

## **Revelation 19:11-21** **The Second Coming of Christ**

Well let's turn in our Bibles please to the book of Revelation chapter 19. The focus of our study today is going to be on verses 11 to 21, so we want to read together Revelation chapter 19, verses 11 to 21:

“<sup>11</sup> And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. <sup>12</sup> His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. <sup>13</sup> And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. <sup>14</sup> And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. <sup>15</sup> And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. <sup>16</sup> And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

“<sup>17</sup> And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; <sup>18</sup> that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great. <sup>19</sup> And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. <sup>20</sup> And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. <sup>21</sup> And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.”

Now in the second half of the book of Revelation, which consists of chapters 12 to 22, we were introduced to Satan and his helpers. Satan was portrayed as the dragon in chapter 12, and his helpers are the beasts out of the sea, representing anti-Christian government; and the beast out of the earth, subsequently identified as the false prophet, representing anti-Christian religion; and Babylon the great harlot, representing anti-Christian society; and all those who had the mark of the beast, representing the anti-Christian populace. These all make war against Christ and His people.

But what we see in the second half of this book is that Christ destroys every one of Satan's helpers, and finally, Christ destroys Satan himself. Now even though this destruction of Satan and his helpers takes place right at the end of this age when Christ returns, we have seen that John describes this destruction over a series of several chapters.

The destruction of those who have the mark of the beast is described in chapter 14. The destruction of Babylon is described in chapters 14, 16, 17, and 18. The destruction of the beast and the false prophet is described in chapter 19. And the destruction of Satan is described in chapter 20. So the end of this age, is the end of Satan and all of his helpers. All of them will be destroyed when Christ returns.

We have noted on several occasions the cyclic nature of the book of Revelation. We have seen that it is made up of seven parallel sections, and each traverses the time period between the first and the second coming of Christ. Each of these sections has a different theme, and each of them emphasizes a different aspect of the spiritual warfare that will take place throughout this age.

However, what each of these parallel sections have in common is that each of them concludes with a description of the second coming of Christ. And that's why we can see the destruction of those who have the mark of the beast in chapter 14, because it describes the second coming of Christ. And we can see the destruction of Babylon in chapter 16, because that describes the second coming of Christ. And of course, we can see the destruction of the beast and the false prophet in chapter 19, because that describes the second coming of Christ. And we can see the destruction of Satan in chapter 20, because that describes the second coming of Christ.

Each of these parallel sections takes us from the first coming to the second coming of Christ, and at the end of each of these sections, we see the destruction of Christ's enemies and the vindication of His people. And we've seen this over and over and over again, as we've proceeded through the book.

But what we have seen as we have progressed through each of these parallel sections is that the descriptions of the second coming of Christ have become more and more full, and we have been given greater and greater detail about both the nature and the effect of the second coming. In the early parallel sections, the second coming was described in very limited terms. But as we've proceeded through the book, the descriptions of the second coming of Christ become larger and more voluminous and more detailed and more specific.

And so as we come to the conclusion of this sixth parallel section we are now in, we see in chapter 19, verses 11 to 21, the fullest and the most complete description yet of the second coming of Christ. The person of Christ in this passage is described in vivid symbolism and in great detail. The immediate and decisive victory He achieves over the beast and the false prophet is extensively set forth in dramatic terms.

Here in verses 11 to 21 is the most expanded description of Christ's defeat and judgment of the ungodly forces at the end of the world that we have anywhere in the book of Revelation. For the saints, the sight of the second coming is one of tremendous awe and joy, as they observe it unfolding. But for the helpers of Satan, the second coming is a time of terror and defeat and destruction, as they experience the wrath of God poured out upon them.

And so then what we want to do together today is to consider the destruction of the last of Satan's helpers, the beast and the false prophet. We saw the destruction of those with the mark of the beast in chapter 14. We saw the destruction of Babylon in chapter 18. And now in chapter 19, we see the destruction of the beast and the false prophet.

