

The Glorious Return of Jesus Christ, Part 1

Scripture: Revelation 19:11-16

Code: 66-70

Well tonight we're going to be looking at Revelation chapter 19, you'll want to open your Bible to the nineteenth chapter of Revelation. We're going to look tonight at verses 11 to 16 and this is the glorious return of Jesus Christ...the glorious return of Jesus Christ. We've been waiting to get to this verse since we started the book of Revelation. We've gone through nineteen chapters and ten verses of preliminaries just to get there in verse 11 where it says, "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 makes 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 winepress 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." That tremendously graphic, powerful description of Jesus Christ portrays Him in this vision to the Apostle John in the glory of His Second Coming.

So often I am asked the question, I guess people know that I'm a preacher, a pastor, one who studies Scripture and teaches the Bible and they often will say to me, "Will things in our troubled world ever get any better? Is it just going to continue to get worse and worse or will there be an end to all the war, to the hostility and the inequity and the crime and the chaos?" And I always answer the question by saying...It's going to get better, it's going to be better, there's no question about it. I can give a resounding yes to...will the world get better? But that yes is directly associated with the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. That and that alone is what is going to remedy the problems of our world. That and that alone is what is going to bring peace instead of war, justice instead of inequity, righteousness instead of wickedness. Jesus Christ will come and He will rule this world some day. He will return to be the King and to establish His kingdom. This particular passage, which we just read, prophesies that greatest of all moments in human history and in the saga of redemption.

As we have learned in our study of this incredible book of Revelation, such a glorious event will not happen without preliminary hostility of a very vast and far-reaching nature. Prior to the return of Jesus Christ there will be worldwide hostility generated by Satan and demons and wicked men, as well as worldwide hostilities generated by God Himself as He pours out His wrath. We have learned about the efforts of Satan during the coming time of Tribulation. We have learned about the identity of Antichrist and the cohort that he has called the false prophet. We have learned about the demons that

will be released to overrun the earth. We have learned about the escalating wickedness of men in the midst of the outpouring of the fury and the wrath of God, they continue to become more and more wicked, more and more obstinate, harder and harder and more resistant against the gospel which at the same time is being preached to them like never before. We have learned about how Satan with all of his hosts comes to fight against the purposes of God and the people of God and the plan of God, the angels of God and even the Christ of God Himself. The forces of heaven and the forces of hell will meet in final fury, involving the nations of the world in a battle that we know as Armageddon, as the darkness endeavors to stop the King of light from establishing His glorious Kingdom on the earth.

At the head of the unified forces of the world army will be the beast or the Antichrist who marches in hostility with the power of Satan against God and His anointed. We find down in verse 19 that it says, "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."

We also remember from the sixteenth chapter of the book of Revelation and verse 16 that the great focal point of that battle will be in a place called in the Hebrew language Armageddon. So it is not without a tremendous amount of hostility, far beyond what we have seen yet in our world, so when we are asked the question...are things going to get better? The answer is absolutely, assuredly they will get better and they will get better in an instantaneous fashion at the coming of Jesus Christ in one great cataclysmic moment of redemptive history. But before they get better, they're going to get worse...a lot worse. The world hasn't even begun to understand how bad life can be. How terrifyingly inequitable it can be. How unjust it can be. How criminal it can be. How chaotic it can be. How devastating and deadly it can be. If you want to understand that, understand the book of Revelation. Starting in chapter 6 the unfolding of seven seal judgments and seven trumpet judgments and seven bowls of the wrath of God culminating in that which is called the day of wrath itself describe for us how bad it is going to become.

Before the world gets any better in the return of Jesus Christ, it's going to get far worse than it is today. And sometimes we ask ourselves if it can get any worse. And the answer is, it can and it will. And then in a great moment of redemptive culmination, Jesus will come and the world will immediately become a paradise regained.

