

17. Who won the war in heaven (12.7-9) and how (11)?

18. How does the picture of these chapters, and of the whole Bible, differ from the idea beloved of some religions and many authors of an eternal ongoing conflict between good and evil (that is dualism - yin and yang etc)?

Pray

Pray that as Christians we would see the importance of enduring and persevering in faith, and not follow the ways and worship of the world around us.

Pray for our young people, and especially Rooted as they have a weekend away and begin again midweek meetings. Pray that they would not only believe the eternal gospel (14.6) but recognise the call of Christ to endurance and faith (13.10).

Pray for the following part of our Church vision:
Enabling worship to be uplifting and God focussed.

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The Apocalypse

Week 5 - the War



*If possible in preparation read all of **Revelation chapters 12 to 14**. Chapters 12 to 14 show us a great conflict. Some see this as describing the same events as chapters 6-7 and chapters 8-11, others as coming in a sequence after them.*

People have had very different ways of understanding the details of these chapters and have often read into them what they want to believe. We will only look at the details of the first few verses but the identity of the beasts and the meaning of 666 have particularly exercised people.

The woman, the Child and the dragon

Read Revelation 12.1-6

1. In at the deep end - who are the woman, the child and the dragon? (*People generally agree on the last two but have different views about the first.*)

Read Genesis 3.14-15

2. What does Genesis say about the conflict between the offspring of Eve and the offspring of the serpent?

3. In what ways does the New Testament show us the attempts made to kill Jesus, the promised "offspring" (or "seed")?

4. How does the passage in Revelation fit into this strand running through Scripture of the devil's attacks on the Seed?

5. How does this passage in Revelation show that despite his efforts the devil is thwarted in his schemes? (See also verse 9.)

5. Nevertheless in what ways do these verses show suffering because of the devil's schemes? (See also verse 17.)

The Dragon

6. How is the enemy described? (12.7-10)

7. What is the enemy seeking to do? (12.17)

8. What is the relationship between the dragon and the beast described in Rev 13.1-2?

9. How do people respond to this first beast? (12.3-5)

10. What is the relationship between the other beast described in 13.12 and the first?

11. How do people respond to the second beast? (13.13-14)

There has been and is much speculation about the mark of the beast (13.17) from those who tried to relate it to specific Roman emperors (always in convoluted ways) to those who worry about barcodes. In the ancient world the idea of someone being marked, or branded, as a slave was well understood.

The Offspring

12. What happened to the child? (12.5)

13. How are the rest of the offspring of the woman described? (12.17)

14. What do these chapters therefore suggest, as in previous chapters, about the conflict facing the seven churches and Christians through the ages?

Read Revelation 14.6-13

15. How are we to respond to this conflict (13.10, 14.7, 14.12)?

16. What reassurance is given in verse 13 and why do you think it is often read at funerals?

The Victory

16. How was the child protected in 12.1-6?