

It is my great joy to minister the Word of God to you once again this morning. I would like to ask you to take your Bibles and turn to Revelation chapter 19. We return, again, to our verse by verse study focusing primarily on the return of the warrior king. This is part two in this series. And I would like to read verses 11 through 16, Revelation 19 beginning with verse 11.

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. 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. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. 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. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.¹

At his first coming we know as we study the Word of God that over 300 prophecies were fulfilled literally, precisely. For this reason we can safely assume that all of the rest of the prophecies will be fulfilled literally as well. But before we focus on the text here this morning I have much to say to you, to give you an overview of some of the prophetic truths found in the Word of God with respect to the Second Coming of Christ. And hopefully this will give you even more context for the verses that we will focus upon in a few moments.

May I remind you that on the Mount of Olives on Wednesday before Jesus was crucified on Friday he gave a detailed answer to the disciples question regarding his coming. In Matthew 24 and verse three they asked, “Tell us, when will these things be, and what will be the sign of Your coming, and of the end of the age?”²

The word “coming” **PAROUSIA** (par-oo-see'-ah) in Greek, it is a word that doesn't necessarily pertain as much to an actual arrival, but rather to presence, to his ruling presence. “When are you going to manifest yourself as the king? When are you going to ascend the throne as Israel's triumphant Messiah?” That is what was burning on their mind. And his lengthy answers are recorded in Matthew 24 and 25, Mark 13 and Luke 21.

So what will be the sign of his coming? What kinds of things will happen in the world that will point to his manifestation as the Messiah King, as the Judge and Ruler of the kingdom that was promised to Israel?

¹ Revelation 19:11-16.

² Matthew 24:3.

Jesus' answer is recorded in each of the gospels as I mentioned, but I want to focus for a moment on what he had to say in Matthew 24. There he described these signs as birth pangs, like a mother in labor. There would be a sequence of signs or a sequence of events that would increase in severity as well as in frequency until finally the birth of the Lord in terms of his appearing occurs.

For example, the Lord tells us in Matthew 24 that before he comes there will be religious deception, there will be false messiahs and counterfeit representatives of the Lord Jesus Christ, those that will mislead people, that will distort the gospel, that would redefine the person and the work of Christ, that would reinvent God to make him one of their own making. And ultimately these people would prepare the world for the antichrist and his worship. In other words he is telling us that before he comes there will be a proliferation of false Christianity. That will flourish. And we see that today. There are far more counterfeit, apostate Christians than genuine born again believers and they are multiplying like fruit flies.

He also promised that there would be nations at war. And we see the beginnings of this even today though it will be exceedingly worse just before the Lord returns. Nations today are doing battle economically and politically, even militarily. The threats are everywhere. Virtually the entire Muslim world is at war with anybody that is not Muslim. The world is a powder keg today.

The Lord also promised in Matthew 24 that there would be natural disasters that would increase, natural disasters of epic proportions, earthquakes, volcanoes, tsunamis, hurricanes, plagues. These things will escalate globally and eventually include the cataclysmic disasters that are described in the book of Revelation.

He promised that there would be great signs from heaven and he never even really explains what those things will be because, certainly, they are beyond our capacity to fathom. And he elaborates on these more in the seal, trumpet and bowl judgment in Revelation.

He also promised that before he comes there will be increased persecution in terms of people causing the saints to suffer. And we see this mounting today, hostility against true Christians. It is estimated that about 1000 believers are martyred for their faith every day around the world. This is only going to get worse.

Likewise, in Luke 21 Jesus summarized some of these same signs, the signs of his **PAROUSIA** (par-oo-see'-ah). And he added yet another specific sign in verses 20 through 24. In verse 20 he said, "But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then recognize that her desolation is near."³

³ Luke 21:20.

