serve in Diocletian's Court in anticipation he would be made Caesar; He was there during the Universal Christian persecution beginning in 302/303.



# The Tetrarchy – Rule of 4

304 AD

Emperor: Diocletian



**Augustus:**  
Senior  
Emperors

**Caesar:**  
Junior  
Emperors



# The Tetrarchy – Rule of 4

304 AD

Emperor:



**Augustus:**  
Senior  
Emperors

**Caesar:**  
Junior  
Emperors



# The Tetrarchy – Rule of 4

304 AD

Emperor: Galerius



**Augustus:**  
Senior Emperors

**Caesar:**  
Junior Emperors



# The Tetrarchy – Rule of 4

304 AD

Emperor: Galerius



**Augustus:**  
Senior  
Emperors

**Caesar:**  
Junior  
Emperors



# The Tetrarchy – Rule of 4

304 AD

Emperor: Diocletian



**Augustus:**  
Senior  
Emperors

**Caesar:**  
Junior  
Emperors



# The Tetrarchy – Rule of 4

305 AD

Emperor: Galerius



**Augustus:**  
Senior Emperors

**Caesar:**  
Junior Emperors



# The Tetrarchy – Rule of 4

306 AD

Emperor: Galerius



306 – Constantius dies of illness; army “forces position of Augustus” upon Constantine. Sends picture of himself to Galerius robed as Augustus – an enraged Galerius makes him Caesar.

