



The Book of Revelation: Week 15

Chapters 12 - 13:

Darkness & Light

Media & Notes at:

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Review

- The last time we were together we looked at the trumpet judgments as well as the story of the two witnesses.
- We've seen how this section of the Book deals with the judgments that God will use to bring the nations into subjection to the government of His Son.
- In Chapters 12 and 13, John has additional visions which are outside of the main timeframe. The main chronology of the book follows the story of the last seven years of man's rulership of the Earth.

Revelation 12

1 Now a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and on her head a garland of twelve stars. 2 Then being with child, she cried out in labor and in pain to give birth. 3 And another sign appeared in heaven: behold, a great, fiery red dragon having seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads. 4 His tail drew a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to give birth, to devour her Child as soon as it was born. 5 She bore a male Child who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron. And her Child was caught up to God and His throne. 6 Then the woman fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days. (Revelation 12:1-6 NKJV)

- The first significant here is the woman. From the description, it seems that the woman can only be described as the nation of Israel. Notice the reference to the sun, the moon, and the 12 stars.
- *Then he dreamed still another dream and told it to his brothers, and said, "Look, I have dreamed another dream. And this time, the sun, the moon, and the eleven stars bowed down to me." So he told it to his father and his brothers; and his father rebuked him and said to him, "What is this dream that you have dreamed? Shall your mother and I and your brothers indeed come to bow down to the earth before you?" And his brothers envied him, but his father kept the matter in mind. Genesis 37:9-11 (NKJV)*

- The next character we see is the Dragon, which is meant to represent Satan. Most conservative Bible scholars take this to mean that the dragon or the devil was able to take with him a third of the angels. We are told that he is red, and this symbolizes bloodshed and anger. He also has seven heads and 10 horns.
- The seven heads are seven empires down through history which represent the Gentile nations which have rebelled against God and persecuted Israel. The 10 horns represent the 10 kings who form the nucleus of the Antichrist's empire.
- The devil did indeed try to devour and killed Christ as soon he was born.
- Israel has to flee into the wilderness and God prepares a place for her there for 1260 days. This speaks of the great tribulation which begins in the middle of the last seven years. (1260 days is 3 1/2 years.)

7 And war broke out in heaven: Michael and his angels fought with the dragon; and the dragon and his angels fought, 8 but they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them in heaven any longer. 9 So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. 10 Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, "Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down. 11 And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death. 12 Therefore rejoice, O heavens, and you who dwell in them! Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and the sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows that he has a short time."

- The Bible is clear that the devil still has access to the heavenly places. For reasons of his own, God has allowed the enemy to have access to the courts of heaven to accuse believers before him.
- Once this war takes place, the devil will no longer be allowed access to the heavenly places. What's truly terrifying is that Satan and his angels themselves will be thrown down to the earth and confined to the realm of this world.
- There's tremendous rejoicing in heaven and there is an announcement that the power of Christ has come when this happens, because the accuser of the brethren is no longer allowed access to heaven.
- Notice how the saints overcome. They overcome by the blood of Jesus, and the word of the testimony, and they don't love their lives to the death.
- The blood of Jesus helps you to resist coming under condemnation.
- When you declare the word of your testimony, you are telling the world and telling yourself what God has done for you. And when you call to find the faithfulness of the Lord, it increases your faith.
- When you don't love your life to the point of death, that loyalty to Jesus releases a spiritual power of boldness.
- Imagine what it will mean for Satan and his angels to be personally present on the earth and directing the government of the earth? Paul said that the manifestation of the antichrist, which takes place in the middle of the seven years, is according to all the power of Satan. (2 Thess. 2) Why is the manifestation of the antichrist in the middle of the seven years according to all the power of Satan?

13 Now when the dragon saw that he had been cast to the earth, he persecuted the woman who gave birth to the male Child. 14 But the woman was given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness to her place, where she is nourished for a time and times and half a time, from the presence of the serpent. 15 So the serpent spewed water out of his mouth like a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood. 16 But the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened its mouth and swallowed up the flood which the dragon had spewed out of his mouth. 17 And the dragon was enraged with the woman, and he went to make war with the rest of her offspring, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

- He persecutes Israel, but she is protected for time and times and half a time, which is three and half years. That is a very odd phrase. In Hebrew it means one time, two times, and then another half of a time.
- What does it mean when it talks about the flood and the earth helping the woman?
- The devil is frustrated at his inability to kill the Jewish people and in his rage he will begin to persecute anyone who believes in Jesus Christ.

Revelation 13

1 Then I stood on the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rising up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and on his horns ten crowns, and on his heads a blasphemous name. 2 Now the beast which I saw was like a leopard, his feet were like the feet of a bear, and his mouth like the mouth of a lion.

2b The dragon gave him his power, his throne, and great authority. 3 And I saw one of his heads as if it had been mortally wounded, and his deadly wound was healed. And all the world marveled and followed the beast. 4 So they worshiped the dragon who gave authority to the beast; and they worshiped the beast, saying, “Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?”

- The sea is a picture of the nations which are always turbulent.
- We need the background of the Old Testament Book of Daniel to understand this beast. John doesn't explain the beast because his readers knew of it.
- The seven heads are seven empires which have persecuted the people of God over time. The ten horns are ten kings who arise at the end of the age and ultimately give their authority to the Antichrist, the final world ruler.
- This beast has the characteristics of the empires that persecuted the Jewish people: Babylon, Persia, and Greece.
- Something amazing happens to this beast which causes the world to be amazed at him. One of his heads appears to be mortally wounded but this wound was healed. Now this has a couple of different interpretations. Many people say that this means the Antichrist will be killed and have a counterfeit resurrection.
- Some see it as a revived empire. First, John says that it was one of the heads of the beast that was slain. Secondly, John says he saw this head AS IF it had been mortally wounded. Third, John says it was a wound that was healed. Healed means healed, not raised from the dead.
- The world will be amazed and follow the beast, and proclaim that no one can defeat it in battle.

5 And he was given a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies, and he was given authority to continue for forty-two months. 6 Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven. 7 It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation. 8 All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. 9 If anyone has an ear, let him hear. 10 He who leads into captivity shall go into captivity; he who kills with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.

- People debate the extent of his empire: is it worldwide?

11 Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon. 12 And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. 13 He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men. 14 And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived. 15 He was granted power to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed.

- This second beast is commonly referred to as the false prophet. We cannot be sure whether the power to give breath to the image is demonic or technological.
- He has two horns like a lamb but speaks like a dragon. His appearance and his intentions seem to be mild, but his words are the words of Satan.

16 He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads, 17 and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. 18 Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: his number is 666.

- Notice that the enemy seeks total economic control.
- The mark is something which involves physical alteration of the body. The word in the Greek means a mark like you would make from scratching or stamping.
- The famous number 666 stands for man making himself God. Six is the number of man, and when we multiply that by three, we make a trinity.
- We also see 666 in the Old Testament, in the story of Solomon, who received 666 talents of gold in a year. This is a picture of how wealth, breaking the commands of God, and idolatry all go together.
