**Book of Revelation Sermon VII**

**666, Armageddon, the Millennium, Oh My!**

Theme of Revelation: Peel back the layers of history and even the terrible persecutions and what do we find? **The lamb is on the throne and God is in control.**

Structure of Rev 6-20:

Seven seals Ch 6-7

Seven trumpets Ch 8-9

Seven symbolic creatures Ch 10-15

Seven bowls Ch 16-17

All God’s enemies destroyed. Ch 18-20

Rev 11:1-6

v. 1 God measures the Temple. God will protect his people

11:3-6 The two witnesses. These represent the Christian witness which will still shine during the time of great trial.

v. 5-6 And they (we!) are powerful!! Fire from mouth (not bad breath), shut up heavens (like Elijah James 5 3-1/2 yrs), Turn water to blood (Moses). We have a powerful testimony!!!

11:7-12 The Roman persecutor (the beast… the first of the seven mystical creatures) will attack the witnesses—the Church.

The Witnesses appear to be dead.

v. 9 The world will gloat over the persecuted church.

v. 11 But God will raise them up.

The intense persecution will only last 3-1/2 DAYS (not years).

The defeat of the church will be temporary.

**Revelation Part II Ch 12-22**

Rev 1-11 What is going on up front—on the earth.

Rev 12-22 What is going on behind the scenes. The heavenly battle which underlies the outward battle.

Rev 12:1-6

Rev 12:1 A great and wondrous sign ***in heaven***: The woman

She has twelve stars, so she represents God’s people.

She is Israel

She is the Church

She is God’s kingdom in any of its aspects.

12:3 Another great and wondrous sign: an enormous red dragon. Satan

7 heads (great wisdom)

10 horns (very powerful)

7 crowns (great authority (on the earth at least)

Satan tries to kill the child. He loses.

Satan tries to wage war in heaven. He loses.

Satan is defeated and sent down to the earth. He attacks the woman. He loses.

Satan is a 3-time loser.

Satan the deceiver (12:9) and Satan the accuser (12:10)

How do we defeat the Dragon: his lies and accusations? 12:11

1. By the blood of Jesus

2. By our testimony (remember the two witnesses in Rev 11). Sharing our faith is essential to overcoming the lies and the accusations.

3. By our willingness to sacrifice our lives rather than do the bidding of the dragon. They “loved not their lives”

This week’s sermon: 666, Armageddon and the Millennium, Oh My!

Revelation 13 The Beast out of the sea and the beast out of the earth.

Rev 13:1-8

The Beast out of the Sea is the wealth and mercantile power of Rome.

10 horns, 7 heads and ten crowns.

v. 3 One of the heads seemed to have a fatal wound. That is Nero.

But the wound had been healed. Domitian is Nero reborn—persecution reborn.

I did not make this up. Revelation 17:6-11

v. 8 The Beast once was (Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius Nero)

Now is not (Vespasian, Titus and early Domitian)

And yet will come out of the Abyss (Domitian’s persecution).

v. 10 The seven heads are the seven hills (of Rome)

They are also seven kings (Augustus, Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, Nero, Vespasian, Titus)

The Beast is the eighth king. He is Domitian!

He is going to his destruction.

Rev 13:5 The Beast out of the Sea utters blasphemies and exercises authority for 42 months.

v. 6-7 God gave Rome power to wage war against the saints and to conquer them for 42 months. It will only be temporary.

Message: God allows people who rebel against him to do bad things. God allows this because he has given us free will and we abuse that freedom to serve Satan.

Let’s not minimize this: The world is in service to Satan.

v. 8 The world will worship the Beast—those not written in the lamb’s book of life.

This world is pretty messed up.

Q: Is your name written in that book? When did that happen? Have you truly repented and been baptized into Christ?

v. 8 Who is Jesus? He is “the Lamb who was slain from the creation of the world.”

Rev 13:9-11 But it will get tough in the meantime. The Christian life may not always be a picnic, especially if we are Witnesses. This calls for patient endurance.

Rev 13:11-18 The Beast of the Sea represents the religious power of Rome.

v. 11 Two horns. It is powerful in its influence.

v. 12 The Roman religion supported the political and military power of Rome.

False miracles, religious deception. Made people worship Domitian.

13:17 There may not have been a literal “mark” on people’s forehead, but there was an official document declaring that the holder had made obeisance to Domitian.

They had to burn incense, make a sacrifice, offer a prayer to Roma/Domitian.

The “mark” of the beast might be coins with the head of Domitian, declaring him to be Lord and God. There is some evidence that the early church refused to use these coins in commerce, as did the Jews, who refused to use them in the temple.

Domitian’s number is 666 He is totally Satan’s man (as will be Galerian, Diocletian and Decius).

