

89. The Book of Revelation—19:11-21

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(8-10-22)

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This evening in our study in the Book of Revelation—we find ourselves in Chapter 19 starting with verse 11—

Revelation 19:11 (NKJV)

¹¹ Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him *was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war.*

Note the emphasis on Jesus' names (Revelation 19:11–13, 16)—that He is **“Faithful and True”** (see Revelation 3:14 also),

“Faithful and True” represents Jesus as the keeper of promises—even promises of judgment.

Many Scriptures in both the Old and New Testaments anticipate (promise) this scene—Jesus coming to the earth to judge His enemies:

Psalm 96:13 (NKJV)

¹³ For He is coming, for He is coming to judge the earth. He shall judge the world with righteousness, And the peoples with His truth.

Psalm 9:8 (NKJV)

⁸ He shall judge the world in righteousness, And He shall administer judgment for the peoples in uprightness.

Acts 10:42 (NKJV)

⁴² And He commanded us to preach to the people, and to testify that it is He who was ordained by God *to be Judge of the living and the dead.*

2 Timothy 4:1 (NKJV)

¹ I charge *you* therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom...

Revelation 19:11–12 (NKJV)

¹¹ Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him *was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war.* ¹² **His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself.**

“His eyes were like a flame of fire” (verse 12a)—this speaks of His searching, penetrating vision and understanding of all things—especially when it comes to sin:

Hebrews 4:13 (NKJV)

¹³ And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things *are* naked and open to the eyes of Him to whom we *must give* account.

“...and on His head *were* many crowns.” (verse 12b)

The word for ‘**crowns**’ here is *diadems*—a diadem was a crown worn by a king.

Sometimes when a king conquered a city he would place on his head, along with his own crown, the crown of the conquered king signifying that he was now the “*king of that king.*”

Jesus is seen here wearing *many* crowns indicating that He is the—“*King of kings and the Lord of lords*”—of all the earth!

Psalms 2:8 (NKJV)

⁸ Ask of Me, and I will give *You* The nations *for* Your inheritance, And the ends of the earth *for* Your possession.

“He had a name written that no one knew except Himself.” (verse 12c)

He has a name inscribed which no one knows except Himself—as one author said, “*There are mysteries connected with the Person of Christ that no created being will ever be able to comprehend.*”

Revelation 19:13 (NKJV)

¹³ He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood...

Some believe that Jesus’ robe is dipped (the actual Greek is ‘*baptized*’ or ‘*immersed*’) in His own blood from His death on the cross—but in reality, He bears the blood of His enemies (hold on to that thought).

Revelation 19:13 (NKJV)

¹³ He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called **The Word of God.**

“The Word of God” is one of the more familiar names of our Lord Jesus in Scripture—

John 1:1–3, 14 (NKJV)

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was in the beginning with God. ³ All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made....¹⁴ And the Word became 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.

Revelation 19:14 (NKJV)

¹⁴ And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses.

The Lord Jesus Christ when He returns will be accompanied by **“the armies (plural) which are in heaven.”**

There are 4 divisions that make up these glorified troops:

1. Earlier in Chapter 19 the **Bride of the Lamb** (the church) was pictured “*wearing fine linen, white and clean*” (verses 7–8)—she of course will be returning with Jesus at His Second Coming. (Col.3:4)

2. So will the **Tribulation Saints**, who are also pictured in heaven wearing white robes (Revelation 7:9).
3. The third group is the **Old Testament Saints**, who are resurrected at the end of the Tribulation (Daniel 12:1–2).
4. Finally, the **holy angels** will also accompany Christ (Matthew 25:31).

The **‘white horses’** ridden by this heavenly cavalry are not *literal* horses—they are some kind of *supernatural* ‘horses.’

Unlike the Lord Jesus Christ, this heavenly army is unarmed—because He and He alone will destroy His enemies.

Isaiah 63:3

“I have trodden the winepress alone...”

