

Wheelersburg Baptist Church 6/30/10 Wednesday Evening
Series: A Walk through the Book of Revelation
Revelation 19:11-21 "The Applause of Heaven" --part 2

So many people, including me I must confess, have a deficient view of Jesus. He's way too small, too domesticated, too made-in-our-own-image. We need reminders like the one we're about to behold in Revelation 19.

This is God's world. He made it. He deserves glory in it. But the fact is, God hasn't received what He deserves from this world since Genesis 3. A battle has raged since Adam's fateful choice in the garden.

Every day God is ignored, mocked, and disregarded by self-focused people who live for this world's system rather than His kingdom. And it *seems* that either God doesn't care, or that He's powerless to do anything about it.

Wrong. He cares, and He will do something about it.

The day is coming when God, in dramatic fashion, is going to reclaim this world for Himself, and put an end to all kingdom-rebels.

When? I don't know the date, but I can show you a description of the event. It's found in Revelation 19.

Review:

Revelation 6-18 describes the period of time known as the Tribulation period. As we've been seeing for many weeks now, the Tribulation period will include the following:

--God will judge the rebellious world with a series of judgments (seven seals, seven trumpets, seven bowls).

--The world will respond to God's judgments with persistent rebellion. In fact, the world will unite in its rebellion by following two great "beasts" described in chapter 13, the first beast apparently representing some type of secular authority and the second beast representing some type of religious authority.

In chapter 17 this world-wide authority is referred to as "Babylon the Great" (17:5) and as "the great prostitute" (17:1). This future, vast, anti-God world system will be united by economics (it will be a global economy, 18:11-13) and fueled by a pseudo-religious, demonic system (18:23).

In chapter 18, we see the fall of Babylon the Great, and with it, the collapse of the world economy. This powerful, anti-God system that will lead the world in its rebellion of God and its attack on God's people will in the end come tumbling down. That's what we saw last time.

In chapter 19, the spotlight moves from earth to heaven. There we hear heaven's response to the fall of Babylon the Great on earth. In essence, we hear *the applause of heaven*.

Last time we looked at the first ten verses of Revelation 19. This time we'll explore the second half of the chapter which unfolds with three scenes (three times John says "I saw...").

I. John saw a Rider on a white horse (11-16).

Q: Where was the rider when John saw Him?

--In heaven; Notice that John says he saw heaven "standing open." Something big is about to happen.

--On a white horse, the type of horse a mighty conqueror rides

Q: Who is this rider? Let's look at His description and we'll see...

A. He describes His features (11-13).

1. *He is called Faithful and True.* Called by whom? We're not told.

2. *He judges and makes war.*

Q: And how does He do it? "With justice"

3. *His eyes are like blazing fire.*

Q: What does that feature indicate? Omniscience?

4. *He is wearing many crowns.*

One crown indicates royalty. What do *many* crowns indicate?

5. *He has a written name known only to Himself.*

Discuss: What's the significance of this unrevealed name?

6. *He is dressed in a blood-dipped robe.*

Q: Whose blood? It could be the blood of those He has conquered. More likely, it refers to His own blood. When was it shed? At the cross.

7. *His name is the Word of God.*

John often uses the term *logos* to refer to Christ (John 1:1; 1 John 1:1). Why does God reveal Himself as the "Word?" What is a *word*? What do we do with words? What does this name teach us about the Son of God? But the Rider on the horse is not alone. Who is with him?

B. He describes His accomplices (14).

1. *They are the armies of heaven.*

Q: Who are these beings that comprise the armies? Notice the term is plural. They could be angelic beings, or believers, or both (see 17:14).

2. *They too are riding white horses.*

Remember, this is apocalyptic literature. Are these literal horses coming out of heaven, or is this a symbol laden, figure of speech? Apocalyptic literature is full of such symbolic images such as in chapter one. John saw seven "stars," but the stars represented seven "angels" (1:21). And he saw seven "lampstands" which represented seven "churches" (1:21).

Discuss: John doesn't tell us here, but what does the image of armies riding white horses seem to indicate?

3. *They are wearing white.*

Don't miss the difference here. What was Christ wearing? A robe dipped in blood. What are His accomplices wearing? Fine linen, white and clean. They are in white, He is in red.

Discuss: Why the difference?

C. He describes His intent (15-16).

1. *He will defeat the nations.*

Q: How? What will He use to destroy the nations? A sharp sword that comes out of His mouth. The end of the verse is a quotation of a messianic psalm, Psalm 2:9 (see Psalm 2).

Notice that Jesus will be the agent of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. At His first coming He was a Lamb, a slain Lamb. But the next time He comes, He will execute God's wrath.

e.g.--tell the story of the man and woman who once stopped by my office; both had been there before but with individuals who were now dead...The point? The time to get right with the Lord is *now*.

2. *He will rule as king.*

Q: What name is written on His robe and thigh? Verse 16 says...

II. John saw an angel (17-18).

A. Where was he?

He was "standing in the sun." What does that indicate?

B. What did he say?

He spoke to the birds and told them to come. Why? A battle is about to occur, and the fatalities will be many. Who is going to die? "Kings, generals, etc."

III. John saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies (19-21).

The beast represents the secular world ruler/authority (13:1) who convinced the world to unite in rebellion against God. Here we see the kings of the earth...

A. What were they doing (19)? Two things...

1. *They gathered together.*

Why?

2. *They intended to make war.*

Against whom? Against two parties--the Rider and his army.

B. What happened to them (20-21)?

1. *The beast was captured.*

2. *The false prophet was captured.*

Who is this "false prophet?" He's the second beast in chapter 13 (13:11). What do we learn about him from verse 20?

Discuss: Why does this verse say the world will receive the mark of the beast? Because the false prophet "deluded" them.

3. *Both were thrown into the lake of fire.*

4. *The rest were killed.*

Q: How were they killed?

Q: What happened afterwards?

Observation: Some professing Christians teach "universalism." What is that, and why is it unacceptable according to Revelation 19?

Lehman Strauss writes (328), "Let the doom of these two men and their followers serve as a solemn warning to all who are still rejecting Christ. I sound this alarm because I feel I must. God has done everything to save you...Rebellion against Him means doom, for no weapon formed against Him can prosper..."

Discuss:

1. What questions does Revelation 19 raise for you?
2. What effect does Revelation 19 have on you?
3. If we were gripped more fully by the message of Revelation 19, what would be different in our lives?