The mark of the beast is not a computer chip or a tatoo. It is held by those who worship the world, or follow false religion, not Christ.

Revelation 14. Another encouraging interlude and a very last call to repent.

Revelation 15-16 The seven bowls—the wine of God’s wrath. Complete destruction, not ¼ or 1/3 as with the seals and the trumpets.

Revelation 16:15-21

16:15 Behold: I come like a thief. (Matt 24:43) Keep your spiritual clothes on.

Matthew 22:11-13. We need to have spiritual clothes on to eat at the banquet. Gal 3:26-27 We are clothed with Christ. Let’s keep these clothes on!!!

Message to Christians: Be ready at any time for the spiritual battle. Keep up your guard. Keep in the spiritual fight. Keep praying. Keep testifying.

16:16-19 The seventh (and last) bowl. The final judgment on Rome.

16:16 A (spiritual) war is about to be fought at Har Megiddo Armageddon. The Mountain or the city of Megiddo Five wars, at least happened there.

1. Israel defeated Jabin Judges Ch 4,5

2. Gideon defeated the Midianites. 300 soldiers versus a vast army. Judges 7-8

3. Saul defeated by the Philistines. 1 Sam 28-29

4. Ahaziah defeated by Hazael and killed by Jehu. 2 Kings 9

5. Necho slew Josiah (as ordained by God) (2 Chron 35:20-25) Necho warned Josiah that he was on a mission for Jehovah.

Armageddon is a symbol of the great spiritual battle between Jesus and Rome.

Premillenialists have a literal battle with 200,000,000 troops from the East (China? Russia?) battling against a Roman confederation in the Valley of Jezreel.

v. 19 The great city (Rome) split into three by a great earthquake. This is not literal! All this eventually did in fact happen to Rome. The entire system of cities collapsed and Babylon the Great (Rome) was judged.

**Revelation 17-20 The Victory of the Lion/Lamb**

(This is the working out of the seventh bowl.

Rev 18: The Great Prostitute—The commercial power of Rome is judged and destroyed.

Rev 18:2 Fallen! Fallen is Babylon the Great! This is Rome and Domitian.

The world is going to its destruction in the lake of fire.

Rev 19 The Beast (the political power of Rome) and the False Prophet (the religious power of Rome) are judged and destroyed.

Rev 20 The Serpent/Satan judged and destroyed.

Rev 18:2 Fallen is Babylon the Great.

Rev 19: 9 Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!

**Revelation 20:1-10. Satan/The Serpent in judged.**

Rev 20:1-6 What is the thousand year reign?

Well, what is it not?

1. No mention of the second coming of Christ.

2. No mention of Jesus being on the earth.

3. No mention of a bodily resurrection.

4. No mention of a rapture.

It mentions the martyrs of the early church (“beheaded because of their testimony”) being resurrected.

It is not a literal 1000 year physical reign of Jesus on the earth from Jerusalem, with the resumption of Jewish sacrifice. Dispensational Premillennialism is wrong.

Q: Are the thousand years a literal 1000 years? Obviously not!

What the 1000 year reign is:

v. 2 It is a period during which the power of Satan to attack God’s people is significantly reduced (bound) which will last for an unknown but relatively long period of time, which began at a time near when John wrote Revelation.

How is Satan bound? In the sense that he no longer had the Beast, the Prostitute and the False Prophet working on his side. This is, in fact, historically, exactly what happened after AD 325 (Constantine).

Was he entirely bound? Obviously not! Like a chained dog.

v. 3 After that he will be set free for a short time. What does that mean? See v. 7-10.

v. 4 Martyrs killed by Domitian (and others?)

Martyred because they did not make sacrifice to the beast.

They come to life in the “first resurrection” and are alive during the 1000 years (v. 4). Is this literal? Maybe.

If so, the rest of us will be resurrected (soon) after the end of the 1000 years. And the second death has no power over us.

Amen????

The point: Satan is bound and the martyrs are free!

Rev 20:7-10 The prophetic clock fast-forwards to the end of time.

At the end of time a second major persecution will break out against the Church. He will gather Gog and Magog (the people (Gog) and nations (Magog) in the world committed to Satan) and fight against the church. (v. 9). See Ezekiel 38-39.

But God will protect the church and destroy Gog and Magog (again, Ezekiel 38-39)

v. 10 In the end, Satan, like the Beast, the Great Prostitute, and the False Prophet, will be defeated, judged and sent to hell. A final judgment (day and night forever and ever).

Summary:

There is a spiritual battle going on which we do not see.

Satan is not our friend.

The world is not our friend—it is Satan’s friend.

But God has put his mark on us—the Holy Spirit. We must never bow to the ‘gods’ of this world. God will defend us.

The second death has no power over us. We will reign with Christ.