So in the first place then this morning, let us consider together the description of Christ and His armies. The description of Christ and His armies is in verses 11 to 16. Notice if you will verse 11. It says, "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war."

This phrase, "And I saw heaven opened," has occurred throughout the book of Revelation, and it indicates the beginning of another vision. This vision introduces a scene of judgment in which Christ returns to the earth to vindicate His people and to destroy His enemies. John sees Christ returning as a conquering warrior who has come to bring the wrath of God to bear upon the wicked of the earth and to destroy anti-Christian government and to destroy anti-Christian religion.

Now it's important to remind ourselves again that Revelation is a book of visual symbolic imagery, and that much of what is said here is not to be taken literally. For example, the visual image of Christ astride a white horse does not mean that Christ will literally ride an actual horse from heaven down to earth. Literal horses do not fly through the void of space, nor do they fly through the atmosphere of the earth. But the symbolic imagery set forth in this visual picture does convey a literal message, and the literal message is this: Christ will return as a conquering King who is going to make war on His enemies, to crush their rebellion against Him, and to remove them out of His kingdom. John understood this imagery of a conquering king from the custom of his own day. In John's day, kings did go to war on actual horses, and therefore, it was a fitting symbol for John to use to convey the idea that Christ is a conquering King who is coming to defeat the enemies of His kingdom.

Now it says of Christ that he bears the descriptive titles of being one who was both faithful and true. Notice verse 11: "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him"—now here are the titles—"was called Faithful and True." These titles tell us something about Christ. Christ is one who is faithful to His promises and His people, and Christ is one who is true to His promises and to His people. Christ will be true to His word and faithful to His promises to judge the wicked and vindicate His disciples. Nothing that Christ has promised will fail, and no one who trusted in Christ will be betrayed or be abandoned, and everyone that has persecuted the people of God will be judged.

That's what it means when it says Christ is Faithful and True. He is faithful to His promises, He is faithful to His people; He is true to His promises, He is true to His people. All that He has said, and all that He has committed Himself to do, He will accomplish.

Furthermore in verse 11, it says in the latter part that “in righteousness he doth judge and make war.” Now this world has always been filled with corrupt judges, and this world has always been filled with wars that are motivated by greed, the lust for power, and the pursuit of self-glorification. But Christ is not a judge like the judges of this earth, and Christ does not wage war with the motives of those who wage war on this earth. When Christ passes judgment, it is righteous judgment. And when Christ initiates war, it is always a righteous war, carried out in a righteous manner, in order to achieve a righteous purpose. As for Jesus, in righteousness He judges, and in righteousness He makes war, unlike the judges of the earth, and unlike the warriors of the earth.

Now this is a great encouragement to we who live in this present time, in which it seems like lies and injustice have triumphed, and wars fought for evil reasons are pervasive across the globe, and Christians are openly persecuted by these judges and through these wars, wherever they live on the globe. And in the face of all of this, we can be led to question the promises of God, and the justice of God, and the faithfulness of God to His people and to His word. But we must understand that many of God’s promises are fulfilled in the end, and not in the present. So we must live by faith until He returns, and *then* we will see those promises fulfilled. Christ’s righteous judgment and Christ’s righteous war will be the end of every unrighteous judgment and the end of every unrighteous war forever. The Old Testament is full of promises and prophecies in this regard.

In Psalm 9 and verse 8, it says, “And he shall judge the world in righteousness, he shall minister judgment to the people in uprightness.” Psalm 72 and verse 2 says, “He shall judge thy people with righteousness, and thy poor with judgment.” Psalm 96, verses 12 and 13 says, “<sup>12</sup> Let the field be joyful, and all that is therein: then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice <sup>13</sup> before the Lord: for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth: he shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth.” Psalm 98 and verse 9 says, “for [the Lord] cometh to judge the earth: with righteousness shall he judge the world, and the people with equity.”

