

**By any of the world's measures Elon Musk is a winner.**

A 50-year-old white male, born in South Africa, lived in Canada, and now a US citizen. He is the richest person in the world. His wealth is estimated to be \$NZ440 billion. Just to give us a little perspective, our whole countries income for 2020 was \$NZ312 billion. Elon Musk is a rich man.

He is the "Techno King" of Tesla, the world's most valuable car maker. He was one of the founders of Pay pal and Space X. He has interests in green energy and Artificial Intelligence. Just this week, he has acquired Twitter for an eye watering sum.

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Mr Musk has a son named X and a daughter named Y. Like a lot of very rich people, he has a number of reputations, one is for being a bully. After the rescue of 12 trapped Thai school boys from a cave, he tweeted to his 80 million followers, that one of the rescue helpers, looked like a "pedo guy", then shrugged it off as a bad joke. Very recently he has come under fire for harassing Twitter employees, less than a week after buying the company.

Tesla, is currently being sued by the State of California in the biggest racial discrimination lawsuit in the state's history. It is also said that Tesla employees don't go anywhere near Mr Musk's office, because if he's in a bad mood, he will fire them.

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In 2020 he was named No 1 Business Person in the World by Fortune magazine.

In 2021 he was No 1 on Forbes Billionaires List, Person of the Year in The Financial Times Annual List, was added to the Newsweek Hall of Fame ... and then on December 13<sup>th</sup>, was named Time's Person of the Year.

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The book of Revelation is an interesting piece of literature, and in spite of what we have heard about it, it speaks more about its recent past than any future event. Rather than being interested in what is going to happen, it speaks powerfully and eloquently, about what has already happened.

That in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ ... everything has changed.

Revelation is written as the Roman Empire rules the known world. Likenesses of Roman gods and goddesses are everywhere, their practises and influence fill the skies, rivers and land with their sacrifices, incense offerings, their temples are a presence on every corner.

The ruler of all these gods, is the Eagle ... the First among men ... the God, Caesar ... the Roman Emperor.

**By any of the world's measures Caesar is a winner.**

But the book of Revelation suggests that a new way of looking at things has arrived. That the world's winners ... are not necessarily God's winners. God's winner here is not the Eagle, but the Lamb ... the Lamb standing as if it had been slaughtered.

**By any of the world's measures ... the slaughtered Lamb ... is not a winner.**

But Revelation says, that, “all power and wealth, wisdom and might, glory and honour and blessing” ... belong ... to ... that slaughtered Lamb.

Not to the Eagle, not Caesar ... not Elon Musk ...

John’s people who heard this being read, were often at the pointy end of things, without money or social standing, without power or influence. People who were told what to do, not tellers of others.

What they heard in these words was in that slaughtered Lamb, in Jesus’ death and resurrection, ... they ... by faith ... were God’s winners.

Not Caesar and Rome.

They heard that in spite of all that the empire of the Eagle had done to them ... the abuse they had suffered, being bashed and violated, being shunned, having husbands or wives walk away, being widowed, or having lost children, or trouble in their families ...

That in spite of struggling with mental illness or sickness of other kinds ... being lonely, hurt and afraid, in spite of financial misadventure and having their dreams ... their livelihoods and sometimes their lives, snatched away ...

They heard ... that they were God’s winners ... and this was good news.

The very best news ever.

**By any of the world’s measures Elon Musk is a winner ...**

but thanks be to God

... the measures of the empires ... of the Elon Musk’s of the world ...

... are not what counts.

Amen.