Now, of course, we saw a preview of this sign in the Roman siege of Jerusalem in AD 70, but when you compare what the Lord is saying here and what happened then with Matthew 24 and Mark 13, we see that this specific sign is linked far more, ultimately, to the prophet Daniel's prophecy regarding the "abomination of desolation" described in Daniel 9:27 and chapter 11 verse 31 when the antichrist demands that the world worship him, that time when ultimately the Lord will come in judgment in his return. In fact, in Luke 21 verse 22 the Lord says, "Because these are days of vengeance, so that all things which are written will be fulfilled."⁴ That is why he is talking about the time of Jerusalem being surrounded. They will be days of vengeance so that all things which are written will be fulfilled, referring to the consummation of all things.

And we see a preview of this particular scene today as we marvel at the tiny state of Israel, about the size of New Jersey, about 5.6 million Jews. Today they are surrounded by 22 Arab countries encompassing five million square miles with 145 million people. And they are ultimately aligned with the whole Muslim world of over a billion people in an area twice the size of the United States. Their common purpose, to destroy Israel. Yet Israel survives.

Do you know anything about what is going on in Israel today? You will see that she not only survives, she thrives in contrast to her enemies who live in ignorance and poverty and superstition and immorality and in barbaric violence. Like no other city in the history of the world, for 3000 years, Jerusalem has been exactly what the prophet Zechariah tells us in Zechariah 12:3, "a burdensome stone" or "an immovable rock for all nations."

So Israel's enemies are already beginning to lay siege to her and it will worsen as Jesus promised when the forces of the antichrist will fill the land of Israel and surround Jerusalem at Armageddon. In fact, during the tribulation we know that the Lord will use the coalition of the antichrist as an instrument of judgment upon the ungodly Jews. Two-thirds of them will be killed. However, the Lord will preserve and reconcile unto himself the final third and they will be the ones that will enter into the kingdom.

Jesus went on to add in Luke 21 verse 25:

There will be signs in sun and moon and stars, and on the earth dismay among nations, in perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves, men fainting from fear and the expectation of the things which are coming upon the world; for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see THEN OF MAN COMING IN A CLOUD with power and great glory. But when these things begin to take place, straighten up and lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing near.⁵

⁴ Luke 21:22.

⁵ Luke 21:25-28.

As we examine the Lord's words just a bit more closely he says, "There will be signs in sun and moon and stars,"⁶ again, he doesn't fully explain this because it will be something unimaginable to us. But we find this in other passages of Old Testament prophecy.

In Isaiah chapter 13 beginning in verse nine the prophet tells us:

Behold, the day of the LORD is coming, Cruel, with fury and burning anger, To make the land a desolation; And He will exterminate its sinners from it. For the stars of heaven and their constellations Will not flash forth their light; The sun will be dark when it rises And the moon will not shed its light. Thus I will punish the world for its evil And the wicked for their iniquity.⁷

Likewise the prophet Joel tells us in Joel chapter three, referring to the day of the Lord, that time of judgment. He says in verse 15, "The sun and moon grow dark and the stars lose their brightness."⁸ Likewise the prophet Zephaniah tells us in chapter one verse 15 it will be, "A day of darkness and gloom, a day of clouds and thick darkness."⁹ And this is precisely what the Lord predicted in Matthew 24 verse 29 when he said, "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."¹⁰ And all of this is consistent with the final three bowl judgments in Revelation.

Now there are numerous other Old Testament prophecies that describe the heavenly bodies careening out of control and the luminaries growing dark. But as we go back to Luke 21 and verse 25 the Lord says, "And on the earth [there will be] dismay among nations."¹¹ Dismay in the original language means an overwhelming sense of distress and anguish because there will be no hope. There will be no help. The world will be coming to an end. They will be, he says, "in perplexity at the roaring of the sea and the waves."¹² Perplexity is a word that refers to a state of profound quandary, a state of overwhelming and paralyzing confusion. And that will be at the roaring of the sea and the waves. In other words, the world is going to be in absolute utter chaos.

