

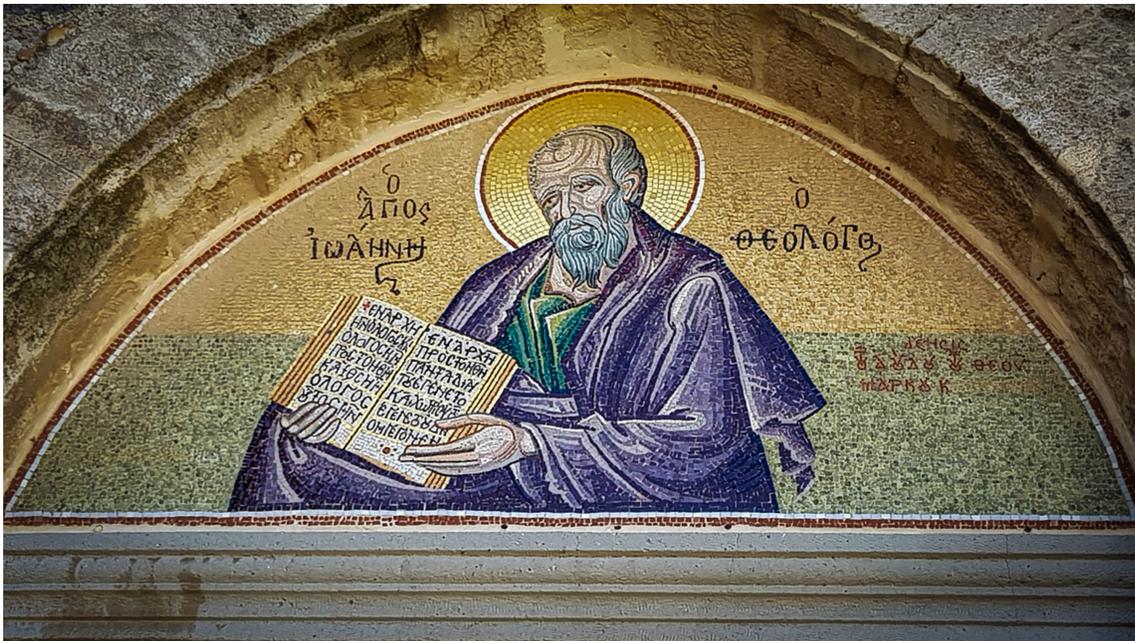
PASTOR'S BIBLE STUDY

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

13 APRIL 2021

V-DAY

REVELATION 19:11-21



Intro

Life under the sun is hard. Work is toilsome. It's like that scene in the movie *Groundhog Day*: the alarm rings, you get up, you go to work, only to repeat it every day. The things we don't think take work do—like marriage. Our relationships are fractured. Money is a worry to us all. Life is hard.

Then there's being a Christian in the world. We're citizens of another kingdom; we swear ultimate allegiance to King Jesus alone; we live according to his rules oftentimes contrary to the world's rules. More and more we're seeing and feeling the pressure of persecution. One political candidate several years ago gave a speech saying religious beliefs have to change in order to allow girls and women access to abortion. These sorts of statements aren't just rhetoric; they're shots across the bow of what's to come: suppression of freedom to think and believe what you want under the threat of punishment.

Yet, what we here in the US go through pales in comparison to our brothers and sisters across the world who suffer like Christ, for Christ. They have an intimate acquaintance with what the first century audience of John's Revelation were going through. One of the principles that needs to guide us in our reading and applying of Revelation is that it was written to a real audience.

Our Theme. John's words at the end of chapter 19 assure persecuted Christians of King Jesus' victory over his enemies at his Second Coming. They're meant to embolden persecuted Christians to stand firm in their testimony to Jesus regardless of the threats and consequences. Here is a glimpse of ultimate V-Day.

I. A Vision of the Lord (vv. 11–16)

I.1. **Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse** (v. 11)

I.1.1. We've already seen the Lord in glory. In chapter 1 as the glorious Son of Man; in chapter 5 as the worthy Lamb–Lion. Here we get a glimpse of our ascended Lord who feels absent to us in our sufferings.

I.2. More important than the horse is its rider: **The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war** (v. 11)

I.2.1. *Note the names of our Lord.* Like a painting that has a title over it to give it some description, here John reveals Jesus to us with these

descriptive titles to help us know him better and to live for him in the harsh world we find ourselves in

