



ONE PLUS GOD

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

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Week 10

**The efforts of Darkness will intensify,
yet come to an end**

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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 17:1-6a, A deadly combination

This woman influences a multitude of people—she’s sitting on many waters (v. 1; see also v. 15). She seduces the kings/leaders and intoxicates the people, leading them all into adultery, but especially also into adulterous relationships with the idols (v. 2). In the timeframe of Revelation (as we have seen in chapter 16 already) this woman refers to Rome (Babylon), but metaphorically obviously simply refers to the efforts of evil (see also v. 18). We have multiple examples in the Old Testament of cities being described as prostitutes when they fall away from God (Ezek. 16:15-17; Nah. 3:4; Is. 23:15-17).

The woman can be clearly identified as evil from a divine perspective (v. 3). The Spirit shows her to John, tracking her into the desert (this time with a negative meaning, and not positive as in Rev. 12 with the woman as the Church). The Spirit lets John see how she is completely overpowered and ruled by the anti-Christ (sitting on the beast, v. 3; see also Rev. 13:1). We encounter here an evil combination of corrupted political power, sex, money and idolatry (vv. 3-5)...a deadly combination where evil is very intentionally breeding evil (“mother of prostitutes”, v. 5). Some of the believers even get caught in the cross fire and pay the highest price (v. 6a). Progressive intensity indeed!

Revelation 17:6b-14, An evil attack from all angles!

One can only be astonished by the intensity of such evil, as John was (v. 6b). Whether we interpret these seven heads, seven hills, or 10 kings as locations, kingdoms, kings or Caesars become fairly irrelevant. Perhaps it is better to hold on to a couple of principles that seem to be in alignment with all that we have shared till now. Evil is combining all their forces in a strong coalition (see the emphasis on numbers like 7 and 10): The anti-Christ (beast) trying to fake a death and resurrection like Jesus (vv. 7-8, 11), the non-believing followers of all that is evil and being are tricked by the lie of the anti-Christ (v. 8b), and the evil leaders (vv. 9-10, 12).

This strong coalition should tell us that we are progressing with an undeniable intensity towards the end. However, we know the outcome: Evil came from the Abyss and will end in destruction (vv. 8a, 11b); although they are out for war (v. 14b) the Lamb with his entourage of faithful followers (v. 14c) will overcome because He is already ruling (v. 14b)! And then of course, always the irony: Evil only has power for a short-short while...because it has been given to them (v. 12), so how could they ever win?!

Note how nothing of the actual war is being described, except for evil's actions leading up to the war and then, very powerfully...its end-result (v. 14).

Revelation 17:15-18, An unexpected twist...

God is surely in control. Revelation leaves no shred of doubt about that. Not only does God empower evil whenever He wishes to, but also confuses evil when He chooses to, and here in v. 17 He causes evil to turn on itself (v. 16)! And what a terrifying and humiliating sight (v. 16; see also Ezek. 23:22-25).

Evil will eventually self-destruct... They will have the worst kind of war...a war against themselves...

Let's see if we can put it differently: Evil will lose the war they had been putting all their hope on...by losing to themselves!

Revelation 18:1-3, 21-24 Fallen, fallen!

With power, authority, and inspiring splendor it is loudly proclaimed: Babylon (evil) is going down with such certainty that a future event can be proclaimed in the past tense (vv. 1-3; see also Is. 21:9)! Again, something only God can do...claiming the future outcome of an event with rock solid certainty (v. 2a, "Fallen! Fallen...")!

The "city" becomes desolate, like a desert, inhabited by evil spirits and detestable animals (v. 2; see also Mt. 12:43 and Is. 13:20-22). This is the result of continuous sexual and idolatrous adultery, combined with excessive wealth and economical seduction, misguidance and corruption, and finally the murdering of saints (vv. 3, 23-24). The city will simply disappear like a huge millstone disappears when thrown into the sea (v. 21), and this judgement will be final (look at the repetition of "never" and "ever" in vv. 21-23a).

Revelation 18:4-8, Run from evil!

Like a loving Father God is calling upon His children to flee from evil (v. 4; see also 2 Cor 6:14-17). They should actually run so that they don't fall into evil's snares or punishment (v. 4), for God will not forget this evil disaster (v. 5). Evil will be punished completely, severely, and suddenly (vv. 6-8). What evil thought they could boast about will be brought to nothing—it

was all false and fake and led to absolutely nothing (vv7-8; Verse 7 reminds of Caesar Claudius’ wife, Messalina, both queen and temple prostitute).

Evil is attacking with such *sophisticated* ungodliness that “running”...leaving with a high sense of urgency...is crucial and non-negotiable (v. 4)! This is the wise, the right, the necessary thing to do. It is time to listen to the call of the Father - now!

Revelation 18:9-19, Lamentations...the wrong kind!

Evil is lamenting the loss of evil—can you imagine anything more sad (v. 9)...? Rather than repenting at evil’s judgement, the kings weep and mourn over the downfall of the city...from a distance (vv. 9-10)?! The same disappointing reaction follows from the “merchants” (vv. 11-17a; see also Ezek. 27) and the “sea captains” (vv. 17b-19). How sad...

Revelation 18:20, Praise God!

God can be praised—He will overcome, and He will let righteousness prevail! Rejoice, rejoice because what is right will triumph and God will continue to rule, with all of evil being completely and permanently destroyed! Yes, it is that simple, yet powerful: He wins!

Resources

Revelation 17-18 had taught us evil is attacking us in all kinds of ways, and that we should be spiritually alert and know that in our God we can and actually already are conquerors! It is in the light of this triumph that we can do incredible things with the short time that we have. Pastor Richard Wurmbrand, the founder of the Christian mission, The Voice of the Martyrs, was such a man. Imprisoned and tortured for fourteen years by Romanian Communists, pastoring both inside and outside of prison, this a powerful journey that you would wanna read: "In God's underground", by Richard Wurmbrand.

This is available in a Kindle version on Amazon.

Want to dig deeper, or just stay connected?

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