He tells us that, "men fainting from fear and the expectation of the things which are coming upon the world; for the powers of the heavens will be shaken."¹³ Men fainting, **APOPSUCHO** (ap-ops-oo'-kho) in the original language. It means to breathe out or to

⁶ Luke 21:25.

⁷ Isaiah 13:9-11.

⁸ Joel 3:15.

⁹ Zephaniah 1:15.

¹⁰ Matthew 24:29.

¹¹ Luke 21:25.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Luke 21:26.

expire. It literally means heart failure. People will absolutely be scared to death. Again, going back to Isaiah 13 beginning in verse six:

Wail, for the day of the LORD is near! It will come as destruction from the Almighty. Therefore all hands will fall limp, And every man's heart will melt. They will be terrified, Pains and anguish will take hold of them; They will writhe like a woman in labor, They will look at one another in astonishment, Their faces aflame. Behold, the day of the LORD is coming, Cruel, with fury and burning anger, To make the land a desolation; And He will exterminate its sinners from it. For the stars of heaven and their constellations Will not flash forth their light; The sun will be dark when it rises And the moon will not shed its light. Thus I will punish the world for its evil And the wicked for their iniquity; I will also put an end to the arrogance of the proud And abase the haughtiness of the ruthless. I will make mortal man scarcer than pure gold And mankind than the gold of Ophir. Therefore I will make the heavens tremble, And the earth will be shaken from its place At the fury of the LORD of hosts In the day of His burning anger.¹⁴

This last week I was talking with a banker and this person told me how people were coming in and talking with her with a look of horror on their face. They are terrified. They are losing all of their savings. They have placed all of their hope, she said, in earthly treasures. Obviously, this lady is a believer. And she teared up as she was telling me how tragic it is to watch people that she has known for years coming apart at the seams. They placed all of their faith and their confidence in earthly treasures. They place their confidence in their political heroes and they are beginning to see it all unravel. She said she has never seen anything like it.

Beloved, it is bad now. But it is nothing compared to what it will be.

The signs of which Jesus spoke are further detailed in his revelation to us in the book of Revelation in the seal and the trumpet bowl judgments that will happen during the tribulation. We will not be here then, but these will happen. And we are seeing the beginnings of this even now. There we read of violent wars, world-wide famine, millions of people dying from diseases and plagues and wild animals, massive earthquakes, volcanoes. There will be the utter destruction of the earth's ecosystem. All the vegetation will eventually go. The earth will be pelted, we believe, with what would probably be asteroids and meteorites. Demons will be released upon the earth causing men to seek death and they will not be able to find it. We read that they will be covered with loathsome and malignant sores, all those who worship the beast. The oceans and even the fresh waters will be turned into a toxic, putrid pool of death. All the marine life will die. Men will be scorched with the fierce heat of the sun. And, as we have read, darkness will cover the earth.

¹⁴ Isaiah 13:6-13.

In fact, in Revelation 16 it will be so bad that men will “gnaw their tongues because of pain.” Yet it is interesting. The text goes on to say “they blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores and they did not repent of their deeds.”

In Chapter 18 we read that life as we know it will utterly disintegrate. Examples are given there in that text. There will be no more commerce, no more navigation in the sea or the air. There will be no more music. Can you imagine that? There will be no more marriage. There will be no more family. There will be no more joy. All that will be left is impending judgment and eternal doom from the one that they have blasphemed. And finally the entire earth will be shaken. One hundred pound hail stones will come down upon those at Armageddon, surrounding Jerusalem. The Lord will pour out his wrath upon them and they will be destroyed.

