**Wrath Lecture 3 – The Lamb That Roars.**

John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father’s only son, full of grace and truth. As both love and wrath are part of the glory of the Father, so also of the Son.

**Psalm 2 (NRSV) — 1** Why do the nations conspire, and the peoples plot in vain? **2** The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord and his anointed, saying, **3** “Let us burst their bonds asunder, and cast their cords from us.” **4** He who sits in the heavens laughs; the Lord has them in derision. 5 Then he will speak to them in his wrath, and terrify them in his fury, saying, 6 “I have set my king on Zion, my holy hill.” 7 I will tell of the decree of the Lord: He said to me, **“You are my son; today I have begotten you. 8 Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage, and the ends of the earth your possession. 9 You shall break them with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.”** **10** Now therefore, O kings, be wise; be warned, O rulers of the earth. **11** Serve the Lord with fear, with trembling **12** kiss his feet, or he will be angry, and you will perish in the way; for his wrath is quickly kindled. Happy are all who take refuge in him.

Matt 28:18 And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

John 5:21 Indeed, just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so also the Son gives life to whomever he wishes. 22The Father judges no one but has given all judgment to the Son.” … 25“Very truly, I tell you, **the hour is coming, and is now here, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God, and those who hear will live.** **26For just as the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself; 27and he has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man**. 28Do not be astonished at this; for the hour is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice 29and will come out—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation.

**Gentle Jesus Meek & Mild**  Matt 11:20Then he began to reproach the cities in which most of his deeds of power had been done, because they did not repent. 21“Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida! For if the deeds of power done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. 22But I tell you, on the day of judgment it will be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon than for you. 23And you, Capernaum, will you be exalted to heaven? You will be brought down to Hades. For if the deeds of power done in you had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day. 24But I tell you that on the day of judgment it will be more tolerable for the land of Sodom than for you.”

Matt 12:22-34 Then they brought to him a demoniac who was blind and mute; and he cured him, so that the one who had been mute could speak and see. … 24But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, “It is only by Beelzebul, the ruler of the demons, that this fellow casts out the demons.” … Jesus – 34**You brood of vipers!** How can you speak good things, when you are evil? For out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks.

Matt 21:12 Then Jesus entered the temple and drove out all who were selling and buying in the temple, and he overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those who sold doves. 13He said to them, “It is written, ‘My house shall be called a house of prayer’; but you are making it a den of robbers.”

Mark 3:5 Again he entered the synagogue, and a man was there who had a withered hand. 2They watched him to see whether he would cure him on the Sabbath, so that they might accuse him. 3And he said to the man who had the withered hand, “Come forward.” 4Then he said to them, “Is it lawful to do good or to do harm on the Sabbath, to save life or to kill?” But they were silent. 5He looked around at them **with anger;** he was **grieved** at their hardness of heart and said to the man, “Stretch out your hand.” He stretched it out, and his hand was restored.

Matt 13:40 40Just as the weeds are collected and burned up with fire, so will it be at the end of the age. 41**The Son of Man will send his angels**, and they will collect out of his kingdom all causes of sin and all evildoers, 42and they will throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth. 43Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Let anyone with ears listen! (judgment is a purging for the New Creation).

**The Lamb – The Lion Who Roars. The Book of Revelation.**

* When reading Revelation note the words **“given”, “permitted”, “allowed”**. They all translate the same Greek word (edothe). Nothing can take place unless it is give, permitted, or allowed by God.
* Note that **the inhabitants of the earth** are unbelievers. (Christians are citizens of heaven (Phil 3:20)).
* Look for, “**they did not repent**”. God is long suffering, longing for a change of heart. (Purpose of wrath.)

(Read Rev 5) **5:5** “Who is worthy to open the scroll and break its seals?” 3And no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll or to look into it. 4And I began to weep bitterly because no one was found worthy to open the scroll or to look into it. 5Then one of the elders said to me, “Do not weep. **See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has conquered, so that he can open the scroll and its seven seals.” 6Then I saw between the throne and the four living creatures and among the elders a Lamb standing as if it had been slaughtered, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. 7He went and took the scroll from the right hand of the one who was seated on the throne.**

**1st Seal.** Revelation 6:1 Then **I saw the Lamb open one of the seven seals**, and I heard one of the four living creatures call out, as with a voice of thunder, “Come!” 6:2I looked, and there was **a white horse!** Its rider had a bow; **a crown was given to him**, and he came out **conquering and to conquer**. (Rider not Christ).

