



WEEK ONE: MATTHEW 24 PART 1

WEEK TWO: MATTHEW 24 PART 2

WEEK THREE: 1 THESSALONIANS 4-5

WEEK 4: REVELATION 19

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Introduction: Revelation 19 includes a stunning vision of the ultimate return of Jesus as a figure of judgement and vindication. Jesus, the white rider, passes judgement on the nations and ultimately the Devil at the beginning of chapter 20.

WARMING UP:

1. This vision of the return of Jesus jumps straight into the book of Revelation. What has been your perception or experience of Revelation in the past?

***A note on interpreting Revelation:** Revelation contains three genres of literature – epistle (letter), apocalyptic and visionary prophecy. Understanding how the original hearers of this book interpreted these genres is important in applying it to our lives today. Apocalyptic literature was widely used in the ancient world. It contained cryptic images that acted as parodies of a current situation. The original hearers would have read some of the images of Revelation and been able to immediately connect it to a world event/power or person in their time period. These images were highly symbolic, not literal. Visionary prophecy was not strictly future prophecy. Its primary use was to use visual imagery to speak God's heart to his people – e.g: the visions of God on his throne told the early Christians that though Caesar may appear to be reigning, God ultimately reigns over the cosmos.*

GOING DEEPER:

READ Revelation 19:11-16

2. There are a lot of metaphors here for what Jesus will bring when he returns again. The images are summarised in the table below. What do you take from each image and what should be our appropriate emotional response to the picture of Jesus here?

SYMBOL	MEANING
FAITHFUL AND TRUE v11	<i>GIVER OF THE REVELATION</i>
JUDGE v11	<i>ULTIMATE AUTHORITY</i>
EYES ARE BLAZING FIRE v12	<i>SEES ALL</i>
MANY CROWNS v12	<i>RULER OVER ALL</i>
UNNAMEABLE v12	<i>INDESCRIBABLE</i>
ROBES DIPPED IN BLOOD v13	<i>JESUS OF NAZARETH</i>
HIS NAME IS THE WORD OF GOD v13	<i>THE LOGOS (John 1:1)</i>
TREADS THE WINEPRESS OF GOD'S WRATH v15	<i>THE AGENT OF GOD'S WRATH</i>
"KING OF KINGS, LORD OF LORDS" v16	<i>PERFECTION (777)</i>

3. Two emotional responses we should feel when reading this portrait of the returning Jesus is **gravity** (fear, awe) and **gladness**. Why would you feel **gravity** when you see Jesus come and why would you feel **gladness**?

4. This is not only a picture of Jesus when he returns, but a picture of who Jesus is **right now**. How does this change your perception of him and your current lifestyle as a Christian?

4. READ v17-20:3

Here, Jesus sets off a world ending chain of events. He is depicted as the one who judges the nations, the false prophet (any spokesperson for the beast) and the beast (any system of power that arises as an enemy of the way of God). How does this ultimate judgement against the enemies of God bring hope to our current lives as Christians?

5. Jesus finally defeats the Dragon, who is the Satan. How final is his defeat here, and how does it connect to Jesus' victory over him on the cross?