Now all of these signs, dear friends, point to the **PAROUSIA** (par-oo-see'-ah), to the manifestation, the appearance of Israel's Messiah, the Lord Jesus Christ. And the world will know exactly that he is the cause of all of these things. It is not like they are wondering, “my goodness, what is happening here?” No, they will know. In fact, earlier we read that they cry out in Revelation six verse 16, “to the mountains and to the rocks, ‘Fall on us and hide us from the presence of Him who sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of their wrath has come, and who is able to stand?’”¹⁵

Again, no one will be confused. They will know it is the Lord Jesus Christ and yet they will hate him. After all, the gospel by this time will have been faithfully preached by the 144,000. The two witnesses will have preached the Word of God. They will have been killed and risen again from the dead. The whole world will see this. There will be absolutely no doubt as to what is going on. In fact, I would submit to you today that people already know because of reason and conscience that they are responsible to God and to the Lord Jesus Christ. Romans one makes that clear to us. Therefore the world is without excuse.

But then after all of these cataclysmic judgments, when the world is pitch black as we go back to Luke 21 and verse 27 we read this. Jesus says, “Then... then they will see THE SON OF MAN COMING IN A CLOUD with power and great glory.”¹⁶ Matthew even adds in chapter 24 verse 30, “And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky.”¹⁷

You might ask, “Well, what is the sign?” Grammatically it tells us that it will be *the* sign of *the* Son of Man. It is what we call a subjective genitive. It merely means that he is the sign. You could translate it, “The sign which is the Son of Man. You see, against the

¹⁵ Revelation 6:16-17.

¹⁶ Luke 21:27.

¹⁷ Matthew 24:30.

backdrop of total blackness, the resplendent light of his blazing glory that has historically been represented in his shekinah, will suddenly be unveiled for all to see.

Remember when Peter, James and John witnessed the Lord's transfiguration on the mountain where the Lord Jesus peeled back some of his flesh and he allowed the effulgence of his dazzling glory to be seen? Beloved, when the Lord returns in the blackness of the world with all of this chaos going on, he will once more blaze forth in an ineffable display of dazzling glory. And everybody will see it.

In fact, we see, according to the Lord's words in Mathew 24:27, that when he comes it will be, as he says, "as the lightning comes from the east and flashes even to the west, so will the coming of the Son of Man be."¹⁸ Think of it. Unlike his first coming in obscurity and in humility, he is going to return in full view and in full glory. It is as if he is saying, "Don't worry. You will know it when I come. Nobody will miss it."

Think about it. What happens when you see lightning? Instantly everything stops and it usually comes with deafening thunder, right? Lightning never goes unnoticed, does it? Everything stops. It is an awesome, it is a glorious spectacle and it is even terrifying. And even if it comes from the east and it goes to the west, you see it. That is the point. In fact, in Revelation 1:7 the Lord describes his appearance. He says, "BEHOLD, HE IS COMING WITH THE CLOUDS, and every eye will see Him, even those who pierced Him."¹⁹

We can even go back to Psalm 97 and verse one and have a description of this scene. Here is what it says:

The LORD reigns, let the earth rejoice; Let the many islands be glad. Clouds and thick darkness surround Him; Righteousness and justice are the foundation of His throne. Fire goes before Him And burns up His adversaries round about. His lightnings lit up the world; The earth saw and trembled. The mountains melted like wax at the presence of the LORD, At the presence of the Lord of the whole earth. The heavens declare His righteousness, And all the peoples have seen His glory. Let all those be ashamed who serve graven images, Who boast themselves of idols; Worship Him, all you gods.

Zion heard this and was glad, And the daughters of Judah have rejoiced Because of Your judgments, O LORD. For You are the LORD Most High over all the earth; You are exalted far above all gods.²⁰

¹⁸ Matthew 24:27.

¹⁹ Revelation 1:7.

²⁰ Psalm 97:1-9.

What a glorious spectacle this will be after all of the darkness, both physically and spiritually. Suddenly the sky will be illuminated with the indescribable light of the glory of Christ as people all over the world will see his preincarnate deity.

I love what Zechariah 14 tells us in verse six.

And it will come about in that day that there will be no light; the luminaries will dwindle. For it will be a unique day which is known to the LORD, neither day nor night, but it will come about that at evening time there will be light.²¹

Evening could also be translated “at sunset” or “at night time.” In other words, dear friends, a new day will suddenly break forth as light, as the light of the world breaks upon the earth in full glory.