Now as we come to Revelation chapter 19 and verse 11, where the return of Jesus Christ is described for us, we want to remember the prior passage. It has been a number of weeks since we studied the book of Revelation and I won't want you to lose the train of thought here. You will remember that in the prior passage there was some presentation of the great event called in verse 9 the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, a time when the Lamb of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, will join together with His redeemed people and they will participate in this wonderful marriage supper that in its fullness will be enjoyed in the time of the millennial kingdom, the thousand-year reign as Jesus establishes on the earth as the first phase of His eternal rule. But the Marriage Supper of the Lamb,

as wonderful as it is, when the Lamb gathers His bride and they enter into the glory of the kingdom and participate in that wonderful time of celebration, before that marriage supper can come to pass, the warrior King must win the final battle.

He cannot take His bride into the kingdom, He cannot establish that great event of the marriage supper, that great and permanent celebration. He cannot enter into that promised marriage and that promised culmination until He returns from victory in the greatest battlefield of all time. And so in anticipation of the great event of the Marriage Supper, the great event of the kingdom, the warrior King goes to battle one final time. And it is at this time that the greatest...the greatest amassing of enemies comes against the Lord Jesus Christ. For now you have demons who have been loosed, and you have demons that have been bound and now are loosed. You have two hundred million demons who have been released, who have been held captive for a long period of time. You have the pit of hell opened up and demons belching out of that who have been incarcerated in chains until the hour of the time of Tribulation. So the hosts of hell are more formidable now than they have been. You have what is left of the humanity of the earth, that which hasn't been destroyed under the power of Antichrist or destroyed by the furious judgments of God. And they gather together in great armies and are led into the fields of Megiddo, as it were, and stretching all the way there into the south past the city of Jerusalem, they become really fuel for the fires of the returning King.

This greatest of all human holocausts is commonly known, and rightfully so, as the great holocaust of Armageddon. And before the King can take His bride to her supper in celebration, He has to make a final triumph. The daring challenge of the Antichrist is accepted by heaven itself, it is accepted by the King, the warrior King and His holy angels. And He comes in flaming fire to take His vengeance.

As we come to this event in chapter 19 and verse 11, Babylon the great capital city of the empire of Antichrist has already been destroyed. The world economic and religious system has been devastated. The empire of the Antichrist is in shambles as we remember from chapters 17 and 18. The seven-seal judgments have been opened and fulfilled. The seven trumpets have been blown and their furious judgments unfolded. The seven bowls of wrath have been poured out. And after all of that divine wrath, the remaining people of the earth are gathered into armies and assembled for the last holocaust. Man's day is about to end. The Great Tribulation to be over. Satan's time as well has ended as Jesus Christ comes in glorious triumph.

It wouldn't do justice to the intent of Scripture and to the anticipation of all of the redemptive literature that is before in the Bible if we didn't say at this point...this is the culmination of God's plan that His people have been waiting for throughout all of redemptive history. This is that which has been anticipated since the very beginning. This is the time when fully the serpent's head is bruised. And that takes us back to Genesis chapter 3 and verse 15. This is the time when the scepter is given to the true King and that takes us back to Genesis chapter 49. This is the time, also, for example, that was anticipated in the great prophecy given in 2 Samuel chapter 7, in that great chapter in which

David is told that there is going to come a King, there is going to come a King greater than any other King, and that King who will be a son of David will establish a kingdom that will last forever. It will be a kingdom that will never end. Second Samuel 7 then is anticipating the very event described for us here in Revelation chapter 19.

It is the very anticipation of this day and this moment that was certainly in the heart of Isaiah when he talked about the fact that there was going to come a great servant King, a great One who would establish a throne and a kingdom. Isaiah anticipates that in the eleventh chapter and again in the forty- second chapter.

This was anticipated by Ezekiel in chapters 38 and 39. It was anticipated by Joel in chapter 3 of his prophecy. And by Zechariah in chapter 14. And certainly Isaiah had it in mind in chapter 9 when he said, "The government will be upon His shoulders." He talked about a child who would come, who would reign and rule.

The Old Testament also pointed out very clearly that the center of this kingdom which the Messiah would establish would be in the city of Jerusalem. Clearly the prophet Zechariah let it be known that Jerusalem was to be the place. In Zechariah chapter 12 and verse 3, "It shall come about in that day I'll make Jerusalem a heavy stone for all the peoples, all who lift it will be severely injured and all the nations of the earth will be gathered against it." In the battle of Armageddon there is a focal point as well at Jerusalem, and Jerusalem is going to be a place, of course, where Antichrist establishes his rule. After desecrating the temple, you'll remember, during the Tribulation, he sets up himself as the one to be worshiped. He sets up the center of his worship in that sense in the city of Jerusalem. And so the conflict will hit that city as well. Zechariah talked about it even Isaiah talks about it in chapter 9 verse 7.