When the Lord Jesus returns to the earth He will judge His enemies alone—but He is not coming to the earth alone—

Jude 1:14-15 (NKJV)

¹⁴ Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying, "Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints, ¹⁵ "to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him."

Revelation 19:15-16 (NKJV)

¹⁵ **Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. ¹⁶ And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.**

In Jesus’ mouth is a **‘sharp sword’** (Revelation 1:16; Revelation 2:12, 16; Revelation 19:21) which He will use to strike down the nations.

The word for **“sword”** (*rhomphaia*) was used of a long, heavy, two-sided broad sword used for only one purpose—to kill. The **sharp sword** is a symbol for God’s Word—the same word Jesus used to create the universe and that He uses to hold it all together (Colossians 1:16-17; Hebrews 1:2-3)—that same word of His power will be used to destroy His enemies.

Those who are still alive on the earth when He returns who are believers will be allowed to enter His Kingdom—but the wicked that have gathered for battle against Him, He will instantly slaughter.

The rest of the world’s unredeemed people will be gathered from the four corners of the earth by God’s holy angels to stand before the Lord Jesus Christ, judged and executed at the sheep and goat judgment (Matthew 25:31–46) that follows Christ’s return just prior to His Kingdom being established.

In addition to using the sword for striking down and destroying His enemies—He will use **“an iron scepter”** for ruling (Psalm 2:9; Revelation 2:27).

One pastor put it well—

“The stern, swift judgment that marks the onset of Christ’s kingdom will be the pattern of His rule throughout

the Millennium. During His thousand-year reign, **He will rule the nations with a rod of iron** (cf. 12:5; Psalm 2:8–9); He will swiftly judge all sin and instantly put down any rebellion. All people will be required to conform to His law or face immediate judgment. Using the same imagery of ruling **with a rod of iron**, Jesus promised that believers would rule under Him in the Kingdom: “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” (2:26–27).”

Revelation 19:17-19 (NKJV)

¹⁷ Then I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in the midst of heaven, “Come and gather together for the supper of the great God, ¹⁸ that you may eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them, and the flesh of all *people*, free and slave, both small and great.” ¹⁹ And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army.

This battle has a name—“**The Battle of Armageddon.**”

Revelation 16:12–14, 16 (NKJV)

¹² Then the sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, so that the way of the kings from the east might be prepared. ¹³ And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs *coming* out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. ¹⁴ For they are spirits of demons, performing signs, *which* go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty...¹⁶ And they gathered them together to the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon.

The deceiving demon spirits will have gathered the nations **together to the place which in Hebrew is called Har-Magedon. Har-Magedon** is a Hebrew word meaning “Mount Megiddo.” Since there is no specific mountain by that name, and **Har** can refer to hill country, it is probably a reference to the hill country surrounding the Plain of Megiddo, some sixty miles north of Jerusalem. More than two hundred battles have been fought in that region, including Barak’s defeat of the Canaanites (Judges 4–5; Judges 5:19), Gideon’s victory over the Midianites (Judges 7; Judges 6:33; the “valley of Jezreel” is another name for the Plain of Esdraelon), and Josiah’s defeat at the hands of Pharaoh Neco (2 Chronicles 35:22). The Plain of Megiddo and the nearby Plain of Esdraelon will be the focal point for the Battle of Armageddon, which will rage the entire length of Israel as far south as the Edomite city of Bozrah (Isa. 63:1). Other battles will also occur in the vicinity of Jerusalem (Zechariah 14:1–3). The “battle” will be over almost as soon as it begins, as the Lord Jesus Christ returns to rescue His people (Zechariah 14:1–3; Joel 3:16) and defeat His enemies. The resulting slaughter of the world’s armies will be almost unimaginable, with blood splattered several feet high and perhaps running in streams throughout a distance of two hundred miles (14:20). The sixth bowl sets the final stage, but before the brief “battle,” the seventh and final plague will hit.