**2nd Seal -** 6:4 And out came **another horse, bright red;** its rider was **permitted** to **take peace from the earth, so that people would slaughter one another;** and he was **given** a great sword.

**3rd Seal –** 6:5b-6 … I heard the third living creature call out, “Come!” I looked, and **there was a black horse!** Its rider held a pair of scales in his hand, **6** … four living creatures saying, “A quart of wheat for a day’s pay, and three quarts of barley for a day’s pay, but do not damage the olive oil and the wine!”

**4th Seal -** 8I looked and there was a **pale green horse!** Its rider’s name was Death, and Hades followed with him; they **were given authority** over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword, famine, and pestilence, and by the wild animals of the earth.

**Fifth seal -** 9When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slaughtered for the word of God and for the testimony they had given; 10they cried out with a loud voice, “Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long will it be before you judge and avenge our blood on the **inhabitants of the earth?**” 11They were each given a white robe and told to rest a little longer, until the number would be complete both of their fellow servants and of their brothers and sisters, who were soon to be killed as they themselves had been killed.

**6th Seal** 6 : 12 When he opened the sixth seal, I looked, and there came a great earthquake; the sun became black as sackcloth, the full moon became like blood, 13 and the stars of the sky fell to the earth as the fig tree drops its winter fruit when shaken by a gale. 14The sky vanished like a scroll rolling itself up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place. 15 Then the kings of the earth and the magnates and the generals and the and the rich and the powerful, and everyone, slave and free, hid in the caves and among the rocks of the mountains, 16 calling to the mountains and rocks, **"Fall on us and hide us from the face of the one seated on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb; 17 for the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to stand?"**

The 7th Seal is opened in 8:1 And when He broke the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour and then another series begins as seven angels with trumpets announce more Judgments and on it goes until chap 15 where we are told that the seven angels with seven plagues, are the last, for with them the wrath of God is ended. However, we have not yet been told of the Bowls of Wrath or the fall of Babylon.

It is best not to think of the judgments as sequential but rather as a collage with different parts being displayed throughout history until the time when Christ comes.

These judgments are exercises in the overt actions of the wrath of God as we have seen in the OT Prophets. Yet there are other acts of God’s wrath that are more akin to those of Romans Chapter one.

We first need to think about apocalyptic writing. Common in times of persecution. Has meaning for “insiders” but does not make much sense for those not in the know. What was happening when the revelation was given? What were the terrors being faced by the Church and what did Jesus say to assure them that all was well? And we must ask, what did they understand by these strange apocalyptic visions.

**A Great Red Dragon**

**12:3 Then another portent appeared in heaven: a great red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and seven diadems on his heads. 4 His tail swept down a third of the stars of heaven and threw them to the earth. Then the dragon stood before the woman who was about to bear a child, so that he might devour her child as soon as it was born.**

In the O.T. Israel is often depicted as being in travail and about to give birth. Is 26:17.-18, 66:7f Mic 4:10, Mic 5:2-5. In the early verses of chapter 12 the woman is easily identified as Israel but in 12:13f she appears to be the Church who is attacked by the dragon It seems feasible to identify the woman as a picture of the entire ‘Messianic Community,’ She then represents God’s covenant community, both Israel and the Church. See Rev 12:17.

12:10 I heard a loud voice in heaven, saying, **"Now the salvation, and the power, and the kingdom of our God and the authority of His Christ have come**, for the accuser of our brethren **has been thrown down**, who accuses them before our God day and night. 11 “And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even to death.

