

True Worship

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"Then the dragon was enraged at the woman and went off to make war against the rest of her offspring – those who obey God's commandments and hold to the testimony of Jesus. . . . He was given power to make war against the saints and to conquer them. And he was given authority over every tribe, people, language and nation." -Revelation 12:17; 13,7

If you read through Revelation 12, you will discover that the devil was humiliated five times in that chapter. In verse 4, the devil tried to kill Baby Jesus through the sword of King Herod, but he failed. (Matthew 2:16) In verse 5, the devil was able to kill Jesus through the Jews, but he could not keep Jesus in the tomb. (Acts 10:39,40) In verses 6 and 14, the devil tried to destroy the believers in Christ for 1,260 years, but the church went into hiding, and God's Word and His people survived.

In verse 7, the devil tried to hold onto his position in Heaven's senate (Job 1:6,7), but Jesus took his chair. The devil was thrown out of Heaven on Resurrection Sunday! (John 12:31; Revelation 12:8,9) In verse 15, the devil tried to terminate the Protestant Reformation through war in Europe (Psalm 124:2-4), but God opened a place of religious refuge for Protestants which was the United States of America.

So, after being humiliated five times, the devil is understandably furious and focused on the next war. He knows that his time is short (Revelation 12:12), and he is expecting that war number six to begin any day. (Revelation 12:17) This war is described in Revelation 13:1-8.

This may surprise your, but God will allow the devil to win the upcoming war. Read this twice: ". . . **He was given power to make war against the saints and to conquer them. And he was given authority over every tribe, people, language and nation. . . . for forty-two months.**" (Revelation 13:7,5 italics mine) How does the devil achieve total control of Earth?

Violence, idolatry, moral degeneracy and sexual immorality have filled up Earth's cup of sin. Since 1994, the four angels (Revelation 7:1-4) have been holding back God's judgments for almost ten years. Soon, Jesus will pummel Earth with a series of devastating judgments. Jesus will startle the world with the reality of His coming kingdom.

Jesus intends to separate the sheep from the goats with a test of worship. His coming judgments will include a global earthquake, a swath of meteoric firestorms (which will dwarf the recent fires in California), two horrific asteroid impacts, and afterwards, great darkness will cover a third of Earth. (This darkness may be caused by ejecta released from many volcanoes.) Altogether, these judgments will cause the sudden death of 1.5 billion people (Revelation 6:8), and as you might expect, the survivors will be frightened and subdued beyond words.

Because the governments and infrastructures of the world will be in shambles, political leaders will turn to their religious leaders for answers. The religious leaders of the world will

unanimously agree that a Crisis Government should be created to appease God so that His judgments will cease – or no one will survive His wrath. (This topic is discussed at length in my November 2003 WUAS Broadcast.) The Bible indicates that political leaders will "go along" and the Crisis Government will demand that everyone worship God.

The word "worship" is mentioned three times in Revelation 13:4 and 8 because the leaders of the Crisis Government will declare worship to be THE solution to appeasing God's wrath and who can disagree? Think about this: When the infrastructures of communication, transportation, commerce, manufacturing and medical care are in shambles, when 1.5 billion people lie unburied in the streets, and when thousands of coastal cities have totally disappeared because of the tidal waves caused by an asteroid impact upon an ocean, who will be able to argue that worship isn't THE solution?

Desperate circumstances justify desperate actions. Even the 144,000 will be saying, ". . . **Worship Him who made the Heavens, the Earth, the sea and the springs of water.**" (Revelation 14:7) The Bible says, "**The whole world was astonished and followed** [did not resist] **the beast** [the Crisis Government]." (Revelation 13:3, insertions mine) In other words, a time and a circumstance is coming when the diverse religions of the world will agree that worshiping God is THE solution to appeasing God's anger. In this context, a searching argument will rise: What does God require for worship?

By definition, worship is an act of submission, showing respect for God's authority. Remember the story of Cain and Abel? Both men worshiped God, but God refused to accept Cain's worship because Cain did not submit to God's demand for an animal sacrifice. (Genesis 4, 1 John 3:12)

This made Cain angry and he killed his brother who humbly submitted to God's authority. There's an important end-time parallel here. The devil will enable demonically controlled religious and political leaders to enforce laws demanding worship in ways which are blatantly contrary to the law of God.

However, the saints will choose to obey God's commandments (specifically, the fourth commandment) and refuse to obey the laws of the Crisis Government. Consequently, demonically controlled people will persecute the saints *for religious reasons for 42 months*. For fear of persecution, "**All inhabitants of the Earth will worship the beast** [the Crisis Government] – **all whose names have not been written in the Book of Life belonging to the Lamb that was slain from the creation of the world.**" (Revelation 13:8)

Even though the devil will be successful for 1,335 days, his reign will come to an end. The devil will be soundly defeated in his seventh war against God, and he will be destroyed in his eighth. I will write more about this next month.