



Monday Evening Bible Reading Group (3)

Monday November 10th: Revelation Chapter 8: Host David, Lead Andy: Back to warnings of the need for amendment of life - collective and individual. The silence message is really powerful. How do you feel about silence: silence in church (has the leader lost the script?), silence with really good friends? Silence rather than blurting out something to avoid an uncomfortable silence? In some Jewish thinking the heavenly worship had to be paused so that human prayers could be heard. Have you ever tried a silent retreat. Keep in mind our Shirley Churches Together Quiet Day in November (not Silent Day). How do you feel about John Cage's 433 Silence music?

Reminder of the plagues in Egypt. Again, bad deeds risk bad consequences. Trumpet announcing God action. The 7 Archangels/ Angels of the Presence are Uriel, Raphael, Raguel, Michael, Sariel, Gabriel, and Remiel.

How are you with incense? Wormwood is a bitter substance. C S Lewis chose the name Wormwood for his devil in "The Screwtape Letters".

Monday November 17th: Revelation Chapter 9: Host Andy, Lead Brian. Locusts live about 5 months, but God torturing someone for 5 months? Do we hate anyone enough to want them "To rot in hell"? We might survive a meteorite; but not a star crashing into us. Key message that Bad actions (or the absence of good actions) tend to have bad consequences. I guess one of the really big questions is whether the extent of badness is such that amendment is no good, and a fresh start is needed. Real locusts are about 5 inches across and 2 inches long, but huge numbers can cause huge damage. Locusts star in the first chapter of Joel. Could the survivors go back to being as before the disasters?.... Lots of OT precedents! Maybe we do, individually and collectively, forget the lesson rather easily?

The sin of worshiping images has been differently interpreted at different times. We have images at St George's? Maybe we have images at home?

If the Revelation pictures don't do it for us, how would we get the message across?

Monday November 24th: Revelation Chapter 10: Host Andy, Lead Peta. The familiar theme of preaching and not being listened to. More sevens. The swallowing book theme again. Evil is not straightforward: Doing harm unintentionally, Doing harm with good intentions, Doing harm under orders,

Doing harm because that is the way you have been brought up. John's readers no doubt had evil people such as Nero and Antiochus in mind. Are there evil forces, or just human beings doing evil? An interesting core message: little old John doing what the great big angels can not do. God needs us: even the least of us.

Would John look favourably on OUR missionary work; or would he count us with the Laodiceans – luke warm?

Monday December 1st: Revelation Chapter 11: Host Andy, Lead David. Central chapter: weirder and weirder. The measuring thing is quite popular in the Bible: Why? 3.5 years if half of the perfect 7. It is also the duration of the Antiochus siege of the Temple. The Two Witnesses might be Moses and Elijah. An echo of the Temple curtain being rent in two – way into the Holy of Holies. Hymn: Crown Him with many crowns. More of Handel's "Messiah",