**The Beast from the Sea**

**13:1b And I saw a beast rising out of the sea, having ten horns and seven heads; and on its horns, were ten diadems, and on its heads were blasphemous names.**

In the ancient world the sea is often a symbol of evil and here it is a picture of turbulent, raging humanity (Is 5:30; **Rev 17:15, peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues**.) This beast is a composite creature, like a leopard, with feet like a bear's, and a lion's mouth (V2). Similar beasts in **Daniel 7 represent different world empires**. The characteristics of all of them, their power and evil are found in this new entity. This **beast from sea/Evil humanity**

**The beast is in league with the dragon Satan, ‘and the dragon gave it his power and his throne and great authority’.** The relationship of dragon and beast seem to be parallel to that of God the Father and the Son. In amazement the whole earth followed the beast. They worshiped the dragon, for he had given his authority to the beast, and they worshiped the beast, saying, "Who is like the beast, and who can fight against it?" (V3b, 4).

**Who is this beast** that has the authority of Satan, blasphemes God, makes war on the saints and is honoured by the pagan world? Mounce (246) says**, ‘for John, the beast was the Roman Empire as persecutor of the Church ... yet the beast is more than Rome.’**

Hendriksen suggests that the beast is 'the persecuting power of Satan embodied in all the nations and governments of the world...it is now Old Babylonia; then Assyria; ... Rome etc. but though the forms differ the essence remains the same; **worldly government directed against the Church." (Today)**

Caird says – "In the war between God and Satan, between good and evil, the state is one of the defences established by God to contain the powers of evil within bounds, part of the order which God the creator has established in the midst of chaos. But when men worship the state, according to it the absolute loyalty and obedience that are due not to Caesar but to God, then the state goes over to the enemy. "What Satan calls from the abyss is not government, but the abuse of government, the omni-competent state. (Nanny State).

Note carefully – 5 The beast was **given** a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words, and it was **allowed** to exercise authority for forty-two months. 6 It opened its mouth to utter blasphemies against God, blaspheming his name and his dwelling, that is, those who dwell in heaven. 7 Also it was **allowed** to make war on the saints and to conquer them. It was **given** authority over every tribe and people and language and nation, 8 and all the **inhabitants of the earth** will worship it, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb that was slaughtered.

From the perspective of the ‘inhabitants of the earth’ the beast conquers the saints. Yet from a heavenly perspective even in dying the martyrs are conquerors in that ‘they did not cling to life even in the face of death 12:11, but they triumphed ‘by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony.

(Bauckham 90-91). “By the witness of Christ and the saints to the grace, mercy and truth of God, men and women come from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God”. We may ask, why are Christians being persecuted and put to death and why does God allow such things to happen? By their testimony the dragon’s kingdom crumbles. **This beast from the Sea who is in league with the Dragon is a picture of Corrupt and evil government.**

**A Second Beast, this time from the land.**

**Revelation 13:11 Then I saw another beast that rose out of the earth; it had two horns like a lamb and it spoke like a dragon. 12 It exercises all the authority of the first beast on its behalf, and it makes the earth and its inhabitants worship the first beast, whose mortal wound had been healed. 13 It performs great signs, even making fire come down from heaven to earth in the sight of all; 14 and by the signs that it is allowed to perform on behalf of the beast, it deceives the inhabitants of earth**….

The Beast from the Land is identified in various ways. It appears to be the false prophet of 16:13, 19:20 and 20:10 (Morris, Hendriksen), in which case it may be **a picture of religious power serving the state** (Torrance), or the propaganda machine of the Imperial cult (Bauckham, 89) or ‘Antichrist’s Minister of Propaganda, (Mounce) and false religion and false philosophy … antichristian religion, (Hendriksen). (Australian 20161008 )

What did this vision mean for the early church? Most occupations had guilds where members had to participate in the worship various of various gods. No worship, no work.

Rome was one of the first cities to worship the Emperor and a temple was erected for Emperor worship in the time of Tiberius who reigned during most of the life of Christ (Tiberius Claudius Nero 42 B.C.-A.D. 37). As John puts pen to parchment Emperor Domitian (92-96 AD) has declared himself to be ***Deus et Dominus,* God and Lord.** The first day of each month was emperor’s day. He demanded worship from the citizens of Rome.

The Dragon, the beast from the sea (Corrupt worldly government) and the Beast from the land (False religion/ philosophy) have yet another cohort.

**Reve 17:1 (NASB) And one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and spoke with me, saying, "Come here, I shall show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters, 2 with whom the kings of the earth committed [acts of] immorality, and those who dwell on the earth were made drunk with the wine of her immorality. "**

The harlot is clearly Babylon the great city and she sits on ‘many waters’, (Jer 51:13). John tells us what this symbolizes. (Rev 17:15) “And he said to me, “The waters that you saw, where the whore is seated, are peoples and multitudes and nations.