The Antichrist’s armies have assembled to fight “*against the Lord and against His anointed*” (Ps. 2:2)—but what effect can a human army using surface to air missiles, Apache helicopters and AK47’s have on the God of the universe!?

The answer of course is—NONE!

Psalm 2:1–4 (NKJV)

¹ Why do the nations rage, And the people plot a vain thing? ² The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against the LORD and against His Anointed, *saying*, ³ “Let us break Their bonds in

pieces And cast away Their cords from us.”⁴ He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; The LORD shall hold them in derision.

The Antichrist and his armies attempt to defeat the Lord at His coming to keep Him from establishing His Kingdom—but it will prove to be utterly futile. In fact, the “battle” turns out to be a slaughter—a “supper” for scavenger birds and wild animals!

The first half of Revelation 19 describes the marriage supper of the Lamb—the last half describes the “supper of the great God” (verse 17)—but see also Matthew 24:28; Luke 17:37).

The word ‘flesh’ occurs five times in verse 18.

While John’s immediate reference is to human flesh eaten by vultures and other animals, there is certainly a deeper meaning here—sinful rebellious man loves his flesh, lives for his flesh, feeds his flesh, worships his flesh and puts his trust in his flesh—but now God destroys his flesh!

There is a passage in Ezekiel 39 which seems to be describing the same battle as we read in Revelation 19:17-18:

Ezekiel 39:17–20 (NKJV)

¹⁷ “And as for you, son of man, thus says the Lord GOD, ‘Speak to every sort of bird and to every beast of the field: “Assemble yourselves and come; Gather together from all sides to My sacrificial meal Which I am sacrificing for you, A great sacrificial meal on the mountains of Israel, That you may eat flesh and drink blood.”¹⁸ You shall eat the flesh of the mighty, Drink the blood of the princes of the earth, Of rams and lambs, Of goats and bulls, All of them fatlings of Bashan.¹⁹ You shall eat fat till you are full, And drink blood till you are drunk, At My sacrificial meal Which I am sacrificing for you.²⁰ You shall be filled at My table With horses and riders, With mighty men And with all the men of war,” says the Lord GOD.

Even though the language of Ezekiel 39:17-20 is similar to that in Revelation 19:17-18—I don’t believe they are talking about the same event.

One commentator says—

“The Ezekiel passage seems to refer to an earlier battle, when the army from the North invaded Israel, whereas in this battle God is fighting with the armies of the entire world!

The resultant destruction of the enemies of God and the consumption of their flesh by the birds are similar but not the same. The actual parallel to the scene in Revelation is found in Matthew 24:28, where reference is made to the carcasses of those who fall in battle and the gathering of the birds to eat them. Care must be exercised in interpreting passages so similar by following the rule that—similarities do not necessarily prove identity.”

At this point, I’d like to stop and try to provide some contextual clarity and chronology as to how these events unfold.

The Bible predicts that at end of the Great Tribulation Period the Antichrist and his armies will gather in the Valley of Megiddo to fight against Jesus when He appears in the sky at His Second Coming—to keep Him from ruling as King over the earth.

They know the day of His return—that it will be the twelve-hundredth and sixtieth day after the Antichrist sets up his image in the Holy of Holies in the rebuilt Temple in Jerusalem and declares himself God (Matthew 24:15-30; Revelation 12:6)—and they will be waiting for Him.

Revelation 17:12–14 (NKJV)

¹² “The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast. ¹³ These are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast. ¹⁴ These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those *who are* with Him *are* called, chosen, and faithful.”

Revelation 14:18–20 (NKJV)

¹⁸ And another angel came out from the altar, who had power over fire, and he cried with a loud cry to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, “Thrust in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth, for her grapes are fully ripe.” ¹⁹ So the angel thrust his sickle into the earth and gathered the vine of the earth, and threw *it* into the great winepress of the wrath of God. ²⁰ And the winepress was trampled outside the city, and blood came out of the winepress, up to the horses’ bridles [4 feet], for one thousand six hundred furlongs [200 miles].