Think of it. It is pitch black. The world is in chaos. It is disintegrating. Suddenly the Lord comes and in an instant there is a transition from darkness to light. There is suddenly a transition from death to life, from chaos to order. The luminaries will, once again, be set into their place and he orbits will begin to occur and the stars and the moon will shine forth. The earth will be renovated, instantly restored once again to Edenic splendor, paradise regained. Finally the long anticipated Messiah King will explode upon the earth as he has promised. And, according to the prophet Habakkuk we read that at that time “the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea.”²²

So there you have an overview of the signs that will point to the Lord’s return and a sampling of some of the events, the sequence of events that will follow.

Again, as we go back to Luke 21 before we look at our text this morning, at the end of verse 27 Jesus says, I love this, “But when these things begin to take place, straighten up, lift up your heads, because your redemption is drawing nigh.” Beloved, like never before in history, we are witnessing the beginning of these things taking place as the shadows of Bible prophecy cast themselves forward.

Now all of this context brings us back to the Lord’s words in Revelation 19 where he describes the actual event of the King’s return for his bride in verses 11 through 21. And as we have learned, there are basically four themes concerning the warrior king that emerge from this text. We will see his arrival, his army, his authority and his attack. This morning we are going to look at his authority.

By way of review, remember beginning in verse 11 we are given the final outpouring of the seventh bowl judgment that was introduced in chapter 16. The last time we were

²¹ Zechariah 14:6-7.

²² Habakkuk 2:14.

together we examined his arrival in 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.”²³ And here John witnesses the warrior king, the Lord Jesus Christ exiting out of heaven, coming to earth in his full, regal authority as the Messiah King coming to judge and to conquer.

Secondly, we examined his army, verse 14. “And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses.”²⁴

Again, this is a reference to the saints, the regiment of the redeemed, consistent with chapter 17 verse 14. Those who are with the King of kings and Lord of lords are called the chosen and faithful.

I might also add that technically these unarmed troops, of which we will be a part, can be placed into four categories. First there will be the bride of the Lamb. That will be the raptured church as depicted earlier in chapter 19. The second group that will be a part of these people coming with the Lord will be the tribulation saints, referring to those who will be saved during the tribulation. These are also pictured in heaven in the identical attire that we read here. You look back in chapter seven and verse nine and see that. The third group will be the Old Testament saints who will be resurrected at the end of the tribulation as we read in Daniel chapter 12 verses one and two. And then, finally, it will go to include the angelic host of heaven. Mathew 25:31 tells us that as well as other passages. For example, Paul tells us in 2 Thessalonians 1:7 that “The Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.”²⁵

Now, this morning I want to focus on the third theme. That is the authority of the warrior king beginning in verse 15. “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.”²⁶

The weaponry of the warrior king speaks of his divine authority. It consists both, you will notice, of a sword as well as a rod. Now, this imagery is drawn from Isaiah’s prophecy concerning the righteous reign of the “Branch” referring to the Lord Jesus Christ. In chapter 11 in verse one we read, “Then a shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse, And a branch from his roots will bear fruit.”²⁷ Later on in verse four we read, “But with righteousness He will judge the poor, And decide with fairness for the afflicted of the

²³ Revelation 19:11.

²⁴ Revelation 19:14.

²⁵ 2 Thessalonians 1:7-8.

²⁶ Revelation 19:15.