So the prophets were anticipating what was going to happen, that there would come a day when Jerusalem would be a place of judgment. There would come a day when God would send His great King to establish His eternal kingdom. And though they didn't fully have the revelation, of course, they had to wait until the New Testament even gave a greater revelation, that which came in the Olivet Discourse, that which comes in the book of Revelation. They understood how human history would finely reach its culmination. There would come One from heaven, the Anointed, the Son of David, the promised King who would dethrone the kings of the world and establish a kingdom of righteousness in which the people of God would be lifted up and exalted. Peace and justice would prevail in the world. Certainly Isaiah as well as the other prophets knew and understood as much as they were told about this great event.

So the conflict is set. We understand it. We've learned about it from the book of Revelation. But so is the anticipation set. And Christians have longed for this great day to come. And now we are reading about its coming.

I think back to Matthew chapter 13 and how the Lord early on in His ministry even began to talk about what was going to happen in the future. You remember in the thirteenth chapter of Matthew, verses 41 and 42, He says, "The Son of Man will send forth His angels and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks and those who commit lawlessness and cast them into the furnace of fire, in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, but the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." Here is Jesus saying there is coming a day of judgment, there is coming a day when the angels are going to be the agents of judgment and the reapers in the harvest. But it's also going to be a day of blessing and the righteous are going to shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father.

And in that great Olivet Discourse where Jesus preached a sermon on His own Second Coming, He reminds again of what's going to happen in Matthew 25:41, He will say to those on His left, "Depart from Me, accursed ones, into the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels." But on the other hand He will say to those who know and love Him, "Enter into My Kingdom, come who are blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you." And so that day is a day of tremendous judgment but also a day of tremendous blessing, tremendous joy, tremendous anticipation.

In Romans chapter 2 as you remember the Apostle Paul talks about the fact that there is coming a day of wrath and day of revelation of the righteous judgment of God. "And that day will render to every man according to his deeds, to those who by perseverance in doing good seek for glory and honor and immortality will come eternal life. To those who are selfishly ambitious and do not obey the truth but obey unrighteousness, wrath and indignation." So again this event signals judgment and it signals blessing. And believers throughout the ages have anticipated this monumental moment.

In 2 Thessalonians chapter 1 and verse 7, it tells us about a day when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven. It's the very day we're looking at in Revelation 19, when He comes 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. And these will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power. But on the other hand, He will come to be glorified in His saints on that day, and to be marveled at among all who have believed.

Again we hear the same rehearsing. It is a day of terrible judgment on the ungodly and a day of immense joy for those who know and love the Lord. So it is the anticipated day of saints in the Old Testament, the anticipated day of saints in the New Testament, the day of judgment, it's the very day which caused John to know sweetness and bitterness, sweetness because Christ was coming, bitterness because it meant the damnation of the ungodly was sealed.

So our text then is monumental in the history of redemption. It is the culminating event. It is the final great event. It is the end of the whole saga, really. The rest that happens in the kingdom and the end of the kingdom, the satanic rebellion at the end of the thousand years is really a sort of a final mop up operation. This is that which establishes the permanent end of man's day and establishes the eternal beginning of the day of God and the day of Christ when He will reign forever and ever. This then is the culmination of all of the Scripture, of all of Christian hope, of all of the hope of all the saints of all the ages. This is the final culminating battle for sovereignty in the universe, and this determines who will rule forever and ever and ever. And it will be none other than the Lord Jesus Christ.