In Isaiah 11, verses 4 and 5, it says, “but with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked. <sup>5</sup> And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins.”

And so, over and over and over again, the Old Testament promises that Christ is going to come back, He’s going to right all wrongs, He’s going to vindicate His people, He’s going to bring judgment upon the wicked, and righteousness will reign in judgment and in truth.

So these titles of the returning Christ—that He is Faithful and that He is True; and this description of His activity—that in righteousness He judges and makes war, are a tremendous comfort to us when we struggle with all of the unfaithfulness and the lies, and the corrupt judgments and the evil assaults that we experience in this world. All of that is coming to an end, all of that is going to be rectified, and we will be delivered by the one who is faithful and is true,

and in righteousness He will judge, and in righteousness He will bring an end to all unrighteous attacks upon us.

Now notice verse 12. It says, “His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself.” Now we’re told here in verse 12 that Christ’s eyes are as a flame of fire. We saw this exact same symbolism back in Revelation chapter 1 and verse 14, in John’s initial vision of Jesus Christ. This metaphor of His eyes being as a flame of fire conveys the truth that nothing can be hidden or shielded from the eyes of Christ. His eyes, as it were, burn down through every layer of deceit in order to lay bare and expose the truth. And His eyes burn with indignation at the wickedness of Satan and evil men, which he beholds.

So His eyes being like a flame of fire symbolizes not only His omniscient penetrating perception, but also express His anger and His indignation at the sin which His divine insight observes. These are eyes that fully understand all that there is to see, and these are eyes that are angry at all that they observe. You’ve often heard the statement in our society, “If looks could kill, I’d be dead.” Well, when Jesus looks, it does kill, when He looks upon His enemies with those eyes of fire.

Verse 12 goes on to say that “on his head were many crowns.” In opposition to the false claim of sovereign rule that the dragon and the beast assert, is the true sovereign authority that Christ asserts. You remember that both the dragon and the beast had crowns on their heads. But Christ’s many crowns indicate that He exercises rule over all things, over all realms, and over all people. Whatever may exist, no matter how many categories of things there are, Christ is ruler over each one of them, and over every one of them. There is nothing over which Christ is not the crowned king. Whatever it may be, He wears the crown of authority over it.

Jesus declared in Matthew 28 and verse 18 that all authority had been given to Him in heaven and in earth, and these countless crowns symbolize that comprehensive and complete authority. No one can rebel against His authority and attempt to be an authority themselves and ever succeed. We are told in First Corinthians 15 and verses 24 to 25 that Christ will put down all rule, and all authority, and all power, “for he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.” And so these many crowns symbolize the comprehensiveness and the totality and the infinitude of His rule over all things and over all people.

Verse 12 then goes on to say of Christ, not only that He has eyes as a flame of fire, and not only that He has many crowns, but it then goes on to say that He had a name written that no man knew but He Himself.

Now we know many, many names of Christ, each of which are given to us in the Scriptures, and each of which tells us something about the character of Christ, and the nature of Christ, and the identity of Christ. But Christ also has a name which we know nothing about, and the reason why is because there are aspects of His divine nature that we could never comprehend. No man can

understand Christ exhaustively. There are things about Christ that will always be a mystery to us and which we will never know.

Only the Son of God can understand the mystery of His own being. It would take one equal to Christ to fully comprehend Christ, and this is why it says in Matthew 11:27, “and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father.” Only the Father fully knows the Son. And there are aspects of the Son which are known only to Him and will never be known to us, because how can the creature ever comprehend the infinite Creator? Since Jesus is the express image of God, as Hebrews 1:3 says, then we would expect Him, in His divine nature, to be as inscrutable and as incomprehensible as God Himself is.

So He has a name that no man knows but He Himself. And what this tells us is that we can adore God and we can worship God, even though we can never fully know God or fully comprehend God, and this is where our faith must rest.

