

life group study guide

Sermon Discussion Notes for Oct. 25th

Revelation 11 - 13

Chapter 11

Vs. 1-2

- **DQ: What do you think the temple symbolizes?**
 - *the believing church, or the believing Israelites*
- **DQ: Why measure the temple and altar and worshippers?**
 - *Some have suggested that it means that John was supposed to get a true and accurate understanding of God's people/the church during this time. What do you think of this?*
- **DQ: What do you think "trampling the holy city" means?**
 - *(periods of unrestrained wickedness.)*

Vs. 3-6

- **DQ: What do the witnesses' powers and abilities tell you about them?**
 - *Power to keep rain from falling; to turn water into blood; and to inflict plagues*
 - *(THIS IS WHY PEOPLE THINK IT WILL BE ELIJAH AND MOSES)*
 - *Remember they are also the ones appearing to Jesus on the Mt. of Transfiguration; so they have been used as messengers at least once after their "deaths"*
- Two witnesses –
 - *Could be two actual individuals who will be martyred for the proclamation of the truth; or they may symbolize testifying believers in the final period before Christ returns. Or do they symbolize Moses & Elijah?*
 - *Called olive trees and lampstands because they would be symbols that God's people would understand from Old Testament as eyes and witnesses for the Lord.*
- *The periods of unrestrained wickedness are mixed with periods intense witnessing.*
- Fire consuming enemies
 - *actually happened to Elijah in 2 Kings. "If I am a t man of God, may fire come down from heaven and consume you" (Did twice)*
 - *But this time the fire is coming out of their mouths*
 - **DQ: What is the significance of this?** *That's where the power of God is coming out from. Through words and testimony!*

Vs. 7-14

- *Beast –first mention of the major opponent of God's people in the final days.*
- **DQ: What do you think they mean by the "Great City"?**
 - *Rome, Babylon, Jerusalem?*
 - *Could be talking about the place of Christ's death symbolically -- "in Rome" because in a sense, Rome's power extended throughout known a world and was immediately responsible for Christ's execution.*
 - **DQ: What does the reference to Sodom and Egypt mean?**
 - *Calling it Sodom refers to its low level of morality*

life group study guide

- and calling it Egypt emphasizes oppression and slavery.
- **DQ: What do you think the death and resurrection of the witnesses tell you about them and tell you about God?**
 - We know God's power to breathe life back into the dead;
 - Lazarus, the bones in Ezekiel, Christ and more!
 - STILL SHOCKING PEOPLE – love that!
 - And striking terror here!!
 - Making a point – validating their point, showing his power, showing the difference in care/destination/plan between God's people and non-God's people

NOTICE THE BIG CHANGE OF HEART – from mocking his servants to this?

- People were terrified and gave glory to the God of heaven --
- **DQ: Do you think that this is a point where people are repenting and coming to God?**
 - Bible Note says: this wasn't an act of repentance but the terrified realization of how powerful God in heaven was.
 - But . . . can you glorify God when you are a hardened hearted evil person who refuses to bow, worship, follow, obey God?
 - Are terror and repentance sometimes linked together, or are they different types of responses?

Vs. 15-19

- More worship is taking place—by elders again,
 - **DQ: What is different about what the elders say in worship here?**
 - Notice in their praise, they say: the one who is and who was; but omit and the one who is to come—because he has come!
 - **DQ: What do the elders worship God for (specifically) in this passage?**
 - 1) The power over the world, which has been allowed to rest with the prince of the world (Satan) is now taken back over fully by God.
 - 2) Judge the dead,
 - 3) reward your
 - 4) destroying those who destroy the earth.
 - **DQ: Why Is This Significant?**
 - *What We've Waiting For? What Martyrs Have Been Asking For.*
- The temple in heaven was opened and the ark of his covenant was there!
 - **DQ: Why is this Significant?**
 - The book of Revelation is always related to the deepest moral and spiritual experiences of Israel—this includes the experience of the Ark of the Covenant.
 - In the midst of the glorious vision of final things we are reminded of the ancient covenant.
 - God's ancient promises are not forgotten!
 - Notice this is a symbol God's powerful presence has arrived. His reign and rule are here and complete!
 - a sign that God's presence is always with us.
 - We no longer a need to have a secluded, holy, different, other-worldly place to meet with God!!

