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Faith Connection Bible Study Group
Logan Christian Fellowship
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Study #8 TAKE PLACE LATER

– The Symbols Explained: The Woman, the Child, the Dragon, the Beast from the Sea, the Beast from the Earth–

OPENING

Let's understand some of the symbolism that is used in Revelation. It's important to know what they represent and the truth they reflect.

John speaks about several signs or symbols in chapters 12 and 13.

DISCOVER – The Woman, the Child & the Dragon - Read Revelation 12:1-6... What does it all mean?

1. Let's look at the first great sign. Who is 'the Woman'?

John plainly says that this is a sign, so don't expect a literal woman like this to appear on earth. Women are often associated with religious systems in Revelation. Eg. Jezebel (2:20) – religious system of false teaching

The Great Harlot (17:2) – false religion

The Bride (19:7-8) – the church

This woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet and crown of 12 stars is Israel. This matches the dream of Joseph in Genesis 37 who saw the sun and moon and 11 other stars bowing to him – his father, mother and siblings came and paid homage to him as Prime Minister.

2. Who is 'the Child'?

This is the Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. Isaiah 6:9, "Unto us a child is born". Israel gave birth to Christ, via the line of David, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The ruling with an iron sceptre is a reference from Psalms 2 and we see it again in Rev. 19 – these are prophetic references to the Messiah and clearly is Jesus Christ.

3. Who is 'the Dragon'?

The Dragon has 7 heads and 10 horns, and 7 diadems (type of crown). This is a symbol... there is not literally a real dragon flying around in heaven. Very easy to interpret from verse 9, "that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan." Now, the devil certainly is a very real being but the dragon represents him. The 7 heads express the idea of wisdom, the 10 horns the idea of military power, possibly a 10-nation-confederation, and horns express authority such as political leadership.

4. What did his tail do?

The Dragon's tail swept a third of the stars out of the sky and flung them to earth. This describes when Satan was cast out of his position in heaven as an anointed angel (Ezekiel) when he rebelled against God. He took 1/3 of the angels with him.

5. What does it try to do to the woman and child?

The intent of Satan has always been to destroy Jesus. He tried to use Herod to slay every baby boy when Jesus was born. Throughout his ministry and also at the cross. Big mistake though – 1 Cor. 1:7-8. Jesus was crucified, buried, and resurrected and caught up to God in heaven.

There is a huge span of time between verses 5 and 6. It jumps from Jesus' ascension to the last half of the 7 year tribulation. Once the 7 year covenant with Israel is broken at the 3.5 year mark (according to Daniel), then all hell will break loose against the nation of Israel. They will flee from Jerusalem, being pursued by the Antichrist's army, but God will intervene and protect and preserve Israel during this time.

DISCOVER – The Conflict in Heaven – Read Revelation 12:7-12

5. Where does this happen and when?

We are told it occurs in heaven. But there is some debate as to when exactly this battle takes place. Is it something that occurred when Lucifer first rebelled and was kicked out? Or is it referring to a battle when Jesus died and resurrected?

I believe this is something that takes place during the Tribulation, most likely around the halfway point.

If this is the case, it means that Satan still has some kind of limited access to heaven. This lines up with Job 1:6-12 which refers to Satan having limited access to come before God. Why? God knows. But one of the things Satan enjoys doing is accusing us before God (Rev. 12:10). Names of our enemy: Dragon – ferocious beast, Serpent – cunning and wise, Devil – 'diablo' means 'accuser, slanderer', Satan – adversary.

- The Conflict on Earth –

Read Revelation 12:13-17

6. What happens after the war in heaven?

Satan kicked out and totally confined to the earth, so he is now totally focused on destroying the 'woman' or Israel. The Jews. This is best explained as the breaking of the covenant at 3.5 years in. It says God will protect this remnant of Israel in a prepared place in the desert...many Bible scholars believe this to be the south-east of Israel called Petra in Jordan. It has high cliff walls, and caves all cut in those high walls.

7. Who else does the Dragon attack?

Noticing that Israel is protected, Satan then focuses his evil attention on "the rest of the woman's offspring"...these are Gentiles who come to faith in Jesus during the Great Tribulation (Tribulation Saints). This either begins or continues the fierce persecution of all those who won't submit and worship the Antichrist. The martyrs of this period were spoken about in Rev. 6 and 7.

DISCOVER – The Two Beasts –

– The Beast from the Sea –

Read Revelation 13:1-10

8. Who is the Beast from the Sea?

Sea represents political turmoil or chaos (coming from Rev. 17:15). This is the Antichrist who rises out of the political chaos of all the nations as a man of peace who has the answers. The ten crowns on the ten horns is understood by many as his leadership over a group of ten nations. This is the same beast as in Daniel 7 which depicts this final dictator having authority over ten kingdoms. He will be in charge and the dragon will be empowering him.

9. What happened to one of the heads?

Many Bible scholars believe that this speaks of a man who is mortally wounded and then magically healed. It explains why people will want to worship him because he somehow manages to 'come back from the dead'. He imitates Jesus in His death and resurrection.

God permits this beast for 3.5years to make war against the saints...and to conquer them! He can't overcome their faith but he can destroy their physical lives.

– The Beast from the Earth –

Read Revelation 13:11-18

10. Who is the Beast from the Earth?

Earth literally means 'land'. Land often is a reference to Israel so some scholars believe that this person may even come have Jewish descent in him. However, he is known as the 'false prophet'. This is because of the message he speaks. He will be like a preacher or right-hand man, or Vice President of the Antichrist. Similar to a 'John the Baptist' who will promote a false Christ.

11. What does he do?

He speaks like a dragon and gets his authority from the first beast. He will cause people to worship the Antichrist, not himself. This is like an unholy Trinity...the dragon and his two beasts. Additionally, he will be able to perform miraculous signs and wonders.

12. What does he do with business and trade?

He sets up a control measure for commerce and business so that everyone will be required to have some kind of number or chip to buy or sell. We are very close to this. But we'll recognise it by the number of 'his name' – 666.

Don't be confused, it says it's man's number. Numbers mean things in the Jewish study of numbers. Six is man's number because he was created on the sixth day.... And three sixes is man's attempt to be like God. God is 777 – complete perfection – and man always tries to be like God but always falls short! He will try to have the trinity of perfection 777 but his best will only 666.

CLOSING THOUGHT:

This study looked at an unholy Trinity that is similar to God's holy trinity but so obviously different. But the world was deceived. Satan always will try to imitate with what is false, and believers need to beware and be familiar with the genuine. Instead of obsessing with fear and interest about the imitation – the Antichrist – how much more appropriate is it for Christians to be interested in the genuine: Jesus Christ!

Next study....

Study #9 – WHAT WILL TAKE PLACE LATER

– The Seven Bowls of Judgement -