- I.2.I.1. **Faithful and True** (cf. 3:14). What an encouragement to beleaguered brothers and sisters like you and me who are constantly tempted to be unfaithful to Jesus in the world by renouncing our witness of him. How many times have you been asked, like Peter, “Are you one of his disciples?” only to say, “I do not know him!” Yet Jesus is faithful to us and he is the true witness to the gospel he applies to us.
 - I.2.I.2. **The Word of God** (v. 13). As John 1 says, as the Word Jesus is eternal God through whom all things were made and through whom the Father is known to us in the world. In other words, to persecuted Christians he is the Lord of the universe and the Savior of a people out of the world.
 - I.2.I.3. **King of kings and Lord of lords** (v. 16)
- I.2.2. *Note the descriptions of our Lord.*
- I.2.2.1. **His eyes are like a flame of fire** (v. 12 cf. 1:14). He’s the one who sees all our suffering; nothing is missed or forgotten by him.
 - I.2.2.2. **On his head are many diadems**. Note well how this is symbolism. You don’t put more than one crown on your head if you are king, but to say that he has many of them on his head is to say Jesus has “all authority in heaven and on earth” (Matt. 28:18). The dragon (12:3) and the beast from the sea (13:1) had seven and ten crowns, respectively, symbolizing their false sovereignty; Jesus has more than are numbered symbolizing his infinite sovereignty!
 - I.2.2.3. **A robe dipped in blood** because as verse 15 goes on to say **he will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty**. To make wine out of grapes you need to get the juice out of the grapes. Traditionally this is done by stomping on grapes in a thing like a big bathtub with a hole for the juice to go out. This is how John shows us what it’s like to be an enemy of Jesus. It’s like being a grape that’s stomped. This comes right from the Old Testament prophet Isaiah 63, where the coming Messiah is described

as wearing blood-stained garments from his victory over the unbelieving nations.

1.2.2.4. **From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron** (v. 15). Like in chapter 1:16 where we saw this symbolism, to say that Jesus has a sword coming out of his mouth is to say that he'll judge. Paul describes Jesus' judgment of the enigmatic figure of the "lawless one" in 2 Thessalonians 2 saying, "whom the Lord Jesus will kill with breath of his mouth" (2 Thess. 2:8).

1.3. **And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses** (v. 14)

1.3.1. What a vision of our Lord, King Jesus! What an encouragement! Doubly encouraging is that tucked away in this description of our Lord is a description of you and me who believe in and follow King Jesus: Who are these **armies**? In chapter 7 we read of them being the multitude of the saved "from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages" (7:9). What were they wearing in chapter 7 and now here? **White**: the color of forgiveness, purity, vindication.

2. **A Vision of Victory (vv. 17–21)**

2.1. **An angel...called to all the birds, "Come, gather for the great supper of God, to eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and their riders, and the flesh of all men, both free and slave, both small and great" (vv. 17–18)**

2.1.1. John not only gives us a glimpse of our enemies ahead of time and their strategies, but our victory over them before it actually happens!

2.1.2. So complete is this victory that it is described in the gruesome language of an ancient post-victory battlefield

2.1.3. Victory over what or whom?

2.1.3.1. *Chapter 12: the dragon* (symbolic of Satan). He's that original enemy of God, who had been a wonderful angel of God created to serve him but who desired to be like God himself thus leading a rebellion of what are now known as demons. He's that original enemy of humanity,

tempting our first parents in the Garden and leading us to rebel against God thinking we could be like God ourselves.

- 2.1.3.2. *Chapter 13: two beasts* (anti-Christian, persecuting government power & anti-Christian false religion). Don't forget Revelation was written to our brothers and sisters in the first century just as much as it was to those in the third century, or the sixteenth century, or to us in the twenty-first century. The power of government has been used and is being used today to attempt to wipe the name of Jesus from the face of the earth. When you hear the political pundits echoing politicians in saying that we have "freedom of worship," don't get too excited. They're speaking with forked tongue and changing terms. They say "freedom of worship" because they want to get Christianity out of the public square first; then once they have us huddled in our corner they will come for us there. We have *freedom of religion*: to believe *and* practice without fear of the beast threatening us.

2.1.3.3. *Chapter 17: Babylon* (ungodly world).

- 2.1.4. Note the order in which these enemies are presented: 1) dragon, 2) beasts, 3) Babylon. Now note the order in which they're defeated: 3a) the defeat of the forces of the worldly influence of Babylon (ch. 18); 2a) the defeat of the beasts (ch. 19); 1a) the defeat of the dragon (ch. 20). *All of this happens at the same time at the Second Coming of Jesus Christ* (cf. chapter 6). For the sake of our encouragement and emboldening, Jesus reveals his victory over all our enemies one at a time.

2.2. **The beast** (vv. 19, 20)

- 2.2.1. **The beast** (vv. 19, 20) of persecuting government power that arrests, tortures, and kills our brothers and sisters throughout the world will be defeated!
- 2.2.2. **The beast** of false religion known as the false prophet (v. 20) who tempts us to swear allegiance to a flag and to the Republic for which it stands more than the Lord Jesus will be defeated!

- 2.3. **...thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur** (v. 20). The kings of the earth with their armies (v. 19) who did the bidding of these beasts will be defeated!

Application:

1. This assures us who believe because we're on Jesus' side by faith.
2. If you don't stand with Jesus now, this is a warning of your future judgment. Since it hasn't come—yet—it shows you God's patience with you. Now is the time to give your life to Christ. Today is the day of your salvation if you will believe!
3. As we come to the Lord's Supper now together, we come to it as a celebration ahead of time of our feast of victory. With all your sins and doubts, come forward to not only to declare that you will have victory in Christ, but especially to receive God's gospel declaration that you are already victorious in him! Amen.