²⁷ Isaiah 11:1.

earth; And He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, And with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked.”²⁸

Again, here we see that Christ alone will slay the wicked by the power of his Word. Think about it. It is the same word that created the heavens and the earth and all that are in them. This is the same word that once invited sinners to come unto him like an innocent child, but now this Word will speak with the power of deadly vengeance. In fact, the deadly force of his words will also slay the arrogant antichrist. The apostle Paul reminds us of this in 2 Thessalonians 2:8. There the antichrist is described as the “lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming.”²⁹

The earlier imagery of the blood that is splattered upon his robe indicates that this attack will be a bloody one. This will include the slaughter of the forces of the antichrist gathered together against Israel at Armageddon. In fact, there we read that he will bring about a plague according to Zechariah 14:12, a plague that will strike all the peoples who have gone to war against Jerusalem; “their flesh will rot while they stand on their feet, and their eyes will rot in their sockets, and their tongue will rot in their mouth.”³⁰

I want you to notice, again, in verse 15 that he wields the sword of his retribution for a purpose and that is that he might smite the nations. Now, it is interesting. Earlier in chapter one and verse 16 we read that out of his mouth came a sharp two edged sword. And there the Lord is depicted as the Lord of the Church who is protecting the Church from the onslaughts of Satan. Also in chapter two verse 16 he says makes war against the ungodly, those who attack his church with the sword of his mouth. But here, beloved, his sword smites the nations as he delivers Israel from their hour of peril and puts an end to all those who rebel against him.

Now, bear in mind that when the Lord returns he is going to destroy all of the wicked that are gathered against Israel in this slaughter at Armageddon. And we also know that he is going to preserve a remnant of his elect from both Israel as well as the Gentile nations. But the remaining unregenerate people who are still alive on earth will be the ones that will stand condemned before the warrior king who will then separate them from the elect in the sheep and the goat judgment that is described in Matthew chapter 25 verses 31 through 46. In fact, at the end of that text there is a stunning statement that the Lord gives. He says, “And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”³¹

Finally, after rendering judgment upon the wicked, God’s own mediatorial ruler, mediatorial king, the greater Son of David, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, will

²⁸ Isaiah 11:4.

²⁹ 2 Thessalonians 2:8.

³⁰ Zechariah 14:12.

³¹ Matthew 25:46.

finally put an end to Satan’s long misrule upon the earth through the agency of ungodly men.

Now we see further evidence of his regal authority in the next part of the verse here in verse 15. We read, “And He will rule them with a rod of iron.”³²

This is pictured in Psalm two where the question is asked in verse one, “Why are the nations in an uproar, And the peoples devising a vain thing?”³³ In other words, why are they gathered together in their hatred of Christ? Why are they devising a vain thing? Why are they conspiring together with their puny little ridiculous philosophies and policies and false religions that are ultimately doomed to failure? Verse two goes on. “The kings of the earth take their stand, And the rulers take counsel together Against the LORD and against His Anointed.”³⁴

But then in verse four we read that God is the one who sits in the heavens and laughs. “The Lord scoffs at them.”³⁵ There the psalmist pictures the secret throne room of heaven where the almighty rules and reigns in absolute sovereignty. And then in verse nine of Psalm two we read this. “Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron, Thou shalt shatter them like earthenware.”³⁶

In that text he says, “Thou shalt... thou shalt,” used two times to depict the absolute certainty of the severity of his might and the scope of his sovereignty. “Thou shalt break them... Thou shalt shatter them.”³⁷ The text says that he will use a rod of iron.

This is the same term in Hebrew for a king’s scepter, a **SEBET** (shay’- bet), a symbol of rule. In fact, in the Old Testament combining a king and shepherd was a common theme because a king should be one who not only leads and provides, but also one who protects and who goes to war in order to nurture and protect his sheep. So, indeed, here we see the scepter of the monarch symbolizing the authority that God has granted the Messiah King, the Lord Jesus Christ to come and to rule over the nations in absolute, unassailable might and unquestionable authority.

And in Revelation two and verse 26 through 27 we read where Jesus also promised that the overcomers—which is a designation for true, genuine believers—that overcomers will rule with him.

There he says this.

³² Revelation 19:15.

³³ Psalm 2:1.

³⁴ Psalm 2:2.

³⁵ Psalm 2:4.

³⁶ Psalm 2:9.