**Augustus:**  
Senior Emperors

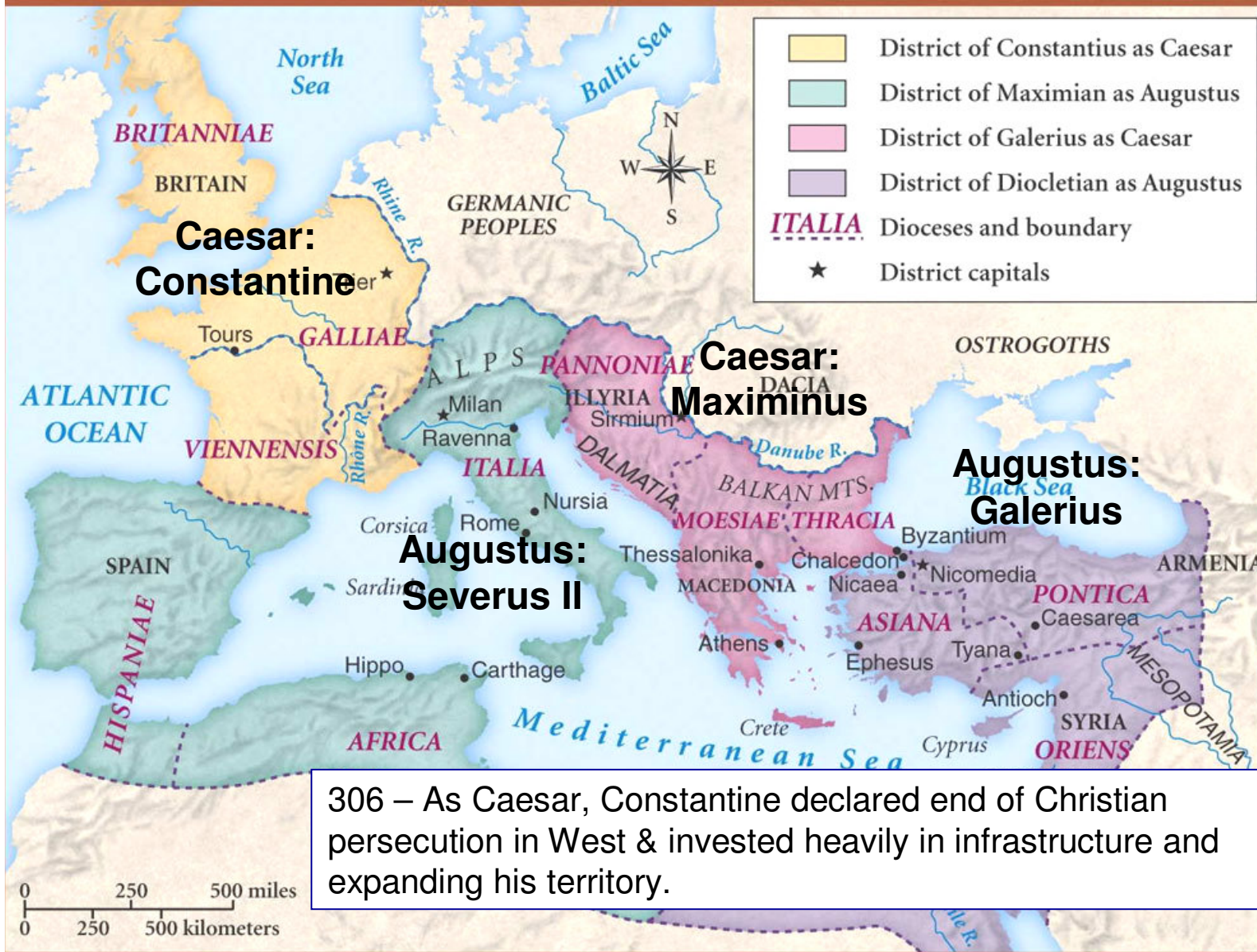
**Caesar:**  
Junior Emperors



# The Tetrarchy – Rule of 4

306 AD

Emperor: Galerius



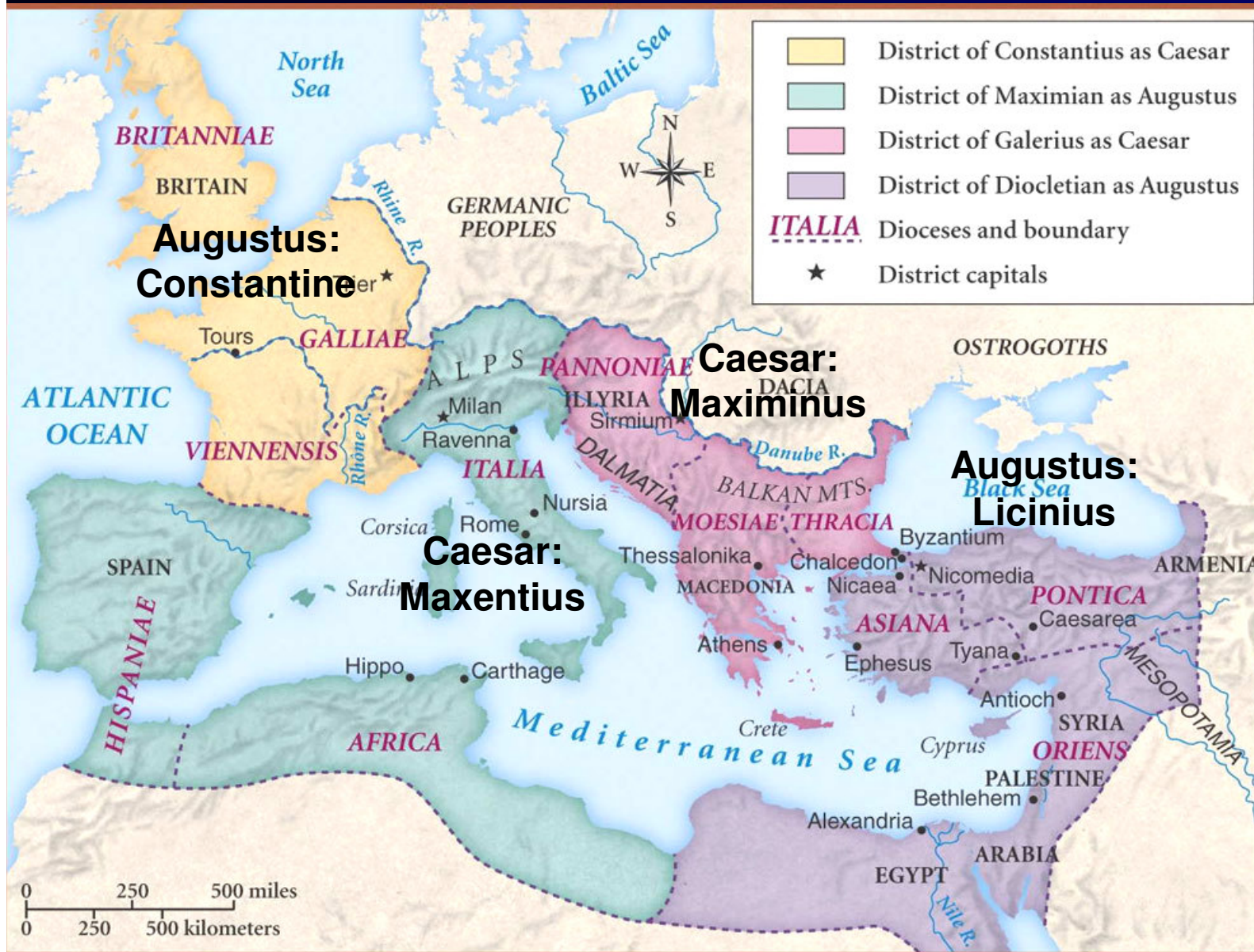
**Augustus:**  
Senior Emperors

**Caesar:**  
Junior Emperors



# Tetrarchy Destabilized

311 AD



**Augustus:**  
Senior Emperors

**Caesar:**  
Junior Emperors



# Tetrarchy Destabilized

312 AD



**Augustus:**  
Senior  
Emperors

**Caesar:**  
Junior  
Emperors



# The Battle of Milvian Bridge

312 AD – Constantine vs Maxentius

## Rev 12:4

“...and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.”



# The Battle of Milvian Bridge

312 AD – Constantine vs Maxentius

- Maxentius had army 2 times size of Constantine's
- Constantine's army emerged with sign of the Labarum on their shields
- Constantine defeated Maxentius and drove him into the river

“When Constantine's army made its appearance, some of its soldiers bore unusual markings on their shields: instead of the traditional pagan standards, a new sign, the *labarum*, was mounted. According to Lactantius, Constantine was visited by a dream the night before the battle, wherein he was advised "to mark the heavenly sign of God on the shields of his soldiers...by means of a slanted letter X with the top of its head bent round, he marked Christ on their shields.“ Eusebius describes another version, where, while marching at midday, "he saw with his own eyes in the heavens a trophy of the cross arising from the light of the sun, carrying the message, Conquer By This". During the following night, in a dream, Christ appeared with the heavenly sign and told him to make standards for his army in that form.” (Wikipedia)



# Result: The Birth of Constantine

## 312 AD – Constantine Enters Rome

- October 29, 312 – Constantine enters Rome as a Christian and neglects to make the pagan sacrifice at the temple of Jupiter
- The Senate named him “the Greatest Augustus” in the Empire
- November 9, 312 - the former base of the Imperial Horse Guard was redeveloped into the Lateran Basilica – the official seat of the Bishop of Rome who is the Pope

### Rev 12:5

“And she gave birth to a son, a male child who is to rule all the nations with a rod of iron; and her child was caught up to God and to His throne.” (NAS)