life group study guide

Chapter 12

Vs. 1-6

- **Learning about our ENEMY here.**
 - **Commentary:** (TIME) Frequently when John tells about a future event he speaks as though it were present or past. Here the situation is reversed; for he is relating an event that occurred in the past, possibly before creation, but writes as though it were just happening.
 - Time is different to God; he's not constrained by same past, present, future.
 - In the ancient world, there were ideas/stories/thoughts -- everything that happened in earth has previously happened in heaven.
 - This weird imagery that John is writing down, at the very least says that the birth of Christ has cosmic significance.

It is hard to figure out who all these characters symbolize:

- Who does The Woman symbolize?
 - Israel? The crown of twelve stars on her head = 12 tribes of Israel
 - All Christians? The heavenly mother of the pre-existent Messiah is also the heavenly mother of the Christians (and in vs. 17 the persecuted Christians are considered her offspring).
- Dragon = Satan
 - 7 heads symbolizing wisdom
 - and 10 horns symbolizing great power
 - corresponds with the beast with 10 horns mentioned in Daniel 7
 - 7 crowns
 - Sign of his dominion over the world
 - Mimics/counterfeit's Christ's crowns
 - Notice, in Revelation he is called five different names
 - HERE -- great dragon,
 - AND LATER ON-- he is called ancient serpent, devil, Satan, Accuser.
 - *Sometimes we ignore evil or say there is no such thing as evil; but this dragon cannot be ignored – it is full on EVIL! And wise and strong and powerful.*
- Baby = Messiah
 - And dragon is crouched in front of her to devour baby – because he knows this baby will take him down eventually.

Vs. 7-9

- What is this event all about? The original casting of Satan out of heaven, or his final exclusion??
- ***All your spiritual foes are ALREADY defeated foes! How does the knowledge of this help give us perspective about the end, evil, our enemy, etc.?***
 - Though Satan will ultimately be defeated by God, he's still a powerful force to be reckoned with. Christians shouldn't fear Satan, but we should respect his power and be on our guard against him at all times.
 - Love this image – he is already defeated. Like a beheaded dragon. But his body is still thrashing around and hurting people.

Vs. 10-12

- How is Satan overcome?

life group study guide



- By the blood of Jesus Christ, the Lamb
- And by the word of believer's testimony
- Why the end will be intense and super-hostile at the end;
 - because Satan knows his time is short!
 - *The victories of wickedness are temporary and deceptive*
 - *Their "time is short"*
 - *Evil belongs to time; goodness belongs to eternity.*

Vs. 13-17

- This seems to be a duplication of the story – but now the action is staged on the earth, not in heaven.
- **DQ: What does this mean?**
 - **The woman now is the earthly church which is persecuted by Satan, but is providentially saved from his onslaughts.
 - The church will be spared, for it is eternal.
 - Her children however will have to suffer for a while

Chapter 13

Vs. 1-10

- Remember that Satan counterfeits – this is the evil trinity trying to be like the Holy Trinity.
- **DQ: Based on this description of the beats, how do you envision him?**
 - Most believe he will be an actual person.
 - Some people believe that the Beast refers to the Roman Empire and most of the prophecies concerning the Beast have been fulfilled.
 - Some people believe that secular authority started with Roman Empire, but now continues throughout the generations.
- **DQ: Why is it important to understand the Beast is given his power?**

Vs. 11-18

- This piece of Scripture refers to the false prophet (mentioned in chapter 16, 19,20)
 - **DQ: Based on this description of the false prophet, how do you envision him?**
 - Some believe he is an actual person.
 - Some believe that the False Prophet is a symbolic way of referring to religious figures or institutions that actually serve worldly authorities.
- He performs miraculous signs; even causing fire to come down from heaven to earth in full view of men; and was given power to give breath to the image so that it could speak
 - COUNTERFEIT of what the Holy Spirit does!
 - **This is the reason why we can't rely on miracles alone to believe in what we believe!**
 - **Remember how Christ got wearied in New Testament by those who just wanted to see more miracles.**

life group study guide