And we should be loving this event. We should be anticipating this event. The Apostle Paul spoke when he was writing at the very end of his life to Timothy. And he spoke some very, very important and practical words. He said in 2 Timothy 4:8, "In the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness which the Lord the righteous judge will award to me on that day and not only to me but also to all who have loved His appearing." In so saying, he defines a Christian as someone who loves Christ's appearing, someone who loves His appearing. When we think about it, when we contemplate it, of course we do as Christians. But certainly we don't demonstrate that kind of affection because we get so caught up in this world, so satisfied with this world, that I think for the most part all of us if we were honest and looked into our hearts, and the question we're asked...would you rather leave this world and be taken to glory? Would you rather that Jesus come or would you rather keep enjoying life? We would be hard pressed to honestly say it is clear cut, I would in one split second give up everything in this world for the presence of Jesus Christ. We don't love His appearing as we should. We become comfortable and enamored by things in this world.

And I think maybe more so in this kind of culture than in many other cultures that are much more difficult and much harder, much more depressing and much less satisfying than our culture. Maybe...maybe the fact that our society is rapidly changing, that the golden era of American history is over, that the glory days of this country and our society are in the past. Maybe the fact that things are going to get worse and worse is going to cause us to have a greater and a greater love for the appearing of Jesus Christ and so be it...if indeed that is the case.

And if we in our condition today can love His appearing, imagine how the saints are going to feel who live in the time of the Tribulation. Imagine what it's going to be like for them to anticipate the coming of Jesus Christ when they're having to experience all that is going on. Antichrist will be operating in full power, openly blaspheming and blatantly defying God and Christ. The whole world will be worshiping Satan and the son of perdition. And those who refuse to do that who belong to the Lord will pay with their life. There will be a massive martyrdom of believers. All men and women on the face of the earth will be enduring unbelievable and unimaginable carnage. Remaining believers from Israel who have survived the wrath of God will have come to the truth of Jesus Christ and will be in the last extremities of their persecution. They will, no doubt, be crying out with the psalmist who said, "Keep Thou not silent, O God, do not remain quiet, do not be still, for behold Thine enemies make an uproar and

those who hate Thee have exalted themselves. They make strong plans against Thy people and conspire together against Thy treasured ones. They have said, Come and let us wipe them out as a nation that the name of Israel be remembered no more, for they have conspired together with one mind against Thee and do make a covenant."

No doubt the redeemed Jews of the Tribulation will find their way into Psalm 83 and those first six verses and be crying out to God...Keep Thou not silent, O God. And living, believing Gentiles will join in that cry. Those who have believed during that period and who are still alive and haven't been martyred.

And then the martyred saints who are in heaven will also be crying..."How long, O Lord, holy and true wilt Thou refrain from judging and avenging our blood?" As they do in chapter 6 of Revelation and verse 10. And so saints on earth, both Jew and Gentile, and saints in heaven under the altar will be crying out for Christ to come. And they will be anxiously loving His appearing because life will be so horrifying. They'll want the King to come back and set up His kingdom and be honored and glorified. And they will be, of course, saddened by their own experiences but even more so by the defamation of the character of God and the name of Christ and they'll want it all to come to an end.

And the time will come, and the prayers of the saints will be answered, and the cries of those under the altar in heaven will be answered as well. And we see the answer to it right here in chapter 19, the day will come. As Jude put it in his little epistle in verse 14, "When behold the Lord comes with many thousands of His holy ones to execute judgment upon all and to convict all the ungodly of all their ungodly deeds which they have done in an ungodly way and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken of against Him."

It's going to come. It's going to happen, this great event.

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

Now as the scene opens in verse 11, you might want to look at it, we are taken to heaven and we see heaven opened. And right on the edge, a white horse and He who sat upon it called Faithful and True and in righteousness He judges and makes or wages war.

What is going to happen here is going to happen very fast. Speedily and triumphantly the gates of heaven are going to burst open and the Lord is going to appear in glory with angelic and saintly hosts. There's going to be a speedy triumph. There's going to be a catastrophic and sudden collision as He comes out of heaven and hits the earth. And I just want to emphasize the suddenness of this text. Heaven opens, He's there and He comes.

And as soon as He comes there is a holocaust that is described in verse 17 as the great supper of God and the birds of the heavens are called to eat the flesh of the corpses that are going to be covering that part of the world. Sudden capturing of the beast and the kings of the earth, the false prophet, even Satan himself and all of them cast into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone. Then the slaughter of any who remain in verse 21. And this whole thing is very sudden and very fast. And that's important to point out. It's not a prolonged engagement. It's not a siege. It is an instantaneous battle that is fought really with one weapon, and that one weapon is described in verse 15 as a sword coming out of the mouth of Christ and with it He smites the nations. And immediately then He establishes His rule and His rule is that with a rod of iron.