Revelation 19:15 (NKJV)

¹⁵ **Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations...He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.**

Zechariah 14:3-4 (NKJV)

³ Then the Lord will go forth and fight against those nations, As He fights in the day of battle.

⁴ And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which faces Jerusalem on the east. And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two, from east to west, *making* a very large valley; Half of the mountain shall move toward the north And half of it toward the south.

According to Zechariah's prophecy, when Christ returns, He will come to the Mount of Olives, to the place of His departure (where He ascended into heaven after His resurrection as recorded in Acts Chapter 1)—He will come to that very place once again.

When He steps onto the Mount of Olives it will split in two creating a valley through which Jesus will lead all of His heavenly armies up to the Golden Gate (the eastern gate) and into the city to the Temple where He will take His place on the throne and reign over the whole earth there from Jerusalem.

However, Isaiah tells us that *before* He comes to the Mount of Olives when He returns at His Second Coming (probably right after the Battle of Armageddon)—He will go to the area of Edom (modern Jordan where the Rock City of Petra is located) to rescue His people (Jewish and Gentile believers) from the armies of the Antichrist that have been besieging them down there— and Jesus will destroy those enemy armies.

“How did they come to be in Petra in the first place?”—Jesus told them to flee there:

Matthew 24:15–16, 21 (NKJV)

¹⁵ “Therefore when you see the ‘*abomination of desolation,*’ spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place” (whoever reads, let him understand), ¹⁶ “then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains [Petra]... ²¹ For then there will be great tribulation, such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be.

Revelation 12:3–6 (NKJV)

⁶ Then the woman [Israel] fled into the wilderness, where she has a place prepared by God, that they should feed her there one thousand two hundred and sixty days.

Isaiah 63:1–6 (NKJV)

¹ Who is this who comes from Edom, With dyed garments from Bozrah [modern Jordan where the rock city of Petra is located], This *One who is* glorious in His apparel, Traveling in the greatness of His strength?— “I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save.” ² Why is Your apparel red, And Your garments like one who treads in the winepress? ³ “I have trodden the winepress alone, And from the peoples no one *was* with Me. For I have trodden them in My anger, And trampled them in My fury; Their blood is sprinkled upon My garments, And I have stained all My robes. ⁴ For the day of vengeance *is* in My heart, And the year of My redeemed has come. ⁵ I looked, but *there was* no one to help, And I wondered That *there was* no one to uphold; Therefore My own arm brought salvation for Me; And My own fury, it sustained Me. ⁶ I have trodden down the peoples in My anger, Made them drunk in My fury, And brought down their strength to the earth.”

Then our Lord will lead a procession from the land of Edom up the Jericho road to the Mount of Olives which will split in two when His feet touch it and He will lead this procession into Jerusalem where He will take His rightful place as “*King of kings and Lord of lords*” over the whole earth!

Revelation 19:11–20 (NKJV)

¹¹ Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him *was* called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. ¹² His eyes *were* like a flame of fire, and on His head *were* many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. ¹³ He *was* clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. ¹⁴ And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses. ¹⁵ Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. ¹⁶ And He has on *His* robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS ¹⁷ Then I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in the midst of heaven, “Come and gather together for the supper of the great God, ¹⁸ that you may eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them, and the flesh of all *people*, free and slave, both small and great.” ¹⁹ And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army. ²⁰ Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone.

As we read about the Second Coming of Christ in Revelation 19—***don’t confuse this with the Rapture.***

Let’s be clear—no such events that we read here in Revelation 19 (when Jesus returns at His Second Coming) will take place at the Rapture—therefore, this passage is NOT teaching a Post-Tribulation Rapture of the Church.