³⁷ Ibid.

He who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, TO HIM I WILL GIVE AUTHORITY OVER THE NATIONS; AND HE SHALL RULE THEM WITH A ROD OF IRON, AS THE VESSELS OF THE POTTER ARE BROKEN TO PIECES, as I also have received authority from My Father.³⁸

Can you imagine that day? I keep going back to this and meditating upon what it must be like. It is impossible to do, to see what it would be like with the whole world under the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ.

My mind went back to a text in 1 Samuel eight. You need not go there. Let me summarize it for you briefly. That was the text where the people were demanding a king, actually a government. They wanted a government like all of the nations. And there God warned them about the impending political disasters that would ultimately come out of their request. The prophet Samuel gives it to them.

As you study that text, I will summarize it for you, he warns that if you do this, the government will ultimately become so interested in its own support and perpetuation that it will eventually cease serving the people and become committed solely to its own existence and power. Surprise, surprise. And that because of this, men would become non productive and dependent and it would produce basically a culture of entitlement and that there would be a never ending expansion of the government and its bureaucracy resulting in inefficiency and waste, creating more and more jobs, most of which are unnecessary and poor paying, especially as the countries accumulate more and more wealth and increase their military. Now they have to support the military and the countries they go to attack and to conquer and the whole thing just spins out of control.

He warned about taxation that would become burdensome and meet fewer and fewer of the people's needs while the citizens watch the government spend their money on things the bureaucrats think and insist that are good for the people, yet the people really don't want.

There in that text he promised increasing government control, property confiscation, political corruption where ultimately tax money will end up in the hands of the rulers and their cronies. He warned that ultimately it would lead to a totalitarian control by a few where the entire populace of the nation exist to support the state which swallows up the very citizens that had created it. And he warned that ultimately the people would encounter intolerable oppression when unrestricted government consumes the liberties of the very ones they are supposed to serve.

And finally, at the end of it all, Samuel warns Israel in verse eight, "Then you will cry out

³⁸ Revelation 2:26-27.

in that day because of your king whom you have chosen for yourselves, but the LORD will not answer you in that day.”³⁹

Well, this is precisely what happened to Israel. Moreover, I would submit to you, that this is the pattern of every nation, including our own. Every nation has experienced this down through history. But, beloved, not so when the world exists under the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ.

But before he rules, he must first conquer. He must first destroy his enemies. Back to verse 15. “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.”⁴⁰ In other words, all rebellion will cease. His law will be the only law. In verse 15 it says, “And He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty.”⁴¹

The repetition here from the proceeding clause denoting the idea here of “he,” “he himself,” he alone is going to do this. The graphic symbolism of an absolute blood bath is one that is drawn here from this idea of him treading the wine press of the fierce wrath of God. This is taking us back to a time in the ancient days where people used to use their bare feet to actually stomp on grapes, to tread grapes in a large vat in order to squeeze the juice out of it. The juice, then, would go through a trough into a container from which they would make their wine.

In fact, the actual language here that the Lord uses in verse 15 is rooted in two primary Old Testament texts. Isaiah 63:1-4. this is where Edom is depicted as symbolically the enemies of God whom God will destroy.

Here is what 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.”⁴²

³⁹ 1 Samuel 8:18.

⁴⁰ Revelation 19:15.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Isaiah 63:1-4.

Likewise in Joel chapter three and verse 11 we read this.

“Hasten and come, all you surrounding nations, And gather yourselves there. Bring down, O LORD, Your mighty ones. Let the nations be aroused And come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat.”⁴³

That literally means Yahweh judges, Jehoshaphat.