Some suggest that the harlot is just Rome but this is ruled out at 11:8 where **the great city**, ‘is allegorically called Sodom (Where God judged sodomy) and Egypt (Bondage), where their Lord was crucified.**’ (**Jerusalem).The great city had an historical manifestation as ancient Rome but 'The City' is much more than Rome. (See Chap 18.)

**3 And he carried me away in the Spirit into a wilderness; and I saw a woman sitting on a scarlet beast, full of blasphemous names, having seven heads and ten horns.**

We have seen the woman sitting on 'many waters' and now she is borne by this beast (**13:1 corrupt Government**). There is no contradiction as government inspired by the dragon and the raging rebellious nations are of the same heart and mind.

The beast is scarlet as is his master the dragon (Satan 12:3). Heads and horns represent power and authority.

**4 And the woman was clothed in purple and scarlet, and adorned with gold and precious stones and pearls, having in her hand a gold cup full of abominations and of the unclean things of her immorality,**

(Mounce 1998: 308) **The harlot is "the dominant world system which is based on seduction for personal gain".**  He quotes Tacitus a Roman senator as saying that, ‘Rome is a place where all the horrible and shameful things of the world congregate and find a home’ (311).

Rev 17:18 The woman you saw is the great city that has dominion over the kings of the earth

Kings and nations have been seduced away from God, enticed by the pleasures, immorality and wealth of the city. John could see all of this in Rome.

**However, the great harlot Babylon is under God’s control and is a part of his action of wrath.**

Jer 51:7 Babylon was a golden cup in the LORD's hand, making all the earth drunken; the nations drank of her wine, and so the nations went mad. (Rom 1 Wrath of God)

Chapter 18 Tells us of the fall of Babylon, the Great City and the wailing of “the inhabitants of the earth. In Chapter 19 the justice of God is declared and the Lamb and his bride are revealed. God’s king of Psalm 2 rules the nations with a rod iron destroying the enemies of God. Chapter 20 Satan is defeated and Judgment given for all of humanity. In Chapters 21-22 we see a new heaven and earth. Bride and City where we see God face to face. There is the river of life and the assurance that Jesus is coming soon.

**Revelation 19:1–16 (NRSV)** — 1 After this I heard what seemed to be the loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, “Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power to our God, **2 for his judgments are true and just;** he has judged the great whore who corrupted the earth with her fornication, and he has avenged on her the blood of his servants.” 3 Once more they said, “Hallelujah! The smoke goes up from her forever and ever.” 4 And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who is seated on the throne, saying, “Amen. Hallelujah!” 5 And from the throne came a voice saying, “Praise our God, all you his servants, and all who fear him, small and great.” 6 Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude, like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty thunderpeals, crying out, “Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns. 7 Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready; 8 to her it has been granted to be clothed with fine linen, bright and pure”— for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints. 9 And the angel said to me, “Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.” And he said to me, “These are true words of God.” 10 Then I fell down at his feet to worship him, but he said to me, “You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your comrades who hold the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.” **11 Then I saw heaven opened, and there was a white horse! Its rider is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war.** 12 His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems; and he has a name inscribed that no one knows but himself. **13 He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is called The Word of God.** 14 And the armies of heaven, wearing fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses. **15 From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron; he will tread the wine press of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. 16 On his robe and on his thigh he has a name inscribed, “King of kings and Lord of lords.”**

**Revelation 21:1–2 & 9-11**— 1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and **the sea was no more.** 2 And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. …

9 Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and said to me, **“Come, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.” 10 And in the spirit he carried me away to a great, high mountain and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God.** 11 It has the glory of God and a radiance like a very rare jewel, like jasper, clear as crystal.

**Revelation 21:22–27** 22 I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. 23 And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God is its light, and its lamp is the Lamb. 24 The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their glory into it. 25 Its gates will never be shut by day—and there will be no night there. 26 People will bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations. **27 But nothing unclean will enter it, nor anyone who practices abomination or falsehood, but only those who are written in the Lamb’s book of life.**