

A SERIES ON REVELATION: is this the end?

Week 18 – battle royale begins

Transition: Last week we completed Revelation chapter 11. Upon the blowing of the 7th trumpet, John heard loud voices in heaven proclaim, “The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ.” This is in alignment with what the mighty angel had sworn one chapter earlier...that upon the sounding of the 7th trumpet there would be no more delay; the mystery of God would be fulfilled. In practical terms, the climax of the story of the Bible (for which we have all been expectantly waiting) will now happen very quickly.

Context: John once again introduces vivid imagery with chapters 12 and 13 (which we will be studying as one unit). This section contains some of the most memorable and most recognizable images from all of Revelation. John begins by mentioning two signs that he sees. At this point it is helpful for us to remember that for John, a sign represents something else and is not the thing itself. Rather, it is there to help lead us to some other thing. Therefore, we will not overly concern ourselves with the sign itself, but with where it is leading us.

Opening Question:

- What is one of your favorite good versus evil stories? What makes it a favorite?
- What kinds of things are worth fighting for? What is something that you have fought for personally? Why did you fight for it? How did it turn out? Would you do it again? (Why or why not?)

Scripture/Storying: Revelation 12-13

Discipleship Questions:

- In 12:1, John mentions a woman. Whom does the woman represent? How did you arrive at your conclusion? Who are the other characters in the story (in chapter 12) and what/who do they represent? Re-tell the story using the real-life characters.
- John mentions that war breaks out in heaven and that the archangel Michael throws the dragon out of heaven. When do you think this happens? What are some consequences of this?
- What are the other names of the dragon that John shares? How does each name help us to understand an aspect of the dragon? Is there a name that sticks out to you (for instance, that makes you especially wary)?
- How do you prepare yourself for spiritual warfare? Share a story of when you were in a spiritual battle. How did it go? What did you do well? What did you learn?
- In chapter 13, two beasts are mentioned. Who are they? What do they do? How do they fit into the story?
- At the end of 13:10 John writes “Here is a call for the endurance and faith of the saints.” What is he talking about? What does that look like in your life today?
- People have been attempting to identify the beasts for the last two thousand years. What are the pros and cons for doing this?