

A Study of the Book of Revelation
Source Material: *Come, Lord Jesus* by Mark Braaten
Week 13: January 10, 2010

Read Revelation 19:11-21

In today's world, how would someone describe Armageddon?

How does John's version of Armageddon differ from the popular notions?

Braaten suggests that "In John's view, it really isn't much of a battle. The beast and the kings of the earth and their armies are gathered to make war on Jesus. But Jesus, by the power of his word, destroys them. The battle is quick and one-sided. What John seeks to say in this imagery is that Jesus, by the power of his Word, overcomes evil. Or to put it this another way, the point of this Armageddon imagery is not the *prediction* of a nuclear holocaust. It is rather the *promise* that Jesus by the power of his Word will overcome evil."(Braaten, pg. 134)

How might people view the Book of Revelation differently if this was the predominate view of Armageddon?

Read Revelation 20:1-6

Millennium - 1000 years: Although it appears to be a minor point for John, groups of Christians argue constantly about this 1000 year period. The Premillennialist propose that Jesus comes and then the 1000 years happens. The Postmillennialist propose that there is 1000 years of improvement and then Jesus comes. Since time imagery in the rest of the Book is not literal, this argument is probably pointless. The question remains, what does this all mean? Braaten suggests that "first, this 'first resurrection' and thousand-year reign gives a priority to those who dies for the faith. . . . This section assures us that God has not forgotten the martyrs. On the contrary, there is something special prepared for them, namely this thousand-year reign. Second, this passage also helps to develop the idea of the resilience of evil. Satan is stopped for a thousand years, yet he will come back."(Braaten, pg. 137)

Why do you think people get so worked up about this 1000 years?

Read Revelation 20:11-16

The passage about the Book of Life teaches us two things. "First is that we are saved by grace. We do not earn salvation; it is given to us in Christ as divine gift. Second, we are nonetheless accountable for our deeds."(Braaten, pg. 140)

How do we balance the tension between divine grace and human responsibility?

Read Revelation 21:1-8

What stands out for you about the new heaven and the new earth?

Notice that God say, “See, I am making all things new.”(Rev. 21:5) *Why is that such good news for us?*

“God continues by saying, “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end.” As Caird so powerfully points out, the end in Revelation is not an event, but a person. Too often we think of the end in Revelation in terms of great cataclysmic destruction or a nuclear holocaust. That is not the case. The end of Revelation is God. In the Bible, all things begin in God and end in God.”(Braaten, pg. 144)

Read Revelation 21:9-27

Why do you think we get such an elaborate description of the New Jerusalem?

If Revelation is a call to faithfulness, how might this part of Revelation invite us to consider our on-going response to God’s Word?

Read Revelation 22:6-21

vs 10-11 - “In many of the modern interpretations of Revelation, the authors assume that much of the imagery of Revelation would not be apparent until the twentieth or twenty-first century. John insists just the opposite, that his first audience was his contemporaries in first century Asia.” (Braaten, pg. 154)

A final question revolves around the statement in verse 12 that Jesus is coming soon. How do we make sense of this assertion? Eugene Boring suggests that John was simply wrong. G.B. Caird suggests that John means the persecution will end soon. Ardelia Yarbrow Collins suggests that there is so much imagery in the book that we cannot know what John means. Braaten offers these two thoughts. First that John talks both of an immediate return and a far off return, and so we aren’t to take his time line literally and second, that John is trying to give a sense of urgency to the message. (Braaten, pg. 156)

What will you take away from your study of Revelation?