For there I will sit to judge All the surrounding nations. Put in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe. Come, tread, for the wine press is full; The vats overflow, for their wickedness is great. Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision! For the day of the LORD is near in the valley of decision. The sun and moon grow dark And the stars lose their brightness. The LORD roars from Zion And utters His voice from Jerusalem, And the heavens and the earth tremble. But the LORD is a refuge for His people And a stronghold to the sons of Israel. Then you will know that I am the LORD your God, Dwelling in Zion, My holy mountain. So Jerusalem will be holy, And strangers will pass through it no more.⁴⁴

And then, finally, notice to even further underscore the absolute authority of the warrior king, John sees a prominent name written on the Lord. This is probably a banner that is draped across his shoulder and his chest and hanging down on his side. Verse 16. “And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, ‘KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.’”⁴⁵

Israel’s long anticipated Messiah will finally return to earth and ascend his earthly throne and establish his kingdom. The unconditional covenants that he made to Abraham and to David will finally be fulfilled to the letter. The 70th week of pre-kingdom judgments prophesied by Daniel will finally be over and he will be King of kings.

As a footnote, may I remind you that we in the present Church age await the rapture, not the Second Coming. Keep in mind the objective of the 70 weeks of judgment prophesied by Daniel were for Israel, not the Church. You see this in Daniel 9:24: “Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most holy place,”⁴⁶ which is a reference to the millennial temple.

⁴³ Joel 3:11-12.

⁴⁴ Joel 3:12-17.

⁴⁵ Revelation 19:16.

⁴⁶ Daniel 9:24.

You see, these promises pertain to Israel's final and future restoration and her messianic kingdom. The Lord promised that the Church would be kept "from," out from the hour of testing, that hour which is about to come upon the whole world, Revelation 3:10.

Remember, the Gentile Church has temporarily replaced rebellious Israel as the custodians of divine truth. And we are going to be snatched away before this final 70th week period occurs, this final seven years. We will be snatched away in a twinkling of an eye. And then God will resume his final seven years of judgment upon his chosen nation.

Remember, the rapture is a signless event. The Second Coming has many signs. When you read passages on the rapture there is no judgment involved. In the Second Coming, that is all there is involved.

Remember in the rapture Christ comes for his saints. In his Second Coming he comes with his Saints. All other views apart from a pre tribulational rapture tend to cause men to become preoccupied with themselves rather than Christ. Christ who is our hope. People—and I know this is even going on around different parts of our country today—people are preparing themselves to survive the tribulation. They are obsessed with politics and survivalism and the environment and they are arming themselves.

But, beloved, I am looking for Christ. I am not looking for the antichrist. There is a huge difference. This is a common device of the enemy to distract us from Christ and to get us preoccupied with things that really don't matter. We need to be about Christ and preaching his gospel before he comes and snatches us away. Has not Paul said that we need to keep seeking the things above where Christ is seated at the right hand of God? Set your mind on the things above, not the things that are on the earth.

Well, these are wonderful truths that God has given us that attest to his marvelous authority of the things to come.

Will you bow your heads with me as we quiet our hearts together? Won't you examine your heart just for a moment? I know that there are many of you within the sound of my voice, probably most of you know the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior, but there are a lot of you that don't. Won't you really ask yourself: Do I really know and love Christ? Do I trust in him alone to be my Savior? Do I realize that I have no hope of eternal life in salvation apart from him? Or are you like the people described in the time of the tribulation who will see all of these judgments coming upon them but by that time God will harden their heart and they will blaspheme him and ultimately he will come and destroy them.

Dear friend, if that is you, may I remind you that today is the day of repentance, today is the day of salvation. Won't you trust Christ today?

Father, as saints we rejoice in Christ who is our hope. We praise you, Lord, knowing that you have promised that you will keep us from the hour of testing, these judgments that

will come upon the earth, this time when you will finally not only judge Israel, but save that remnant and establish your kingdom. Lord, we thank you for all of these promises that are ours, but we pray that you would work your work of grace in every heart. Lord, I pray that you will bring conviction and repentance to those who are living in rebellion against you. And, Lord, I pray that you will equip every saint for the work of service and the building up of the body of Christ.

Lord, we love you and we long to see you. Even so, come quickly, Lord Jesus. We ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

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