

The Revelation of Jesus Christ - Part 10

A Tale of Two...

Revelation 17:1-19:10

June 21, 2020

- I. A text of COMPARISON and CONTRAST. (17:1-19:10; 21:1-22:21)

- II. A tale of two WOMEN...
 - A. The PROSTITUTE of the BEAST. (17:3-6)
 - B. The BRIDE of the LAMB. (19:6-9)
 - C. Powerful IMAGERY and IMPLICATIONS. (18:4-5; 17:5)

The section of Revelation is one of the most difficult to understand. Instead of trying to figure out all the specific details, I want to step back and take a look at the big picture of the passage. What we see when we do that is that John, through the Holy Spirit, is showing the vast difference between the way of the Lamb and the way of the beast. He uses some pretty graphic language to shock us awake in order to keep us from being seduced by the world.

- 1. What are your initial reactions after you read this passage?
- 2. What are some characteristics of Babylon that tempt the church today? Which are the more subtle ones we often miss?
- 3. Kid's Question: What was a hard decision that you had to make? What made it so hard?

III. A tale of two CITIES... two WAYS of LIVING...

- A. BABYLON – EMPIRE of the BEAST. (17:18)
- B. A culture of POWER and POSSESSIONS. (18:9-19)
- C. ZION – BRIDE of the LAMB. (19:1-10)
- D. A culture of SACRIFICIAL LOVE. (Rev. 5:6-10)

The idea of a city is the central aspect of society. Cities represent our culture, the way that we choose to do things. They are where people meet and new ideas are explored. Every city also has an underlying way of thinking – an ethos. Vancouver, BC is very different from Birmingham, Alabama. John helps us to understand the culture of the new Jerusalem by illustrating it against the backdrop of “Babylon”.

- 4. Is it really that simple? The way of the Lamb or the way of the beast? If it's that black and white why do we miss the boat so often?
- 5. Is Jeff saying that wealth and power are always wrong? How do we live in the wealthiest more powerful region of the world and still follow the Lamb?

6. What is the greatest obstacle that keeps you from responding to others in sacrificial love? How can you move past that?

IV. A tale of two RESULTS... (18:1-19:10)

- A. The IMPLOSION of EVIL. (17:15-18)**
- B. The VICTORY of GOD. (18:8; 18:21-19:3)**

Last week we saw that you reap what you sow. That truth is replayed in this text. We see that the nature of evil is that it eventually implodes upon itself. This is the way God has planned it, for as our text says, "...He is Lord of lords and King of kings..." (17:14)

7. Share a story where you have seen evil implode upon itself.

V. A TALE of two CHOICES...

- A. The INDIVISIBILITY of FAITH and LIFE. (James 2:17-18; Lk 6:43-45)**
- B. The SUBTLE pull of BABYLON. (Mk. 8:31-33)**
- C. In which CITY am I LIVING? (Heb. 11:16)**

So how do we apply all of this today? There are two ideas to think about, and one question that will help you to do just that. First, we have to realize that what we believe about God cannot be separated from the way that we live. And the subtle challenge to that is that we often drift into patterns of behavior without thinking about the beliefs that underlie them. We need to constantly ask ourselves, "In which city am I living?"

8. What steps can I take to better assess my life to see that I am living in the new Jerusalem and not Babylon?

The Bible Project has just released an excellent video on "How to read Apocalyptic Literature." Check it out here -
<https://bibleproject.com/videos/apocalyptic-literature/>