

REVELATION REVISITED

Assignment #7 - The Beasts

Read Revelation 12 - 14. John clearly departs from the description of last day events in order to review the grand scheme of the Great Controversy, and to introduce some of the key players - Jesus and Satan. But he quickly moves the story forward to give us additional information regarding Satan's last battle against humanity.

In this weeks lesson we will get another "layer" of information about the things that will transpire in the Great Tribulation – during the time of the Trumpets. This passage contains the second warning given to the people of earth to "Watch out". It then describes Satan going off to make war with the final remnant, and gives us a sneak peek at the strategy that he will use in that battle.

1. Some contend that the woman of Revelation 12 is the nation of Israel, others believe she is Mary. What clues given in the story indicate otherwise? _____

2. Who is her son? (12:5) _____
3. Verses 3 and 4 highlight a new actor. How is this actor depicted? _____

4. Who is this great red dragon? (12:9, also see 20:2-3) _____
5. Verses 7,8 and 9 tell of a war in heaven – a war that Satan loses, resulting in his expulsion to earth. When did that war take place? (Hint: Verse 13 helps establish the timing.) _____

6. What three factors make the saints "overcomers"? (12:11) _____

Chapter 12 ends with an enraged Satan going off to make war against the "remnant", or rest, of her children. These children are described as keeping the commandments of God, and holding to the testimony of Jesus.

In the light of this statement it is sobering to ask the questions, "Do I *truly* keep God's commandments? Do I *really* adhere to Jesus' testimony?"

7. Read Revelation 13:1 in several translations. Do you notice any significant differences in the rendering? _____

As he marches off to do battle with the last of God's people, Satan calls forth two additional beasts. These beasts are discussed in Revelation 13. Together, with Satan, they form an "axis of evil" – an unholy trinity. (See Rev 16:13 and Rev 20:10)

8. The first beast – the Sea Beast – looks quite a bit like Satan. What differences do you see between the Dragon and the Sea Beast? _____

9. Is the Sea Beast a worldwide force? _____

10. Is the Sea Beast an object of worship? _____

11. How long will the Sea Beast be allowed supremacy? _____

12. Is the second beast – the Land Beast – ever an object of worship? _____

13. What is the goal of the Land Beast? (13:12) _____

14. What two methods does he use to accomplish his goal? (13:13 and 13:15) _____

15. What other name is used for this beast? (19:20 and 20:10) _____

Last week we studied the 5th and 6th Trumpet, and saw a 2-phase campaign against humanity, led by Satan himself, focusing on the invisible, spiritual warfare. This week we also see a 2-phase campaign led by Satan. But the focus this week is on the human political and religious structures that will be used in that battle.

Notice that in both story lines the overt killing of masses of humanity take place – not in the first phase – but in the second, suggesting that these two stories are really the same, and that we are getting to see additional details of Satan's battle plan.

But God is not silent or inactive during this time. Last week we saw that God's army of Servants – depicted by the two witnesses – would take the gospel to the entire world. This week we get more information on the testimony that they will share. It is revealed in the familiar words of Revelation 14:6-12.

16. What elements of the first four trumpets are mentioned in the first angel's message? _____

17. What reference to the Sea Beast is made in the second angel's message? _____

18. What aspects of the third angel's message make specific reference to events or entities related to the Land Beast? _____

19. What aspect of the third angel's message speaks clearly of future events? _____

With this lesson are two additional resources.

The first article, included with the permission of the author Hal Mayer, first appeared in *End Time Issues*. It points out how religious freedoms can be easily lost in times of turmoil and stress.

The second is a chart that suggests how the events discussed this week – the “beastly” story - overlaps the story of the Trumpet events, as studied in the last two weeks. This may seem a bit difficult to understand at first glance. But don't be daunted. Look it over. Read it through, and ask God to help us understand what he has chosen to reveal.

Point to Ponder



Going to battle is serious business. Every soldier does all in his power to prepare for the upcoming conflict. But the soldier knows that some things are completely out of his hands. He has no input on the battle plan. He can't say where the battle will be fought. He can't determine when the fight will begin, or how his generals will use the resources available to them. Once the battle begins he must simply trust his commanders and obey them – and hope they have good intelligence on the enemy.



Clearly Satan's plans are laid deep. But it's comforting to know that our General has already seen the enemy's playbook, and has already shown us how the battle will be decided.