



ONE PLUS GOD

**Get going: We don't have forever to get into forever
A study on Revelation**

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Week 7

The Christmas-story through the eyes of Revelation

One Plus God Ministries

Missions Minded, Every Day, Everywhere.

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Revelation: Lesson plan

Lesson 1 — September 3 — Who is Jesus? (Rev 1)

Lesson 2 — September 10 — What Jesus expects from His Church, part 1 (Rev 2 & 3)

Lesson 3 — September 17 — What Jesus expects from His Church, part 2 (Rev 2 & 3)

Lesson 4 — September 24 — In the throne room with God: Father, Lamb, and Spirit (Rev 4 & 5)

Lesson 5 — October 1 — Judgement and Grace (Rev 6 & 7)

Lesson 6 — October 8 — The Church has a mission (Rev 8 to 11)

Lesson 7 — October 15 — The Christmas-story through the eyes of Revelation (Rev 12)

Lesson 8 — October 22 — Evil attempting to imitate God (Rev 13)

Lesson 9 — October 29 — Time for grace will run out... (Rev 14 to 16)

Lesson 10 — November 5 — The efforts of Darkness will intensify, yet come to an end (Rev 17-18)

Lesson 11 — November 12 — God's triumph over a one-sided war (Rev 19 to 20)

Lesson 12 — November 19 — God's complete reign is coming soon! (Rev 21 to 22)

Revelation 12:1-2, The Church is giving birth to the Messiah!

The description of verse 1 immediately reminds one of Joseph’s dream from Gen. 37:1-9. This woman looks like a bride, while the son, moon and twelve stars surely point to Israel (Gen. 37:9; Is. 60:19-20). And now of course the New Israel, like we have discussed previously, the Church of believers in Jesus Christ! In this sense the woman giving birth is not necessarily Mary, but rather the Messianic family of believers, the Church (see also Is. 26:16-21, 54:1, 66:7-9). This sign is indeed the fulfilling of Isaiah 7:14, “Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel” (NIV). How incredible: The Church is giving birth to the Messiah!

Revelation 12:3-4a, 7-9, The devil wants to ruin it all...yet, doomed from the start

Another sign appears in heaven (v. 3): The devil is compared here with a dragon, which was well connected in the ancient world with serpents, or monsters from the sea with demonic powers (see for instance Ps. 74:14, as well as Is. 27:1 and 51:9). For instance, in Ex. 7:9-12 the serpent is being called a “dragon” in the Greek translation!

This dragon is fueled with bloodthirsty fury (v. 3a), and portrays all the signs of false power (v. 3b), as he is clearly trying to imitate Christ’s reign (Rev. 19:12). Verse 4 reminds of Dan. 8:10 as the devil leads a third of the angels in a sad and doomed revolt against God. Right from the start they lost (vv. 7-9; see also Luke 10:18), starting a losing battle that would be concluded at the cross, and leave a wounded, chained and angry dragon behind till the end...

Revelation 12:4b-6, The Messiah is giving birth to the Church!

The dragon standing in front of the woman who is about to give birth surely reminds one of Herod wanting to kill all the boys two years and younger (v. 4a; Matt. 2:16). And then the moment arrives: It's Christmas (v. 5a)! It is every interesting that Jesus' entire ministry on earth in Revelation is simply captured in the term "Lamb", being used no less than 30 times in Revelation, focusing on His death and resurrection! No where else do we read about His earthly life, ministry, preaching or miracles. In Revelation, all that needs to be in focus is that Christ has come and overcome! He is the One who came (v. 5a), and who is ruling forever (v. 5b; Is. 66:7; Ps. 2:8-9; Rev. 19:15). He is the One who is acting as God, and with God, showing that God is truly God and in control—look at how He is forcefully snatched out of the claws of death to rule with His Father (v. 5c; Rev. 22:1)!

However, before He is snatched up Christ gives birth to the Church, who immediately declares her complete dependence upon God (flees into the desert; see the precious Hos. 2:13), where God is the only One who can and will take care of her for the complete allotted time (1,260 days) till Christ's second coming (v. 6; see also Rev. 11:2, 3; 12:6, 14)!

How incredible: The Church is giving birth to the Messiah...or rather: The Messiah is giving birth to the Church!

Revelation 12:10-12, Church, you are not called to *survive*, but to *conquer*!

The victory in God simply covers up any and all attacks of evil (v. 10). The power of God is just so impressive and inspiring that it is impossible not to be encouraged by it, and move forward in his power and victory. Therefore the Church never simply tries to survive (v. 11b; see also Mark 8:34-35). Absolutely not! Just like the Lamb, they are constantly ready to conquer, not through fighting, but by proclaiming their testimony (v. 11a)!

And for this reason there is joy in heaven (v. 12a), but a raging war on earth as the devil continues with great fury (v. 12b), knowing that he is running out of time (v. 12c).

Church, do not try to survive, but live to conquer through proclaiming the Good News...with urgency...for the time is short (which even the devil very seriously acknowledges)!

Revelation 12:13-17, A very upset devil and the well protected Church

Verse 13 continues with a very upset devil who is relentlessly pursuing the Church. Yet, God is undoubtedly in control as He issues the woman with wings (Ex. 19:4; Dt. 32:10-12; Is. 40:31), so that she can fly to a place that God had already prepared for her—not for a second is God caught off guard, or by surprise (v. 14a). Here God will take care of the Church for the full designated period of time, till the second coming of our Lord (time, times and half a time, v. 14c).

During this time the devil will continue with physical attacks, but it will not hold against God’s spiritual protection of the believers. So when he tries to sweep the woman away with a river (v. 15), God will (with great ease!) save the woman (v. 16; see also God’s power over earth in Numbers 16:30, Dt. 11:6 and Ex. 15:12)! The rivers created by the devil make one think ahead of Rev. 13:13-15 and 16:14, but then God’s protection also brings Is. 43:2 to mind (see also 1 Cor. 10:13)!

Obviously God’s protection, and the devil’s failures are infuriating evil (v. 17a), and as we progress towards the end, the intensity of temptation and persecution will surely increase (see Rev. 13-17). Yet, we should always remember that all of this can only continue for the exact allotted amount of time!

The Church should practice obedience during this time, while they are testifying with an urgency (v. 17b)!

Resources

Today we were reminded that the Church is not called to try and *survive*, but to *conquer* in His Name—not by *fighting*, but by *proclaiming* (testifying about Jesus who had conquered)! The book, “Jim Elliot: One great purpose”, by Janet & Geoff Benge, is a book about Jim Elliott and his friends who went into the Ecuador jungle and surrendered their lives to the Auca men with their deadly spears, praying and trusting that their sacrifice would proclaim a powerful Message.

This is available in a Kindle version on Amazon.

Want to dig deeper, or just stay connected?

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