# The Woman of Revelation 12

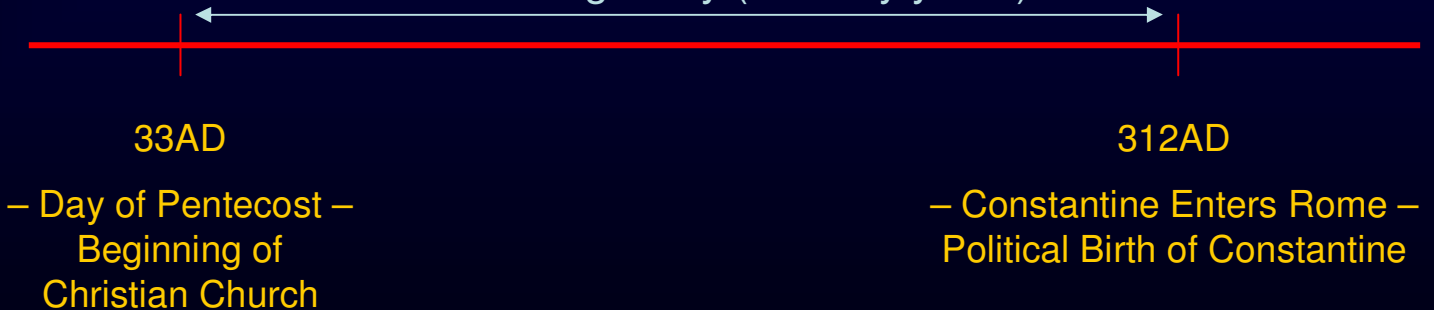
Rev 12:2,5

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

“And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron...”

- Christian community pregnant with iniquity
- Gives birth to a man-child

Period of Pregnancy (279 day/years)



# Constantine Caught Up To God

## Rev 12:5-6

“and her child was caught up to God and to His throne.” (NAS)

- Constantine retained the title “Pontifex Maximus” which emperors bore as heads of the pagan priesthood
- 312 - the former base of the Imperial Horse Guard was redeveloped into the Lateran Basilica – the official seat of the Bishop of Rome who is the Pope
- 325 – He summoned Council of Nicea (1<sup>st</sup> Ecumenical Council)
- Constantine removed paganism and thus would unveil “the man of sin”:

## II Thess. 2:3-9

“Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God...

“And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan...”

# The Woman Persecuted

## Rev 12:5-6

“And the woman fled into the wilderness where she had a place prepared by God, so that there she might be nourished for one thousand two hundred and sixty days.” (NAS)

### Persecution in West:

“The reign of Constantine established a precedent for the position of the Christian Emperor in the Church; Constantine considered himself responsible to God for the spiritual health of his subjects, and thus he had a duty to maintain orthodoxy. The emperor ensured that God was properly worshipped in his empire; what proper worship consisted of was for the Church to determine. In 316, Constantine acted as a judge in a North African dispute concerning the heresy of the [Donatists](#). After making a decision against the Donatists, Constantine led an army of Christians against Christians. After 300 years of pacifism, this was the first intra-Christian persecution.” (Wikipedia)

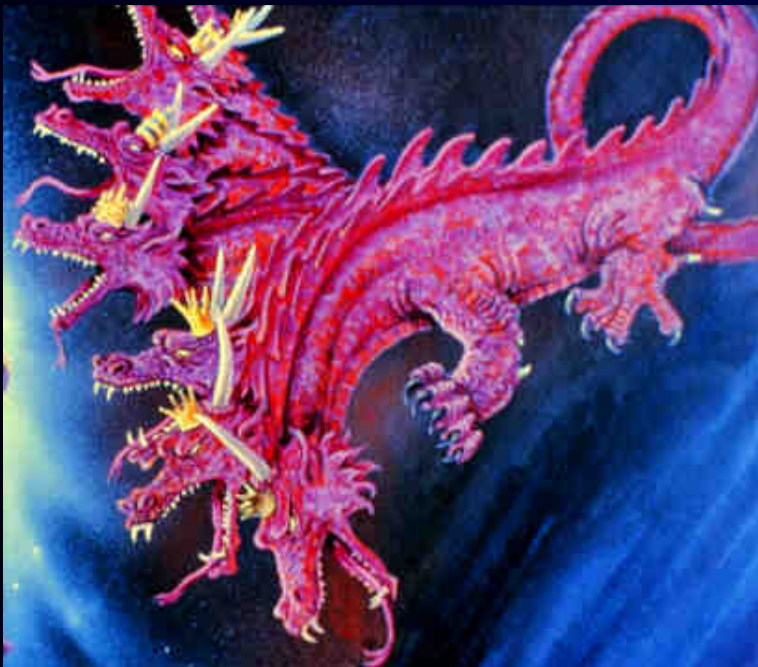
### Persecution in East:

