



ONE PLUS GOD

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

Dr. Wynand de Wet (aka Pastor Wayne)

Week 11

God's triumph over a one-sided war

One Plus God Ministries

Missions Minded, Every Day, Everywhere.

2890 Harding Hwy E. Unit G Marion, OH 43302

P 740.251.7184 W www.oneplusgod.org E info@oneplusgod.org

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 19:1-10, Hallelujah!

The appropriate response to the fall of evil is indeed not lamentations, mourning and non-repentance, but rather rejoicing in the Lord! And here in chapter 19 we have a Hallelujah-chorus like never heard before! It starts with a great multitude as in Rev. 7:9, all giving the highest praise to God (vv. 1-3)! They are joined in verse 4 by the 24 elders and 4 living creatures to bring praise to God (v. 5). Finally the wedding that all had been waiting on has arrived (vv. 6-9) and by His grace the bride can be dressed appropriately (see “...was given her to wear” in v. 8).

In the end it is truly all about worship...not to the angels...but to God and to Him alone (v. 10)!

Revelation 19:11-21, A war in a space ?

Jesus appears victoriously in verse 11—the white horse signifies that beautifully (v. 11a). And He is ready to make war with “justice” (v. 11b)! He can see it all, knows it all, rules over all, and no one has power over Him (v. 12). Jesus’ robe is dipped in blood, which could refer to His own sacrificial blood, those of the martyrs, or even the blood of His enemies splattering over Him (v. 13a, see also v. 15 and Is. 63:3). This is surely an image of salvation, justice and war, all in one! He also carries another title in v. 13b: Jesus is the Word of God, bringing about God’s righteous judgement. See for instance the “sharp sword” coming from Jesus’ mouth—it is with His words that He is striking the nations down, and He Himself is treading the winepress (v. 15). And the believers, probably with legions of angels making up the armies of heaven are all right there with Jesus, riding on white horses too and dressed in pure, triumphant dresses (v. 14; Mt. 13:41, 16:27, 25:31 and 1 Thess. 3:13).

Jesus is truly the only King of kings and Lord of Lords (v. 16), and He is also truly God as this title was usually reserved for God. What a picture of this triumphant, heavenly, Godly army?!

On the other hand we see the armies of the evil one gathering against the Rider and His army (v. 19). Nothing is said to describe them in more detail.

However, the result of this war is described in detail:

- An angel calls upon the vultures to gather for a gruesome meal of the political leaders, the military powers and the different social groupings—evil from all walks of life will be judged (vv. 17-18);
- Evil will be captured and thrown into the fiery lake of burning sulfur (v. 20);
- Evil will be killed through righteous judgement, and the vultures will gorge themselves on them (v. 21).

And the description of the war? Well, read carefully or you’ll miss it, because it all happened in the *space* between the period at the end of verse 19 and the little number ²⁰, marking the beginning of verse 20...!

So, what will this *war* look like...?!

Revelation 20:1-10, The final round!

1000 years...is it a literal period or is it referring to a symbolic period; should we expect it before or after Jesus’ second coming...? Till now we have tried to be faithful not to allow our imagination to run wild. We had been very careful to stick to what we could gather with a reasonable amount of certainty from the text itself. So, let us do that also with this highly debated theme.

The chain in v. 1 is defined as a “great chain”, clearly symbolizing that the bounding of the devil will be unbreakable. We have had multiple references throughout Revelation that God is giving power to evil, and that He is also setting its limits. An interpretation that would in other words make perfect sense here is that the devil had received limited power and mobility. The titles of the devil here in v. 2 have a striking similarity to those used in chapter 12, where we read about the birth of the Bethlehem Child and His triumph over the dragon. It does seem therefore that one interpretation that could be considered, based upon textual referencing, is that the devil got bound with the first coming of Christ. Other New Testament texts could speak to the exact same truth, which goes a long way to help us gain confidence in this possibility: See for instance the highly important Mt. 12:29, John 12:31-32 and Col. 2:14-15, all confirming the same interpretation. Christ didn’t only get rid of sin with His death, but also conquered the devil!

We have seen several times in Revelation how numbers that are multiplied by 10 and 3 has meaning. Could $10 \times 10 \times 10$ refer to a divinely, completed, designated period of time between Jesus’ first and second coming (v. 3a), that would end in great intensity close to the end of the second coming (v. 3b)? This would be in alignment with our entire theology to this point, and it would also help greatly in not having to wrestle with a second...and then a third coming of Jesus (of which we read nothing about in Scripture or would have to do quite a bit of acrobatic textual interpretation to proof...).

In v. 4 we find another reference to those martyrs that were already spoken of in Rev. 6:9-10 where they cried out to God to let His judgement come. This description surely fits them perfectly. As part of the first resurrection they rule in alignment with the Old Testament texts like Daniel 7:13-14 and New Testament texts like Phil. 1:23 and Mt. 19:28, a privilege that unbelievers don’t have (v. 5). Therefore the second death (going to hell) can obviously not have any power over them (v. 6)!

Verses 7-10 describes the end of evil in very much the same manner as chapter 19:17-21. By now we should be very used to Revelation starting a theme, and picking it up again, while either repeating it, or sharing about it from a little bit different perspective, or simply describing the same event using new metaphors. Here the final effort of the devil is described

Resources

This lesson in our journey through Revelation makes one think of running a faith race, doesn’t it? This reminds one of Eric Liddell, refusing to run the Olympic 100-meter race, because he was required to do so on a Sunday, and then finishing the 400-meter later with a new world record remembering God’s promise: “He who honors Me, I will honor”. Read more about the life of this young Olympic medalist who became a missionary to China in “Eric Liddell: Something greater than gold,” by Janet and Geoff Benge.

This is available in a Kindle version on Amazon.

Want to dig deeper, or just stay connected?

- Email pastor Wayne/Wynand with your questions/remarks at wynand@OnePlusGod.org.
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