

The Beasts are Overthrown, Part I- Christ Returns!

Scripture: Revelation 19:11-16

Introduction:

We have seen the utter destruction and fall of Babylon in great detail, and we have seen both, the response of the world and the response of the people of God, to this fall. And last time, we saw how the fall of Babylon brings with it the great anticipation of the Marriage Supper of the Lamb and His bride, the church.

When working through the final bowl judgments, given in chapter 16, we have come to understand that chapters 17 and following, open up the reality of those judgments with respect to how these judgments affect the whore of Babylon, the two beasts and the dragon. Well, we have dealt with the whore of Babylon, and now John is preparing to transition into a different angle of the close of history, by fixing our attention on the destruction of the two beasts, the beast from the sea and the beast from the land (or the "false prophet"). Following this, in chapter 20, we will transition to another angle of the same close of history, honing in specifically on the destruction of the dragon. Remember, apocalyptic literature (the Revelation) is not so much concerned with chronology (time sequence) as it is impact and detail. And so, rather than lump all events together that happen at the same time (for the sake of maintaining chronological order), the Lord wants us to view different sections of the same slot of time, so as to emphasize important things about each section. [Ex: movies that show varying fight scenes that happen at the same time...bouncing back and forth, one to the other...etc.]

I. The Return of Christ

As we move toward the destruction of the beasts, John's attention is shifted in the direction of another spectacular vision, a vision of the returning Christ! [Note: Read Rev. 16:12-21---see similar time connection and that which is about to be opened up in our present text in chapter 19:11ff]. Let us then break down this vision of the returning Christ:

1) Verse 11- John sees heaven opened this time, and a white horse comes dashing out toward the earth. The white horse could represent both conquest (see also Rev. 6:2), as Christ was now returning to conquer His enemies, and also the righteousness attached to the conqueror, who brings about righteous judgment (in accordance with the remainder of verse 11).

The One who sits on this horse is called "Faithful and True." Clearly this is a reference to Christ, who is both faithful to His word (in this context, especially as He is preparing to bring judgment upon His enemies on behalf of His elect), and true in the purest sense (Consider the contrast to the deceitful dragon and the beasts). [See also Rev. 1:5, 3:7, 14].

"And in righteousness He judges and makes war." Again, we have this constant reminder that the judgment of God upon the wicked is right and proper. God is just in all of His judgments. The Lord Jesus Christ is here carrying out divine justice in the destruction of the wicked. [See also Rev. 16:5-7, 19:1-2].

2) Verse 12- "His eyes were like a flame of fire..." His vision penetrates the hearts, the minds; the very motives and intentions of the heart. Nothing can be hidden from His fire penetrating eyes. This further confirms His ability to judge righteously. [See also Rev. 1:14; 2:18].

"And on His head were many crowns." He is the universal ruler over all things; all people, all nations, all angels and heavenly beings; over all creation! He has unlimited sovereignty over all, and forever! This is reiterated in verse 16, where He is called "King of Kings And Lord of Lords!"

"He had a Name written that no one knew except Himself." With respect to His divinity and eternity, there are incomprehensible realities attached to His greatness, His wisdom and His power. In Him, resides the "fulness of the Godhead bodily." [Also see 2:17- related to something which unbelievers cannot even begin to fathom; they cannot grasp it---similar concept to Christ's divinity]. [Gen. 32:29; Judg. 13:18]

3) Verse 13- "He was clothed in a robe dipped in blood..." Pictures not His atoning sacrifice, but rather His coming, trampling judgment upon the wicked. He comes in fierce judgment and He will be victorious. [see also Rev. 14:17-20; Isa. 63:1-6]

"And His Name is called the Word of God." [John 1:1, 14]. Jesus is the self-revelation of God, the revelation of God's will and the agent who fulfills and accomplishes every Word spoken by God. God's Word of judgment meets His enemies in Christ. The Word is spoken, incarnated and actively fulfills the divine purpose. "The Word [the powerful and active utterance] of God" (Robert H. Mounce).

4) Verse 14- "And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses." The people of God ride with Jesus and follow Him unto His conquering victory. They attend His victory and are victorious in Him. They are white and clean; they are righteous, because they have been sanctified and cleansed in Christ. [See also Rev. 17:11-14; 6:11; 7:9; 19:8].

5) Verse 15- "Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations..." [A reference to Rev. 1:16; 2:12]. He strikes and destroys by the Word of His mouth. He speaks and conquers. [See also Isa. 11:1-5; 2 Thess. 2:8]

"And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron." [Refers to Psalm 2:8-9-12].

"He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God." [See again Rev. 14:17-20; Isa. 63:1-6]. Note: "The two nouns normally translated 'wrath' or 'anger' are found thirteen times in chapters 6-19 [of Revelation]" (Robert H. Mounce). Comment on common present views, which speak little of God's judgment and His hatred of sin. This "grace alone" focus is unbiblical. The warnings of Scripture and the wrath of God must be preached *to all* as well (these are not simply OT concepts).

6) Verse 16- "And He has on His robe and on His thigh a Name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS."

He is the Supreme Ruler over all of creation, and so, this picture is to present us with the fierce, dominating, unstoppable, conquering Christ, who must and will defeat all who oppose and contend with Him. He must be the Victor! He is the declarative fulfillment of God's Word, which cannot fail. He must reign! He must rule forever! Every other kingdom and empire and ruler must fall. The beast, with all of his empirical power, must and will fall!

(see also 2 Thess. 1:1-10)

Conclusive Thoughts

1) Which army will you be part of? Will you ride with Christ or will you serve the beast? Will you forsake the lusts of the "now," for the glory of that which is "to come?" Or will you cling to this world, though its doom is certain?

2) To the brethren...read 1 Thessalonians 4 & 5.

AMEN!!!