320 – Licinius began persecution of Christians in Eastern Empire

# The Dragon's Tail

## Tail:

“And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth...” (Rev 12:4)



**Stars of Heaven:** Administrative rulers in the Roman political Heavens

**Cast to the earth:** loosing power -  
“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.” (Rev 12:9)

**His Tail Drew:** Implies it was an internal conflict – Dragon vs Dragon

**Question:** Was there ever a time when the Roman Empire was divided into 3 parts, each having their own leaders?

**Yes** – 312-313. Constantine in West, Licinius & Maximinus in East.  
313 - Maximinus attacked Licinius, whom Licinius conquered, subsequently adopting paganism.

# War in Heaven

## Rev. 12:7-9

“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.”

### Michael vs The Dragon

- 314 – 324: Several battles waged between the two
- 324: Great Civil War

### Constantine vs Licinius

“Licinius, aided by [Goth mercenaries](#), represented the past and the ancient [Pagan](#) faiths. Constantine and his [Franks](#) marched under the Christian standard of the [labarum](#), and both sides saw the battle in religious terms. Supposedly outnumbered, but fired by their zeal, Constantine's army emerged victorious in the [Battle of Adrianople](#). Licinius fled across the Bosphorus... but Constantine next won the [Battle of the Hellespont](#), and finally the [Battle of Chrysopolis](#) on 18 September 324. Licinius... surrendered to Constantine at Nicomedia... Thus Constantine became the sole emperor of the Roman Empire.” (Wikipedia)

# War in Heaven

## Rev. 12:7-9

“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.”

## Michael and Constantine:

*Daniel 11-12 / Revelation 12*

- “The great prince which standeth for the children of thy people”
- It was “a time of trouble such as never was” for the pagan regime
- Constantine brought many Christians from political obscurity to into political life, just as Michael raises many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth

# Now Is Come Salvation

## Rev 12:10-12

“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. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them...”

### **Why use this language?**

- The majority of the Christian people mistakenly believed the Kingdom of God was now on earth in the figure of “the church” and that Christ was there in the figure of Constantine

### **Was it real?**

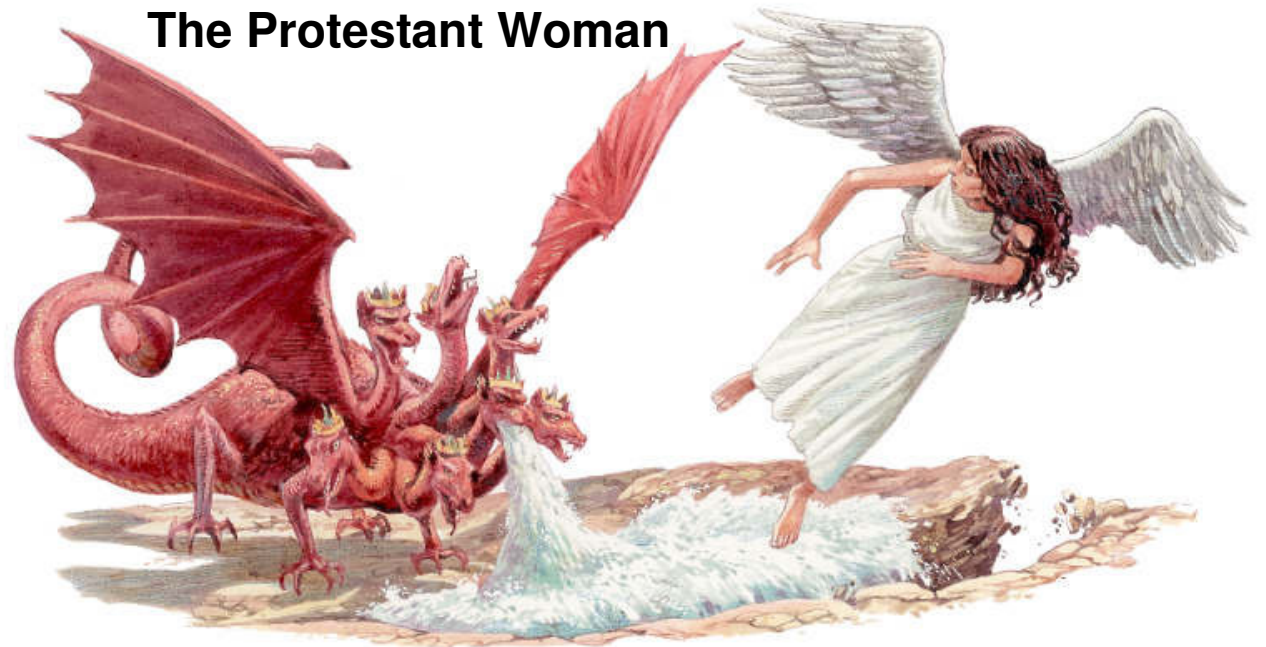
- V13-17 – The woman is still persecuted and must flee to the extremities of the empire