Now notice verse 13. It says, “And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.” First of all, verse 13 says that He is clothed in a vesture dipped in blood. This symbolic imagery is taken from the battlefield, in which slaughter by the sword resulted in the blood of one’s enemies splattering upon and ultimately soaking one’s own garment. Here the picture conveys the message that Christ’s enemies will go down to defeat and death before Him, and that He will slay them all with the sword of His judgment, and none will escape His wrath. And thus, His garments will be covered with the blood of those that He has destroyed. So Christ is pictured here symbolically as the great warrior who seeks vengeance for His people, and who comes to deliver them from their oppressors, and who brings great slaughter against the haters of Christ and the persecutors of His people.

Now the imagery here in verse 13, as is much of this imagery, is taken straight out of the Old Testament. I’d like you to turn for a moment please, if you would, to Isaiah chapter 63. It’s a very interesting passage. In verses 1 and 2, there is a question and answer session going on. The question is asked, and then Christ gives the answer. And then another question is asked, and Christ gives the answer, all right?

So notice Isaiah 63 and verse 1: “Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength?” There’s the question, and here’s the answer: “I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.” That’s who’s coming.

Second question, verse 2: “Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat?” or the winepress. Here’s the answer, verse 3. Christ is speaking and giving the answer. He says, “I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment.”<sup>4</sup> For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.<sup>5</sup> And I looked, and there was none to

help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me; and my fury, it upheld me. <sup>6</sup> And I will tread down the people in mine anger, and make them drunk in my fury, and I will bring down their strength to the earth.” And so the imagery of this passage in Isaiah is lifted directly out of it and placed directly into verse 13 of Revelation chapter 19.

Now turn back please if you would to Revelation 19. Verse 13 not only says that He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood, it then goes on to say that “his name is called The Word of God.” So verse 13 identifies beyond any doubt who the one spoken of in this passage is, when it says, “His name is called The Word of God.”

Now of course, John is writing Revelation and John wrote the gospel of John, right? And you recall John said in John 1:1-3, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him, and without him was not anything made that was made” And then it goes on to say in verse 14, “And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.”

So there is no question that this title, The Word of God, is a reference to Jesus Christ. Christ is the full expression of all that God has to say to mankind. That’s why Jesus is called The Word of God, because Jesus is the full expression of all that God has to say to mankind. All that God has to say to us, He has said through His Son and by His Son. Both in His actions and in His teachings, Christ has communicated the mind of God to man.

Now the problem is that many have ignored the Word of God, and now the Word of God is going to bring judgment on them for doing so. Jesus made a very interesting statement in the gospel of John chapter 12 and in verse 48. In John 12 and verse 48, Jesus said, “He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.”

And so when Jesus says, “He that rejects me and receives not my words,” what He’s saying is that to reject Christ and to reject His word are one and the same thing. Jesus speaks the word of God, and Jesus is the Word of God, and both shall bring judgment upon those who have rebelled against them. So the Word of God is coming. The very Word that the people of this earth have rejected, is now going to come and bring judgment against them.

Now notice if you will verse 14. Here we have additional people that are attending Christ in His second coming. Verse 14: “And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.” Now verse 14 introduces to us the armies from heaven who follow Christ as He triumphantly returns to earth, and these armies are the whole company of Christ’s redeemed people. At this point in time, everyone who is saved is with Christ. All of the dead whose souls were in heaven, and all of the living who were saved on the

earth have all been resurrected or raptured, as the case may be, caught up to be with Christ, and are now coming with Christ in the heavens. We saw this event in Revelation 11:11-12

Now these people are spoken of in Revelation 14 and verse 4. It says, “These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins.”—now here it is—“These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.” So it’s the nature of the people of God that they follow Christ wherever He goes.

Now notice chapter 17 and verse 14. Speaking of Antichrist and his coalition, it says in Revelation 17:14, “These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings:”—now notice—“and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.” So Revelation 17:14 describes in one verse, what is described in chapter 19 and verses 11 to 21.

What Revelation 17:14 tells us is that when Christ comes to destroy the beast and the false prophet, who’s going to be with Him? Those who are the called, and the chosen, and the faithful—that is, those who are redeemed from among men, who follow the Lamb, whithersoever He goeth. You recall that the bride of Christ in Revelation 19 and verse 8 was arrayed in fine linen, clean and white. And what we see in verse 14 is that they are clothed in fine linen, white and clean. So it’s pretty clear that these armies that follow Christ are all of His saved people. The rapture has occurred, the resurrection has occurred, they’re now all with Him. And they are now all accompanying Him to the earth.

Now these saints do not fight alongside Christ as His helpers. Christ needs no helpers. He unilaterally achieves the defeat of our enemies all by Himself. We saw this in Isaiah 63, which I just read to you—He treads that winepress *alone*. It is Christ who has the blood on His garments. The saints have none. Their garments are white and clean. Furthermore, it is Christ who has the weapon of the sword. The saints have no weapon.

The saints are those whom Christ is defending, and the saints are those whom Christ is vindicating. And the saints are there to bear witness to the deliverance Christ achieves on their behalf, and the saints are there to bear witness against their persecutors that Christ is bringing destruction upon. The saints follow Christ and the saints observe Christ as Christ fights their battles for them, all by Himself.

Verse 15: “And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.” Now when it says, “And out of his mouth goes a sharp sword,” this is of course figurative language, like virtually all of the descriptions of physical objects in this passage are. The sword represents the word of God going forth in power and in judgment, out of the mouth. Where do your words come from? They come out of your mouth. And so Jesus

speaks, and that speaking is *like* a sword, in that the words He speaks smite and destroy His enemies. Like a sword, Christ's words smite the wicked with a power that destroys them.

And so the sword represents the word of God going forth in power and in judgment. The word of God that spoke the world into existence and had the power to create the universe is the same powerful word that is now used for the destruction of the wicked. Jesus has but to speak the word, and all the nations are smitten. It says in Isaiah 11 and verse 4, "He shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked."

And so, if all God has to do is say, Let there be light; let there be land; let there be stars and moons, and they come into existence—do you suppose He can say, Let them be destroyed, and they will be destroyed? So "He shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked."

Now verse 15 goes on to say that He shall rule the nations with a rod of iron. Psalm 2 and verse 9 says of Christ, regarding the nations, "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." And the idea here is that if you have a vessel made out of pottery and you have a rod made out of steel, and you hit the piece of pottery with the rod of steel, what happens to the pottery vessel? It just shatters into a thousand pieces. So the imagery changes from smiting them with the sword of His mouth to now striking a pottery vessel with a rod of iron.

And then there's a third image that's used here. The final declaration in verse 15 is that He treads out the winepress of the fierceness and the wrath of Almighty God. The crushing of grapes in the winepress is such that the juice flows out of them, and so the grapes, as it were, bleed out. This is symbolic of Christ crushing the wicked under His wrath in such a way that their blood runs in the streets. Recall that we saw this described to us in Isaiah 63, verses 1 to 6, which I had you turn to and which we read previously.

So the language used here in verse 15 tells us in graphic symbolic terms of the awfulness of the wrath of the returning Christ. There is a smiting with the sword of His mouth; there is a breaking with the rod of His anger; and there is a crushing in the winepress of His wrath. This is a terrible judgment that is coming upon the wicked nations of the earth, and they will not escape. Verse 15 closes with the statement about the fierceness and the wrath of Almighty God.

Take note that what is described here in this passage is the wrath of *Almighty* God, and no one can resist His might or His power. All the wicked will be smitten. all the wicked will be broken, and all the wicked will be crushed beneath the wrath of Almighty God. And notice Jesus here is described as "Almighty God," because He's the one doing the smiting, He's the one doing the breaking, and He's the one doing the crushing. Therefore, He is Almighty God.

Verse 16: "And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS." Now verse 16 tells us of a second name of Christ which we can know. Not

only do we know Christ by the name “The Word of God,” as spoken in verse 13, we also know Him by the name, “King of kings, and Lord of lords,” here spoken in verse 16.

Now the Antichrist saw himself as the ultimate and final lord and king of the earth, the one who ruled all other kings. He thought he was the king of all kings, and the lord of all lords. But he was wrong. He was terribly wrong. He was utterly wrong. He was stupidly wrong. As Second Thessalonians 2:4 tells us, Antichrist declared himself to be God, and Antichrist demanded worship as God. In a word, Second Thessalonians 2:4 tells us that Antichrist believed he was Lord of lords, and King of kings, he was God on earth, and men needed to worship him as God, and the whole ministry and activity of the false prophet was to persuade people to worship Antichrist as God on earth.

And so Antichrist and his helper the false prophet deceived all the nations of the earth into worshiping Antichrist and seeing him as King of kings and Lord of lords. But, as Christ is in his name, so he is in reality. Christ is Lord of Antichrist, and Christ is King of Antichrist, and Christ is Lord and King of all those who follow Antichrist, and all those who help Antichrist, even though they had refused to acknowledge Christ as such.

Now this name “King of kings, and Lord of lords” that Christ possesses, it says, is written on the part of His garment that lays upon His thigh, plain for all to see, clear in the claim that it conveys, and truthful in the declaration that it makes. Jesus is Lord of lords, and Jesus is King of kings. It is plain for all to see on His garment as it rests and drapes over His thigh. And it is the folly of the kings of the earth when they do not recognize that fact, and it is the wisdom of the kings of the earth when they do. When they do not recognize Jesus as King of kings and Lord of lords, and thus as their King and their Lord, all that is left to them is the smiting, the breaking, and the crushing wrath of Almighty God. Thus we have the description of Christ and His armies.

Well that brings us then to our second major point this morning. Having seen the description of Christ and His armies in verses 11 to 16, now notice secondly the destruction of the beast and the false prophet, in verses 17 to 21. Notice first of all that when Christ appears, the destruction of the beast and the false prophet are imminent. Verses 17 to 18: “<sup>17</sup> And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; <sup>18</sup> that ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great.”

Now upon the appearance of Christ in the heavens, an angel announces the imminent destruction of the beast and the false prophet and all those who follow him, just like an angel announced the destruction of Babylon and all that inhabited it, back in chapter 18, verses 1 and 2. Remember chapter 18, verses 1 and 2: “And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. <sup>2</sup> And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.”

So an angel appeared and announced the destruction of Babylon. Here, an angel appears and announced the destruction of the beast and the false prophet. The wicked nations, the Antichrist, and false religion have all had their little time of triumph and success—what it talks about in Revelation 11:9-11 as being three and a half days; what it talks about in Revelation 17:12 as being an hour, and what Revelation 20:3 will call a little season.

It says in the Bible that these wicked nations and this Antichrist and this false religion are going to have a time of triumph, and they're going to have a time of success. But it's going to quickly come to an end. It's kind of like when the Pharisees and the Sadducees triumphed over Christ—they got Him crucified. For three days they were winning. They were in the place of triumph. But then Christ came back to life, and their triumph ended. And in the same way, the Antichrist and the false prophet are going to have their time of success and triumph. But then, Christ is going to come back, and their triumph will end.

It says in Job 20 and verse 5 that the triumphing of the wicked is short, and the joy of the hypocrite is but for a moment. And now they see too late that their little time of triumph will translate into an eternity of suffering under the wrath of God in the lake of fire.

This glorious angel summons the scavenger birds of the earth, the flesh-eating vultures, to gather together to consume the slaughtered carcasses of those Christ has killed with the rod of His wrath and the power of His word. Verse 18 makes it clear that this judgment is universal, covering every category of person; and that it is worldwide, covering every place; and that no one escapes it, no matter their status in the kingdom of Antichrist—if they're great, if they're small, if they're poor, if they're rich, or if they're here or they're there, it doesn't matter—they are all going to fall, universally, under the wrath of the returning Christ.

Now this supper of the vultures on the dead bodies of those that Christ slays stands in sharp contrast to the supper of the Lamb that we saw in chapter 19 and verses 7 to 9. It shows the exalted outcome of those who follow Christ—they are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb; and the shameful outcome of those who rebel against Him—they are the object of the supper of the vultures. The wicked become carrion for the vultures, while the righteous become the bride of Christ. A sharper contrast could not be made.

Now all of this is foreshadowed, once again, in the Old Testament. Turn please for a moment if you would to Ezekiel 39, verses 17 to 22. First look back first at verse 7. God says, "So will I make my holy name known in the midst of my people Israel; and I will not let them pollute my holy name any more: and the heathen shall know that I am the Lord, the Holy One in Israel." So God has a message to His people and God has a message to the heathen, and it is this: I will make my holy name known through my judgment.

Now skip over to verse 17. <sup>17</sup> And, thou son of man, thus saith the Lord God; Speak unto every feathered fowl, and to every beast of the field, Assemble yourselves, and come; gather

yourselves on every side to my sacrifice that I do sacrifice for you, even a great sacrifice upon the mountains of Israel, that ye may eat flesh, and drink blood. <sup>18</sup> Ye shall eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth, of rams, of lambs, and of goats, of bullocks, all of them fatlings of Bashan. <sup>19</sup> And ye shall eat fat till ye be full, and drink blood till ye be drunken, of my sacrifice which I have sacrificed for you. <sup>20</sup> Thus ye shall be filled at my table with horses and chariots, with mighty men, and with all men of war, saith the Lord God. <sup>21</sup> And I will set my glory among the heathen, and all the heathen shall see my judgment that I have executed, and my hand that I have laid upon them. <sup>22</sup> So the house of Israel shall know that I am the Lord their God from that day and forward.” So this exact imagery of the vultures feeding on the fallen is brought over into Revelation chapter 19 in verses 17 and 18.

But not only do we see that when Christ appears, the destruction of the beast and the false prophet is imminent, as the angel announces in verses 17 and 18; secondly, we also see that when Christ appears, the destruction of the beast and the false prophet is final. Notice verses 19 and 21.

Verse 19 says, “And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army.” Here in verse 19 is the Battle of Armageddon that was previously spoken of back in chapter 16 and verse 16. We spent a good deal of time considering that battle when we expounded that passage. And in chapter 16 and verse 16, we saw there that Antichrist and his transnational coalition of all the kings of the earth gather together to launch their final assault against the few remaining saints on the earth, and Christ returns to rescue them and to utterly crush Antichrist and his kingdom.

And so this Battle of Armageddon is the battle that takes place at the very end, when Antichrist has virtually wiped all Christians off the face of the earth. There’s a small group left; he moves to wipe them off; Christ comes; they have a confrontation; and in the outcome, Antichrist and the false prophet and all who serve him are utterly annihilated, and Christ’s people are delivered.

And so here in verse 19 of chapter 19, Antichrist and his kingdom unite to make a final desperate stand against Christ as He returns. And this is what is spoken of in Psalm 2:1-3, when it says: “Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth gather themselves together, against the Lord, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast their cords from us.”

But He that sits in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord will have them in derision. He will speak to them in His wrath from His holy hill, and vex them in His sore displeasure. He will smite them with a rod of iron.

Now verse 20 says, “And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.” Verse 20 makes it clear that this battle that shapes up in verse 19 is immediately

over before it ever even begins. No description is given of the conflict because the mightiest army on earth is powerless in the face of Omnipotence.

In Second Thessalonians 2 and verse 8, it says, regarding this wicked one, that Christ will "... consume him with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy him with the brightness of His coming." In a moment, it's all over. Like a spider thrown into the flame, they instantly wither before the power of the word of Christ and the brightness of the glory of Christ. Before they can lift a finger, they are destroyed. In a moment, it will be all over. This is not like our wars, where this side wins a little and then that side wins a little, and they go back and forth, and eventually after a couple of years, one side wins the war. This isn't like that. It's just instantly over.

Anti-Christian government, represented by the beast and all who were loyal to the beast and participants with the beast in this anti-Christian government, all are cast into the lake of fire. Anti-Christian religion, represented by the false prophet, and all who practice it and participate in it and promote it, all are cast into the lake of fire. Anti-Christian government will cease to exist on the face of the earth, false religion will cease to exist on the face of the earth, and all who participated in them, and promoted them, and practiced them, and were loyal to them, will all be cast into the lake of fire.

Verse 21 says, "And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh." Here is the remnant of the army of Antichrist, and they do not escape the wrath of God either. Everyone is mopped up, everyone is gathered together, and the destruction on the kingdom of Satan wrought by Christ is total, it is complete, and it is final. The birds of the air eat the bodies, and their souls are cast into the lake of fire, and this world has come to its final end.

Now I just want to say two things to you who are sitting here and all who are listening, and it is this: We need to pay very careful attention to the names of Christ that we know. What this says to each of us individually is that:

1. We need to listen to Jesus, because He is the Word of God, as verse 13 says. God has not been silent. God has spoken. God has spoken to us through His Son. And only a fool does not listen to the Word of God, because that Word will one day judge him if he does not. And so we need to listen to Jesus because He is the Word of God.
2. We need to submit to Jesus, because He is the King of kings, and Lord of lords, as verse 16 says. You see, these titles are not given to Jesus as meaningless, symbolic, verbal sounds. These titles convey truth, and the truth is that Jesus is the Word of God, and Jesus is the King, and therefore we need to listen to His words and we need to submit to His rule, and if we do, we'll be in the armies that are coming back with Him, instead of the armies that are being destroyed by Him.

Who are these people in verse 14, the armies which were in heaven that follow Jesus upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean? They were those who recognized Jesus as the Word of God, and so they heard and heeded His message, and they recognized that Jesus was King of kings, and therefore they submitted to His laws and they followed His commandments.

And so the difference between being behind Christ, following Him and being defended by Him, and being in front of Christ, and being crushed and destroyed by Him, is this: Did you own and acknowledge Jesus as your final source of instruction regarding all things, and as your ultimate authority in life? And if you did, then He will be the Word that you hearken to, and the King that you submit to. And the blessing of that, is that He will also be the Mighty Warrior who defends you and delivers you.

And so as we meditate on His names, let us join His army, and not the army of Antichrist and the false prophet, who live in defiance and rebellion and have their little time of joy and happiness because of it, but ultimately have an eternity of damnation in the lake of fire as a result of it. May we choose wisely and recognize that while there are some things about Christ we can't understand, what we can understand is that He has conveyed to us the words of God, and He is the final authority of God. Let us own Him, hear Him, and follow Him, in light of that truth. Shall we pray together.

Our Father, we are so grateful that Jesus is coming again, and that because He's coming again, every wrong will be righted, every persecutor of the people of God will be punished, and every servant of God will be vindicated and honored.

Thank you, Father, that Christ fights our battles for us. May that be the focus of our confidence and hope—to recognize that He is going to destroy all anti-Christian forces on this earth, Himself, and that in the end, only righteousness and truth will prevail in His kingdom.

Father, we long for that day. Help us to keep our eyes up, on the things above; and help us to keep our eyes forward, on the things ahead; and Father, may that sight and vision sustain us as we walk through this unjust wicked world, in which the beast, and the false prophet, and Babylon, and those with the mark of the beast all seem so powerful and so strong. In due time, their foot will slip. In due time, we will walk upon the high places. Father, hasten that day, we ask in Jesus' name. Amen