Author Mark Hitchcock says concerning this—

“Revelation 19 versus 11 through 21 is the classic New Testament text on the Second Coming of Christ. Yet it makes no mention of Believers being caught up to meet Christ as He returns. In fact, to the contrary, it mentions a group of people coming down with Christ from Heaven (verse 14), people who have already been rewarded, which supports the view that they were raptured to Heaven at some earlier point. This is consistent with the Pre-Tribulation Rapture view.

With regard to the absence of any mention of the Rapture in Revelation 19, author John Walford observed: ‘When all the evidence is put together, one must conclude that in the most comprehensive and detailed account to be found anywhere in the Bible of the Second Coming of Christ—there is no Resurrection or translation (glorification of the bodies of believers) mentioned as an event occurring in the Second Coming itself. The Posttribulation Rapture, which should have been a prominent feature of the Book of Revelation if it were indeed part of the great climax of the Second Coming of Christ—is totally missing in the narrative. If details like

the casting of the Beast and the False Prophet into the Lake of Fire are mentioned and the specific resurrection of the Tribulation Saints is described—how much more the Rapture and translation of the Church as a whole should have been included if, as a matter of fact, it is part of this great event. Revelation 19 through 20 constitutes the major problem of Posttribulationists—they have not scriptural proof for the Posttribulation Rapture in the very passages that ought to include it.'

Mark Hitchcock concludes by saying, *"If the Rapture occurs in conjunction with the Second Coming of Christ, as post-tribulationists contend—then why isn't the Rapture mentioned in Revelation 19? The absence of the Rapture in Revelation 19 is inexplicable if it happens at the same time as the Second Coming (as Posttribulationists contend). Thus, Revelation supports the concept of the Rapture taking place before the 7-year Tribulation begins."*

Revelation 19:20-21 (NKJV)

²⁰ Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone. ²¹ And the rest were killed with the sword which proceeded from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse. And all the birds were filled with their flesh.

- The judgment of the Beast and the False Prophet culminates in their being cast alive into the **"lake of fire burning with brimstone."**
- The Lake of Fire is mentioned here but is talked about in more detail in Chapter 20 which we'll study when we get there.
- By comparing other Scriptures, it seems that the Beast and the False Prophet are the first to inhabit the Lake of Fire (hell).

One commentator said—

"These two men are 'cast alive into the lake burning with fire and brimstone' where a thousand years later they are still said to be 'suffering the vengeance of eternal fire' (Revelation 20:10)—thus incidentally proving that the Lake of Fire is not annihilation, and that it is not purgatorial either, for it neither annihilates nor purifies these two fallen foes of God and man after a thousand years under judgment."

Today, when an unbeliever dies, his or her spirit goes to a place called *Hades*, which means *"the unseen world"*—that is, the realm of the dead (where they are fully conscious—no *'soul sleep'*).

When believers die, they go immediately into the presence of the Lord (2 Corinthians 5:6–8; Philippians 1:19–23).

Hades will one day be emptied of its dead (Revelation 20:13), who will then be cast into hell to join Satan, the Beast, and the False Prophet.

The wicked who have died throughout the history of the world up to this point are in Hades right now (Luke 16:23).

Let me give you one final quote and we'll close—

"The fiery lake, a different place, was prepared for the devil and his angels (Matthew 25:41), and will not be occupied by human beings until later (Revelation 20:14-15).

The same inspired Word of God which so wonderfully describes the grace of God and the salvation which is

available to all who believe is equally plain about the judgment of all who reject the grace of God.

The tendency of liberal interpreters of the Bible to emphasize passages dealing with the love of God and to ignore passages dealing with His righteous judgment is completely unjustified.

The passages on judgment are just as inspired and accurate as those which develop the doctrines of grace and salvation.

The Bible is clear that judgment awaits the wicked, and the second coming of Christ is the occasion for a worldwide judgment unparalleled in Scripture since the time of Noah's flood."

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