# The Woman Is Divided

The Roman-Catholic Harlot-Woman



The Protestant Woman



# The Christian Community

- The Sun-Invested Woman (v1)
  - The Roman Catholic Community favoured by Constantine & exalted in the Empire
- The Fleeing Woman (v13-17)
  - The Protestant Community rejecting Catholicism
  - Incorporates the remnant “of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ” (v17)
  - She is persecuted by the dragon & receives help from the earth & is protected for 1,260 day/years



# The Woman Flees Again

## Rev 12:14

“And the two wings of the great eagle were given to the woman, in order that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she was nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent.” (NAS) ↓

- 1,260 days/years – Rev. 12:6
- Commenced: 312AD (“Birth” of Constantine)
- End: 1572 – St. Bartholomew Massacre
- Same time period as Rev 12:6 & 11:2



“In 102 B.C. the Roman Consul Gaius Marius decreed that the eagle would be the symbol of the Senate and People of Rome.”  
(Wikipedia)



# A Change in the Dragon / Serpent

## Rev 12:14

“And the two wings of the great eagle were given to the woman, in order that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she was nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent.” (NAS)

V12 – The dragon “knoweth that he hath but a short time”

**Pagan**

V14 – The woman is hid from face of serpent for 1,260 years!

**Christian**

- Pagan elements were adopted into Christendom
- The very characteristics of the dragon were continued by Constantine – Persecution, Deception
- The dragon throne was adopted by Constantine in Byzantium / Constantinople



# The Earth Helps The Woman

## Rev 12:15-16

“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.”

- Water as Flood – symbol of invading army (Isa.8:7; Jer.46:7-8)
- The Earth – the common people (as opposed to the political heavens) standing up for liberties and freedoms of the people

“The woman, or persecuted minority found herself opposed by the forces of a so-called Christian state. The Circumcellions of North Africa, a movement from the lower strata of society, rose up in defence of the right of such as the Donatists to worship according to their conscience... They took up the sword in defence of political and religious liberty, and so effectively opposed the armies of Rome, as to cause their withdrawal.” (HPM)



# Lessons For Disciples Today

A woman in a white robe and crown stands on the left side of the slide. The background is a dark, abstract, colorful environment with swirling patterns in shades of blue, green, and red. The title 'Lessons For Disciples Today' is written in large, bold, yellow letters at the top.

- Teachers of wrong doctrine must be dealt with quickly, before it becomes infectious to the body and causes division
- Though naturally interested in politics, we must not become involved in any way with it
- Although “the earth” (democratic people) fight for our religious freedoms, we are to remain separate from them
- The world may promise liberty and freedom, but in the end it is a deception (2 Pet. 2:19)



# Sources

- 13 Lectures on the Apocalypse – R.Roberts
- The Book of Revelation: Verse by Verse – H.P.Mansfield
- The Dragon and the Lamb – W.G.Holton & G.Pearce
- The Vital Message of The Revelation for Christ's Servants Today – P.Billington
- Eureka, Volume 3 – Dr.J.Thomas
- Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia