

Will you join me this morning and take your Bibles and turn to Revelation chapter 19? This morning we will begin a two part series on the return of the warrior King, referring to the return of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. And what a marvelous thing it is to be able to study the prophetic Word and to think that our God is a sovereign God who reigns over all things. And therefore he is a God that can accomplish all that he has decreed in his Word. He has no rival. He is the monolithic power over all. Nothing can thwart his predetermined plan to glorify himself. All that he has promised will come true.

I get people writing me from various parts around the world who are a part of our church via the internet and one person recently ridiculed me quite strongly and said, quote, “I want nothing to do with a God of wrath that judges the world as you teach in Revelation.” He went on to say, “None of this is really going to happen. All of this is just apocalyptic literature. It cannot be taken literally.” And he went on to add that a God of love has not decreed evil nor does he control everything.”

That, by the way, is a very common heresy known as Open Theism. And it was basically the product of those who would try to vindicate God from being sovereign and therefore being responsible for evil. However, as we look at Scripture we see something very different. We know that he brings blessing, but he also brings calamity. In Amos 3:6 we read, “If a calamity occurs in a city has not the LORD done it?”¹ After losing all 10 of his children Job said, “The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away. Blessed be the name of the LORD.”²

And, beloved, as we consider the wrath of God that will soon destroy the world in the pre kingdom judgments, and as we consider the Lord’s Second Coming, it is important for you to make sure that your theology is right, unlike this individual.

In Isaiah chapter 46 and verse nine God says, “I am God and there is no other.”

I am God, and there is no one like Me, Declaring the end from the beginning, And from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying, ‘My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure’.³

As we study the Word of God we see that sometimes his purpose includes evil. The Bible is clear that while God is not the author, nor is he the agent of evil, he did, in fact, will it to exist in order to display his glory, his glory through his wrath, through his vengeance, through his justice and through his judgment as well as the other side of the coin, to reveal his glory through his mercy and grace and love and forgiveness.

The greatest act of evil in the history of the world was the murder of the incarnate Christ, the most righteous man that ever lived, an act that God willed to occur in eternity past. You will recall that Peter said in Acts two that he was delivered up by the predetermined

¹ Amos 3:6.

² Job 1:21.

³ Isaiah 46:9-10.

plan and the foreknowledge of God. And Jesus said of himself in Revelation 13 verse eight that he being the lamb was slain before the foundation of the world, an act that displayed the glory of God through his holy hatred of sin as well as his love and his mercy and his grace in his forgiveness.

And as we examine the Second Coming of Christ we will witness both his wrath as well as his mercy. We will witness his vengeance as well as his grace, his judgment as well as his love. And, again, he has decreed all of these things to accomplish his purpose which is ultimately to glorify himself.

And also as we return to the prophetic Scriptures bear in mind that it is God's providence that orchestrates all of the contingencies of reality to ultimately accomplish his plan to glorify himself, an amazing thing. This includes the redemption of sinners, the ultimate defeat of Satan, the fulfillment of the covenant promises that God gave to Israel, the establishment of his messianic kingdom on earth which will ultimately be the consummating bridge between human history and the eternal state.

Now after the Lord has translated his Church into heaven at the rapture of the Church, he is going to set into motion these pre kingdom judgments that will ultimately culminate in his physical return. But bear in mind when he comes now the second time he will not come to seek and to save sinners, but to search and destroy them as well as to bring eternal blessing to the redeemed.

Now, with that background, let me read the passage of Scripture that we will be looking at over the next couple of weeks in Revelation 19. Actually, this morning we are going to look at only the first four verses, but I want to read the entire section here so you get the flavor of what will happen when the Lord returns.

Revelation 19 verse 11.

And I saw heaven opened; and behold, a white horse, and He who sat upon it is called Faithful and True; and in righteousness He judges and wages war. And His eyes are a flame of fire, and upon His head are many diadems; and He has a name written upon Him which no one knows except Himself. And He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood; and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses. And from His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may smite the nations; and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty. And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."

And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried out with a loud voice, saying to all the birds which fly in midheaven, "Come, assemble for the great supper of God; in order that you may eat the flesh of kings and the

flesh of commanders and the flesh of mighty men and the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them and the flesh of all men, both free men and slaves, and small and great."

And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies, assembled to make war against Him who sat upon the horse, and against His army. And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone. And the rest were killed with the sword which came from the mouth of Him who sat upon the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh.⁴

Allow your mind to somehow visualize the Lord Jesus Christ descending in his pre incarnate glory, attended by the heavenly hosts of angels as well as the glorified saint. And bear in mind that this is part of his predetermined plan.

Beloved, in his first coming, the world saw his love and his mercy and his grace, but in his Second Coming they will witness his wrath and his vengeance and his justice. The world will finally behold our holy God, holiness being the all encompassing attribute of God portraying his utter transcendence, his consummate perfection and his eternal glory. Holiness is the defining characteristic of his person. It is the summation of all of his attributes. And isn't it interesting that people hate holiness because they hate God. The world mocks holiness today. But a day is coming when they will beg to die because of it. But death will escape them.

Beloved, today we begin to study the climax of human history. We studied the climax of the Christian's hope, the fulfillment and vindication of every saint down through redemptive history with unimaginable majesty and uncontested regal authority as both judge and warrior, the Lord Jesus Christ, the warrior King, the Messiah, the King of kings, the Lord of lords will physically return to earth to exercise judicial power and destroy the remaining Christ haters who are on earth, those who have survived the pre kingdom judgments of the tribulation. He will crush the beast and all of his minions and he will bind Satan and he will finally put an end to all of man's foolish politics, all of these silly and ridiculous things that we see around the world today. He will abolish all rule and authority.

Beloved, when Christ returns man's long rebellion against God will be smashed. The messianic kingdom of Old Testament prophecy, the hope of Jews and Christians down through the years will finally be established on earth for 1000 years leading to a universal judgment of both the living and the dead.

No, child of God, this will be a day of triumph that is beyond the capacity of our minds to even imagine, the day when all of the weeping stops as the Lord has promised in

⁴ Revelation 19:11-21.

Revelation five and verse five. “[For] behold, the Lion that is from the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has overcome.”⁵

Now, some important context. In the first 10 verses of chapter 19, as we have studied, the Lord revealed to John the coming explosion of heaven’s praise in anticipation of his glorious return. Praise for the glory of God in salvation. Praise for the judgment of God upon the wicked. Praise for the coming reign of God upon the earth. And praise—now catch this—for the love of God, the love that he has for his bride. And this is pictured in other parts of Scripture, but especially in Psalm 45.

Now, you must understand. The marriage celebration cannot take place until the warrior king subdues his enemies on earth. The metaphor of marriage and bride is employed in the Old Testament to depict the covenant relationship between God and his people, both past as well as present and future. And it pictures the deep personal union that God and his people are to have with one another, manifested in his elective love as well as their faithful response to be obedient to him.

Now, speaking of the King Groom, the Lord Jesus Christ, we can go all the way back to Psalm 45 and get a little bit of context of what we are going to look at here in chapter 19. You don’t need to turn there. Let me read this to you. In Psalm 45, for example, beginning at verse three we read:

Gird Your sword on Your thigh, O Mighty One, In Your splendor and Your majesty!
And in Your majesty ride on victoriously, For the cause of truth and meekness and righteousness; Let Your right hand teach You awesome things. Your arrows are sharp; The peoples fall under You; Your arrows are in the heart of the King’s enemies.

Your throne, O God, is forever and ever; A scepter of uprightness is the scepter of Your kingdom.⁶

And then later on in the psalm, in verses 10 through 15 we have, shall we say, the Hebrew version of “Here comes the bride”? And there we read, “Listen, O daughter, give attention and incline your ear.”⁷

Verse 11 says, “The King will desire your beauty. Because He is your Lord, bow down to Him.”⁸

Verse 14:

⁵ Revelation 5:5.

⁶ Psalm 45:3-6.

⁷ Psalm 45:10.

⁸ Psalm 45:11.

She will be led to the King in embroidered work; The virgins, her companions who follow her, Will be brought to You. They will be led forth with gladness and rejoicing; They will enter into the King's palace.⁹

Now, beloved, this brings us to Revelation 19 because here the Lord reveals to us the actual event of the King returning for his bride. And in verses 11 through 21 that we will be studying over the next couple of Sundays there are four themes concerning the warrior King that I believe emerge.

We are going to look at his arrival, his army, his authority as well as his attack. And this morning we will look at the first two, his arrival and his army.

Now this scene, beginning in verse 11, describes the final outpouring of the seventh bowl judgment that was introduced to us in chapter 16. And this will ultimately include a chronological progression of eight magnificent action scenes or events that are revealed in Revelation from here all the way through chapter 21 and verse eight.

Let me give you this overview very quickly before we look more closely at the text. First we have the arrival of Christ here in verses 11 through 16 that we will look at today. And then, second, we are going to see the invitation of the vultures to devour the human carnage as a result of the slaughter of Armageddon in verses 17 and 18. Then the third scene will be the defeat of the beast in verses 19 through 21. And then the binding of Satan in chapter 20 verses one through three. And then the resurrection of the saints who will rule with Christ through the millennium as well as the eternal incarceration of Satan in chapter 20 and verses four through 10. And then the sixth scene, in the absence of the old heaven and earth, we will see the terrifying appearance of the great white throne judgment in chapter 20 and verse 11. And then the seventh scene will be the judgment that will go forth from that throne upon all those whose names are not recorded in the book of life in chapter 20 verses 12 through 15. And in the eighth and the last scene of the seventh bowl will be the creation, the new heaven and the new earth and the descent of the new Jerusalem from heaven in chapter 21 verses one through eight. The new Jerusalem which is prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. So, this is what is in store in our study over the next few times we are together.

Now, as we approach this text, try to imagine in your own mind what must have been going through John's mind on the isle of Patmos. Imagine being 90 years old and suffering in this penal colony under the Romans. And then all of the sudden you are allowed to witness all of this glorious revelation. You know the Lord is speaking to you himself as well as through his angels and now you are witnessing this glorious future that awaits him and all of the saints. Can you imagine how his heart must have been skipping beats? I am sure the sufferings of Patmos paled into utter insignificance as he beheld the ineffable realities of God's sovereign purposes to glorify himself.

So we begin with verse 11, the first scene that introduces all of the others.

⁹ Psalm 45:14-15.

And I must add that I want to go very slowly and carefully through these verses so that we don't miss any golden nugget of our Lord's revelation to us. So first we see the arrival, verse 11. "And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war."¹⁰

What an absolutely amazing scene. To be able to see the spiritual world, to be able to look beyond the veil of our limited sight and reality and actually look into what is happening all around us and especially into the region of heaven itself. "And I saw heaven opened,"¹¹ it says. John is one of a select few who has ever witnessed heaven being opened. Ezekiel saw it when he was 30 years old.

In Ezekiel chapter one verse one we read, "While I was by the river Chebar among the exiles, the heavens were opened and I saw visions of God."¹²

John the Baptist saw it in Luke three verse 21 at Jesus' baptism. There we read:

Jesus was also baptized, and while He was praying, heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in bodily form like a dove, and a voice came out of heaven, "You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased."¹³

And earlier in Revelation chapter four verse one, John looked:

And behold, a door standing open in heaven, and the first voice which I had heard, like the sound of a trumpet speaking with me, said, 'Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after these things.' Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne was standing in heaven, and One sitting on the throne.¹⁴

And later in chapter 11 verse 19 in connection with the seventh trumpet judgment and the proclamation of the kingdom that was about to come we read, "And the temple of God which is in heaven was opened; and the ark of His covenant appeared in His temple, and there were flashes of lightning and sounds and peals of thunder and an earthquake and a great hailstorm."¹⁵

Also in chapter 15 and verse five as the final bowl judgments were about to be poured out upon the earth he looks and we read, "And the temple of the tabernacle of testimony in heaven was opened."¹⁶

¹⁰ Revelation 19:11.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ezekiel 1:1.

¹³ Luke 3:21-22.

¹⁴ Revelation 4:1-2.

¹⁵ Revelation 11:19.

¹⁶ Revelation 15:5.

And then you will remember prior to this he witnessed the mighty angels of judgment coming down out of heaven in chapter 10, in chapter 14 and chapter 18.

And now here we are in chapter 19 and moments before he sees heaven opening and he beholds the glory of the Lord on the white horse as he comes down, right before that we read in verse one of chapter 19, “I heard something like a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, ‘Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God.’”¹⁷

And now, dear friends, he sees the reality of this great paean of praise, verse 11. “And I saw heaven opened.”¹⁸ But as others have rightfully stated, they were not opened to let John in, but to let Jesus out.

“And behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war.”¹⁹ Think what a stark contrast this is to his first coming when the King of kings rode upon a donkey, when he rode upon a beast of burden as he made his way to bear the burden of our sins. But now he symbolically rides on this magnificent mount, a steed of splendor, the kind that would have been ridden by a conquering Roman general in a majestic procession of triumph as he rode down through the magnificent streets of Rome.

The prophet Zechariah prophesied about this very contrast in chapter nine. In verse nine of Zechariah nine the Lord speaks through his prophet concerning his humble first coming and here is what we read. “Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion! Shout in triumph, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your king is coming to you; He is just and endowed with salvation, Humble, and mounted on a donkey, Even on a colt, the foal of a donkey.”²⁰ And we know that that happened at Passover, the vast multitude of Jews acknowledged him to be Jesus when he rode into Jerusalem.

But then next Zechariah describes the Second Coming of Christ, the warrior King as he returns to rescue Israel in her time of peril and when he comes to establish his kingdom. And, I might add, if verse nine was literal, don’t you think verse 10 will be as well?

Verse 10 says, “I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim [which is Israel] And the horse from Jerusalem; And the bow of war will be cut off. And He will speak peace to the nations; And His dominion will be from sea to sea, And from the River to the ends of the earth.”²¹ Indeed, at his first coming he sat upon a humble donkey as he rode to a cross. But, beloved, when he returns he is going to sit on this white horse, this magnificent steed of splendor because he is not going to a cross this time. He is going to a throne and ultimate triumph over his enemies.

¹⁷ Revelation 19:1.

¹⁸ Revelation 19:11.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Zechariah 9:9.

²¹ Zechariah 9:10.

So in verse 11 we read, “I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse.”²² The white horse, of course, is here emblematic of a horse of triumph and uncontested authority. Now notice the rider is described. “He who sat on it is called Faithful and True.”²³ Can there be a more fitting title for the King, a more perfect description of the person and the work of our Savior? I think not.

First, John learns that he who sat upon the white horse is called Faithful. Now this carries the force in the original language of one who is totally trustworthy, one who is totally dependable.

Did not the distraught prophet express his hope in the Lord in Lamentations 3:22 saying:

The LORD’S lovingkindnesses indeed never cease, For His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness.²⁴

And in 2 Thessalonians three and verse three Paul tells us, “The Lord is faithful, and He will strengthen and protect you from the evil one.”²⁵ And in 1 Corinthians 10 verse 13 Paul reminds us that, “God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able.”²⁶ And in 1 John 1:19 we read, “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”²⁷ And in Hebrews 2:17 we read that he is our merciful and faithful high priest.

Oh, dear Christian, this is referring to our faithful Savior and king who will ride to earth some day in absolute, total triumph. He is absolutely trustworthy. All that he has decreed in eternity past will come to fruition. As we read in 2 Corinthians 1:20, “For as many as are the promises of God, in Him they are yes; therefore also through Him is our Amen to the glory of God through us.”²⁸

Now notice. He is not only faithful, but he is described as true. And true here in the original language carries with it the sense of being real or genuine. He is the very essence of truth. Jesus said in John 14:6, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Me.”²⁹ And John said of him in 1 John 5:20, “And we know that the Son of God has come, and has given us understanding so that we may know Him who is true; and we are in Him who is true, in His Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life.”³⁰ And then John contrasts who is true with what is false in the very next verse, verse 21 saying, “Little children, guard yourselves from idols.”³¹

²² Revelation 19:11.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Lamentations 3:22-23.

²⁵ 2 Thessalonians 3:3.

²⁶ 1 Corinthians 10:13.

²⁷ 1 John 1:9.

²⁸ 2 Corinthians 1:20.

²⁹ John 14:6.

³⁰ 1 John 5:20.

³¹ 1 John 5:21.

So here the Lord describes himself as the trustworthy essence of truth. In fact, earlier in chapter three and verse 14 he is described as the faithful and true witness.

Now, to make this very practical, in our world of Satanic deception, in our world of smoke and mirrors and spin and instability and unfaithfulness and absolute outright lies, we can rest assured that all that Jesus is and all that he says is faithful and true. Whatever he has promised, it is reliable. It is utterly true. It is going to come to pass including his wrath, his judgments, his vengeance as well as his saving grace, the blessings of salvation and the inconceivable splendors of the kingdom.

Now notice also we read that in his or he comes and in righteousness he judges and wages war. And here we see both the motive as well as the mission of his return. He is coming to judge as well as to conquer. The forces of the beast and the antichrist are going to be vanquished and all of those who have opposed him are going to be punished. So he comes here as judge as well as executioner of those who have repeatedly and deliberately spurned the warnings and ignored all of the invitations to repent that have absolutely dominated the period of the tribulation.

In verse 12 we are given further description of the warrior king. “And His eyes are a flame of fire.”³² This symbolism was used earlier in chapter one verse 14 and chapter two verse 18 and it speaks of his fierce wrath against his enemies and the penetrating eyes of divine omniscience that is able to, like a laser, burn through all of the barricades of rebellion and to burn through and blast through the fortresses of deceit and be able to search and destroy all those hardened sinners that will be upon the earth.

Daniel witnessed this as well in chapter 10 verse six when he beheld the pre incarnate Christ. Here is what he said. “His body also was like beryl, his face had the appearance of lightning, his eyes were like flaming torches, his arms and feet like the gleam of polished bronze, and the sound of his words like the sound of a tumult.”³³ So here we see that his eyes are a flame of fire. I am reminded of what the author of Hebrews said in Hebrews chapter 4:13, that “there is no creature hidden from his sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of him with whom we have to do.”

Will you notice also upon his head are many diadems? The diadems here refer to crowns of royalty. These are crowns that are emblematic of a king and of a king’s authority. Now, it was common in ancient times for a conquering king to take his defeated foe and place him on the ground and put his foot upon his neck and take his crown and put it on his head in a way to demonstrate his absolute subjugation and take over of power. We witness this, for example, in 2 Samuel 12. After the defeat of the Ammonites in verse 30 we read of King David that he took the crown of their king from his head, it goes on to say, and it was placed on David’s head.

³² Revelation 19:12.

³³ Daniel 10:6.

Now think about it. You will recall in our study of Revelation that the dragon had a diadem on each of his seven heads, chapter 12 verse three. And the beast had one on each of his 10 horns in chapter 13 and verse one. But now the King of kings comes along and he has many more upon his head. And you could think of it this way. Now the greater son of David, the warrior king subdues all of the kings of the world and, in effect, places their crowns upon his head, the very head that once held the crown of thorns.

I was deeply moved by what Charles Spurgeon said regarding this text. I want to read it to you.

Quote, “Ah, well, ye know what head this was and ye have not forgotten its marvelous history, a head which once in infancy reclined upon the bosom of a woman, a head which was meekly bowed in obedience to a carpenter, a head which became after years a fountain of water and a reservoir of tears, a head which sweat as it were great drops of blood falling to the ground, a head which was spit upon, whose hair was plucked, a head which at the last and the grim agony of death crowned with thorns gave utterance to the terrible death shriek, ‘Lama sabachthani,’ a head which afterwards slept in the grave and glory be unto him that liveth that was dead, but is alive forever more, a head which afterwards rose again from the tomb and looked with radiant eyes of love upon the holy women waiting at the sepulcher.” He goes on to say, “This is the head whereof John speaks in the words of this text. Who would have thought that a head, the visage of which was more marred than that of any other man, a head which suffered more from the tempests of heavenward, of earth than ever mortal brow before should now be surrounded with these many diadems, these star bestudded crowns,” end quote.

Ah, indeed, dear friends. He will wear the crowns. Perhaps we will even remember this Lord’s Day, this topic when we descend with him in glory. But John sees something else that identifies this writer in verse 12. At the end he says, “And He has a name written upon Him which no one knows except Himself.”³⁴ Now, it is futile to speculate about the name because he alone knows what it is and what it means. It was obviously inscrutable to John even though he saw it. But, beloved, here I believe we are reminded of the ineffable, indescribable nature of our Savior King. In fact, this is reminiscent of Jesus’ words in Matthew 11:27. You may recall. There is where he spoke about the mysterious unknowability of the Father and of the Son apart from divine revelation. But even with that the full knowledge of who they really are seems to be limited to us. Perhaps the Lord will reveal more about this name in glory. I don’t know. We will find out.

But notice what else John sees as he witnesses the arrival of the warrior king in verse 13. He was clothed in a robe dipped in blood. Now, robe here is a *paludamentum* in Greek and it refers to a rider’s cloak, a certain type of cloak that a person would wear when riding a horse, but especially the type that a Roman general would wear.

But may I point out that this has nothing to do with the blood of Christ as some often say . . . the blood of Christ that was shed upon the cross, because as you look at the context

³⁴ Revelation 19:12.

here, the context has nothing to do with his work of atonement, nothing to do with his work of redemption. The context is war. This is a reference to the blood of his enemies.

The imagery, in fact, is drawn from Isaiah chapter 63 beginning in verse one. And there we read:

Who is this who comes from Edom, With garments of glowing colors from Bozrah, This One who is majestic in His apparel, Marching in the greatness of His strength? "It is I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save." Why is Your apparel red, And Your garments like the one who treads in the wine press? "I have trodden the wine trough alone, And from the peoples there was no man with Me. I also trod them in My anger And trampled them in My wrath; And their lifeblood is sprinkled on My garments, And I stained all My raiment. "For the day of vengeance was in My heart, And My year of redemption has come. I looked, and there was no one to help, And I was astonished and there was no one to uphold; So My own arm brought salvation to Me, And My wrath upheld Me. I trod down the peoples in My anger And made them drunk in My wrath, And I poured out their lifeblood on the earth."³⁵

So the imagery here of the king clothed with a robe dipped in blood speaks of the slaughter of Armageddon when the lion of the tribe of Judah wreaks vengeance upon his enemies.

Then the scene of his arrival closes with yet another mention of the warrior's name. Verse 13. "And His name is called The Word of God."³⁶ You will recall that the inspired apostle also recorded this concept in his gospel referring to Christ Jesus as the logos, the Word in John 1:1 and also in verse 14. And now, here again, he learns afresh that his name is called the Word of God. And this speaks of the revelation of the purposes of God that finds its full expression in the person and the work of the Lord Jesus Christ, especially now as we see the culmination of his work coming to fruition.

Robert Thomas adds this very helpful insight, and I quote, "The same word that brought the creation into existence is powerful enough to subdue satanic powers whom the warrior Messiah is about to confront. In Hebrew thought the word is not a lifeless sound, but an active agent," end quote.

Certainly we see this truth in Hebrews 4:13. "For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword."³⁷ It goes on to say that it is "able to judge the thoughts and the intentions of the heart."³⁸

³⁵ Isaiah 63:1-6.

³⁶ Revelation 19:13.

³⁷ Hebrews 4:12.

³⁸ Ibid.

Now, there can be no dispute as to the identity of this rider. Think about it. In verse 11 he is called Faithful and True. In verse 12 we see the transcendence of his infinite holiness and the boundless mystery of his deity and this name that is written upon him which no one knows except himself. And in verse 13 now he is called the Word of God. And we know later on in verse 16 he has a name that is written on his robe and on his thigh, “King of king and Lord of lords.” Who else could that be but our Lord?

And, beloved, think again. This is the Christ who died in our place. It is just an inconceivable thing. This is the one who has saved us by his grace. This is the one who is coming again in power and great glory. As I was meditating upon this my mind went to Paul’s great testimony in 1 Timothy chapter one and verse 15. He says:

It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all. And yet for this reason I found mercy, in order that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience, as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life.³⁹

And then he closes with this. “Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.”⁴⁰

My friends, Jesus is coming. Jesus also described his rival in Matthew chapter 24 in his Olivet Discourse. In verse 27 we read, “For just as the lightning comes from the east and flashes even to the west, so will the coming of the Son of Man be.”⁴¹

By the way, when the lightning flashes, does it get everybody’s attention? That is the point. Everybody is going to see it. He goes on to say:

Wherever the corpse is, there the vultures will gather. But immediately after the tribulation of those days THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED, AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, AND THE STARS WILL FALL from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken. And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory. And He will send forth His angels with A GREAT TRUMPET and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.⁴²

So, first, John speaks of the warrior King’s arrival and, secondly, the moments that we have left this morning he also speaks of his army in verse 14. “And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses.”⁴³

³⁹ 1 Timothy 1:15-16.

⁴⁰ 1 Timothy 1:17.

⁴¹ Matthew 24:27.

⁴² Matthew 24:28-31.

⁴³ Revelation 19:14.

Now there are other passages in Scripture that tell us that his army will include the angelic hosts of heaven. We see this, for example, in Matthew 25 verse 31. But here they are not mentioned because here the troops that are mentioned in the context of the bridal This refers to all those who will ultimately be a part of his bride, which will include the redeemed from all ages, this refers to you and me, the saints. That is the army. This is the regiment of the redeemed, dear friends.

This is consistent with chapter 17 verse 14 where we read, “Those who are with [the King of kings and Lord and lords] are the called and the chosen and the faithful,”⁴⁴ a reference to the elect of God. And this is further confirmed by their attire. It says that they are clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And the same portrayal is used in chapter is used in chapter 19 verses seven and eight to describe the Lamb’s bride who you will notice has made herself ready and it was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.

Now, will you also notice unlike their leader with a sharp sword, this army is unarmed. We have no sword. We have no bow. We have no arrows. There is no armor. There are no helmets. Certainly we would not need any of those things because at this point we will be immortal, utterly impervious to any kind of injury.

Will you notice there is no mention anywhere that we will engage in this conflict at Armageddon. After all, our almighty sovereign is perfectly capable of handling it on his own. We will just merely accompany the commander even as Paul reminds us in Colossians three verse four. “When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.”⁴⁵

I cannot fathom what it will be like to be a part of this approaching army some day, descending upon this demon infested earth, charging the vast forces of the antichrist as they surround Jerusalem. As we study the Scriptures we see that those armies will basically cover the whole land of Israel.

I remember, however, when I was in Israel climbing up on Mount Carmel. I remember Mount Carmel. That is where Elijah called down the fire upon the burnt offering and it lapped up not only the burnt offering, but all of the wood and all of the stones and it licked up all of the water. And then he took the 400 prophets of Baal and killed them.

I climbed up to Mount Carmel and I remember the very first time I got up there I wasn’t thinking so much about what we were about to study on that mountain with respect to Elijah and other great Old Testament passages, but what filled my heart and my mind was the Second Coming of Christ because on Mount Carmel you can look out across the vast valley of Megiddo. And I remember weeping, thinking one day I will be a part of this vast army along with all of those who are part of my family, those who love Christ, those

⁴⁴ Revelation 17:14.

⁴⁵ Colossians 3:4.

who are a part of my church family, all of the saints that I have known and saints that I have never known. Some day I will be coming down from up there approaching a vast battle field that will one day be a part of the landscape that I can now look upon.

It is an overwhelming thought, isn't it?

Now some will say, "What is he waiting for? Why is he waiting so long?" In fact, scoffers often say, "Hey, its been 2000 years here. I mean, come on. Where is your Jesus?" And Peter reminds us that this is going to happen. You will remember in 2 Peter 3:3, "Know this first of all, that in the last days mockers will come with their mocking, following after their own lusts, and saying, 'Where is the promise of His coming?'"⁴⁶

Peter answers that a little bit later in verse eight. He says, "What escapes them is that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years and a thousand years is as one day. The Lord is not slow about his promises as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish, but for all to come to repentance."

My friends, what appears to be a delay, maybe, in our minds, is perfect timing for God. It is no delay at all. In fact, you might think of this as an opportunity for him to manifest his long suffering love towards sinners. Think of it also as a time for us to have our faith tested, a time for us to loosen our grip on the things of the world. And you begin to get more serious about his imminent return when the Lord comes to snatch us away.

If you are here and you do not know Christ I pray that you will ask him to save you and that you will trust him because he alone is your only hope of salvation. But for those of us who know and love Christ, may I remind you of what Paul told Titus in chapter two?

For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, who gave Himself for us.⁴⁷

I leave you with that thought and, oh, would to God we live it out and bear much fruit for the glory of Christ who is coming very soon.

Let's pray together.

Lord, we rejoice in these eternal truths. I pray that these words will bear much fruit in the lives of many. Even so, Lord Jesus, come quickly for it is in your name that we pray. Amen.

⁴⁶ 2 Peter 3:3.

⁴⁷ Titus 2:11-14.

Transcript Explanation: Each transcript is a rough approximation of the message preached and may occasionally misstate certain portions of the sermon and even misspell certain words. It should in no way be considered an edited document ready for print. Moreover, as in any transcription of the spoken word, the full intention and passion of the speaker cannot be fully captured and will in no way reflect the same style of a written document.

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