Now I want to emphasize the suddenness of this for a very important reason, because I want you to understand...biblical history does not tell us that there is quiet sort of coming of the kingdom, that there this sort of merging of this age into the next age, that maybe we could even be in the kingdom and we just really can't perceive it. We're just sort of sliding into it and there's a bit of a transition period.

You say, "Who would believe that?" Many do. They are called post-millennialists. They believe that things will get better and better and there will be sort of a spiritual movement and the church somehow will capture some of the human institutions, and a gradual merging into the setting up of the kingdom. That is what post-millennialism is, millennium being the thousand-year kingdom. They also could be classified under the term reconstructionists. Sometimes you'll read about reconstructionists. Those are basically post-millennialists who believe that we as a church will reconstruct society around a framework of spiritual reality, and therefore usher in the kingdom of Christ. Some of them are called theonomists, who believe that somehow we can merge the economics of our time, the economy of our time, the social structure of our time with a theological reality and create a theonomic kind of kingdom.

Some of them are called kingdom theologians and they believe that somehow the church is going to gain great miracle power. This is the John Wimber "signs and wonders" kind of movement. And by this great power we're going to overcome demons and we're going to conquer the forces of darkness. And we're going to rest them from the powers of Satan and therefore we're going to establish the kingdom. And this will be some kind of process. It gets wrapped up in the spiritual warfare kind of mentality. And praying against great cities and demons supposedly that hold cities captive...and we want to rest these...these human things away from the powers of darkness, or away from the social architects of our time and create by the power of the church either expressed supernaturally against demonic forces, or naturally against political and social forces and therefore gain the kingdom, establish the kingdom, and offer it to Christ.

That is utterly, in my judgment, foreign to Scripture. The establishing of the kingdom in which Christ rules with a rod of iron is a sudden immediately cataclysmic event and cannot be described in any other way in Scripture. Heaven opens. On the edge of heaven is Jesus Christ seated on a white horse, bursting out of heaven, collides with the earth, and merely with the sword which comes out of His mouth which is nothing more than His word, He devastates. He is able to destroy with His mouth in the same way that He can create with His mouth. Mark it then, history does not quietly and gradually merge into the kingdom of Christ, it comes with a fury and a viciousness, in a cataclysmic divine intervention from heaven that is sudden. The end will come violently in fiery judgment.

And furthermore, the end will not come because things get better. The end will come because things get worse. The church will never conquer the kingdoms of this world, the church will never take over the social institutions of this age. There are not going to be better and better days ahead because of Christian influence in the world. Nor will we by some exercise of imaginary spiritual power conquer the kingdom of darkness and bring the kingdom. We will not do that. The world is not going to get better, it's going to get worse. And it's clear in the book of Revelation that it's getting worse and worse and worse and worse until the King intervenes.

The last blow to a world already engulfed, neck-deep in blood because of the slaughter and the murder and the bloodshed and the violence that's already gone on is the holocaust of Armageddon which is followed by the establishment of the kingdom by the Lord Himself. He alone can establish the kingdom. That's why we say we are pre-millennialists. We believe Christ comes at the beginning of the Millennium and sets it up, not at the end of it after we've set it up. That's what post-millennialism believes.

And then there are the amillennialists who don't believe there is any kingdom. And then there are the pan-millennialists who believe it will all pan out somehow in the end.

But anybody who takes a chronological and literal course in the book of Revelation is going to wind up with a pre-millennial coming of Christ in which He returns and sets up the Millennial Kingdom in which He rules for a thousand years. Nothing else makes any sense in the chronology of the book of Revelation.

Now the prophets tell us that when Christ comes the battle will rage in Megiddo, in the plain of Megiddo. Also that it will range down to Edom through Jerusalem, the valley of Jehoshaphat. But Megiddo is the place which seems to be the greatest battle field, the greatest place of bloodshed. And those of us who have been to that place are struck by the awesome capability of that particular piece of real estate to be a battleground. In fact, Napoleon said it is the greatest battleground on the face of the earth, at least that he had ever seen. There Barak and Deborah fought against Sisera, there Gideon fought the Medianites, there Saul was slain by the Philistines, there Pharaoh Necco slew good king Josiah and so it goes. It's in that place that much blood has been shed.

Through the years every battle fought there, whether by the Drews or the Turks or the armies of Napoleon, all of those battles combined were only a harbinger of the great day of the battle of God almighty. So man's day is going to end and God's day is going to begin. The glorious return of our Lord Jesus Christ whose marks and description here identify Him as the same Jesus who went into heaven from the Mount of Olives, is going to come. And I have to believe that it's going to come sooner than any of us really think.

Remember now, Christ came the first time, He was despised and rejected, spit on, mocked and ridiculed. But when He comes the second time, it's going to be just the opposite...just the opposite.

Now the imagery of this section, and I won't want to hurry through it, the imagery of this section is really marvelous. It pictures Christ as a warrior King and He's coming back in that sort of motif, or that sort of mode. And it really is very similar to the eleventh chapter of Isaiah. In fact, you might even think that the writer John who is seeing this great vision was familiar with the book of Isaiah and would have made in his own mind a parallel. For in Isaiah we read in chapter 11, "A shoot will spring from the stem of Jesse, a branch from his roots will bear fruit." And, of course, the line of Jesse was David and then the Son of David, the Messiah, and so He came from the line of Jesse. "And this one who will come out of the stem of Jesse, the Spirit of the Lord will rest on him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and strength, the Spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord and He will delight in the fear of the Lord and He will not judge by what His eyes see, nor make a decision by what His ears hear, but with righteousness He will judge the poor and decide with fairness for the afflicted of the 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. And righteousness will be the belt about His loins and faithfulness the belt about His waist."

That's very similar to the imagery. He is called Faithful and True in Revelation. Here He is called the Faithful One or having faithfulness, the belt of His waist. His righteousness is celebrated in Revelation 19 and also here. He smites the earth with His mouth here in Isaiah 11, as well as in Revelation chapter 19. He establishes His rule here as He does in Revelation 19. So that same picture of the coming King, the warrior King, the conquering King in Revelation 19 is certainly very close to the imagery of Isaiah 11.

And Isaiah 11, also, the very next verse which I didn't read, verse 6, describes the kingdom that He sets up. "The wolf will dwell with the lamb, the leopard lie down with the kid, the goat. The calf, the young lion, the fatling together, a little boy will lead them." In other words, no more hostility in the animal kingdom. It talks about the cow and the bear grazing together. Their young lying down together. The lion eating straw like an ox, no longer a predator. The nursing child playing in the hole of the Cobra. The weaned child puts his hand on a viper's den. They will not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea. And

he goes on to describe more about it.

So it is definitely a kingdom picture in Isaiah 11, and the coming of the King depicted in very similar terms to Revelation 19.

Now go to Isaiah chapter 63 for a moment, and you'll see another very similar set of pictures. I'm just pointing out that this is imagery which is not brand new. "Who is this who comes from Edom?" And this tells us, of course, that the battle stretches from Megiddo in the north to Edom in the south and the east. "Who is this who comes with garments of glowing colors from Bozrah?" Literally crimson red garments. "Who is this coming 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 winepress? I have trodden the wine trough alone and from the peoples there was no man with Me, I also trod them in Mine anger and trampled them in My wrath. And their life blood 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, and I looked and there was no one to help, and I was astonished there was no one to uphold. So My own arm brought salvation to Me, My wrath upheld Me and I trod down the peoples in My anger and made them drunk with My wrath and I poured out their life blood on the earth." And there is the Messiah answering the questions...who is this one to come to shed blood?

And that blood-shedding imagery of Isaiah 63, go back to Revelation 19, appears here as well. Verse 13, "He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood. And He is called by name the Word of God." He is a bloody conqueror, blood-splattered garments characterize Him. This great event is not only previewed in Isaiah 11 and in Isaiah chapter 63, but it is also previewed in Matthew chapter 24. And you remember that in Matthew chapter 24 in that Olivet Discourse, Jesus made a very important statement in verse 29. Matthew 24, "Immediately after the Tribulation of those days...that seven-year period... the sun will be darkened, the moon will not give its light, the stars will fall from the sky and the powers of the heavens will be shaken." The whole universe goes dark and then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, 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." There too is a picture of the coming King. The event of Revelation 19.

Over in chapter 25 as Jesus continues this sermon on His Second Coming in verse 31, "When the Son of Man comes in His glory and all the angels with Him, He will sit on His glorious throne." So the Old Testament prophets anticipated it, and certainly the Lord Jesus Christ anticipated it. Earlier in the book of Revelation the Apostle John saw imagery related to the coming of Christ. Remember chapter 14 verse 14? "I looked and behold a white cloud and sitting on the cloud was one like a Son of Man, having a golden crown on His head and a sharp sickle in His hand. And another angel came out of the temple crying with a loud voice to Him who sat on the cloud, 'Put in Your sickle and reap because

the hour to reap has come because the harvest of the earth is ripe."

We find even in verse 20, "The winepress was trodden outside the city and blood came out from the winepress up to the horses' bridles for a distance of two hundred miles." That's the distance from Megiddo all the way to the south through Jerusalem and down to the southern parts of what would be near Edom.

So plenty of previews. Chapter 16 verse 14, we find there a battle of the war of the great day of God in verse 14 of chapter 16. And then in verse 16 they're gathered to the place called Har Magedon. Well all of that sets us up to grasp the return of Christ. And, by the way, we now get very chronological in the book of Revelation. He returns in chapter 19. He sets up His Kingdom. In chapter 20 we learn about the kingdom. And then the kingdom ends and enters into the eternal state in chapters 21 and 22. So the rest that is to come is all wonderful, glorious fulfillment of the hope and anticipation of all the believers of all time.

Would you believe I've gone through the introduction? How long have I been talking? Our time is gone. It's just incredible. And I don't want you to miss a thing so I'm going to...I'm going to save what I planned to say for next time. But I think you understand the setting of it and the import of it, and that in itself is foundational. I'm going to give you three great initial perspectives as we go through verses 11 to 16...the return of the conqueror, the regiments of the conqueror, and the rule of the conqueror. And this is just the richest and most wonderful truth and I want to have the time to unfold it so I'm going to wait till next Sunday night to do that. I don't want you to miss it.

It is, to be honest with you, a concern to my own heart when we could say we're going to present the Second Coming of Jesus Christ and have some people not come. I can't conceive of not loving His appearing enough to want to know every possible detail about it. Between now and next Lord's day, you might pray that the Lord will put it upon the hearts of His people to demonstrate the love of this event enough to come to hear about it. And I'm not talking for our sake, because to be honest, and this is a good footnote to close on, we who know and love the Lord Jesus Christ are going to be raptured, right? We're going to be at the Second Coming, but we're not going to be here waiting for it, we're going to be coming with Him. That even makes it more interesting. I want to know what I'm going to be doing, what I'm going to be involved in. Am I going to be part of the judgment? Am I going to have a sword? Am I going to get in on the action? Or am I not? Well I'm going to answer that question next week. What is going to be my role? And wonderful of all wonderful things is the fact that Jesus Christ is finally going to be exalted. All the defamation, all the slander, all the dishonor that's been against His name is going to be over forever. And He will be vindicated and glorified. That and that alone makes it a most precious event of all events. Don't miss it. Let's bow in prayer.

Father, as we think about this tremendous reality that Jesus is coming, we are to grateful to know this, else we would be in such despair, such confusion about what's going on in the world. And how is

it that in such a time when we are educated, such a time when we have elevated ourselves materially and economically, we should have learned some things in the battle to get along. Here we are killing each other at an unbelievable rate, all the way from crime in the streets to the massacre of a half a million people by a tribe in Africa. There's something so wretchedly wrong in the human heart that time doesn't fix and education doesn't remedy and social structure can't control. It doesn't get better, it's just the same only worse. And where would we hope and where would we look for a gleam of light if we didn't have the confidence that Jesus was coming? That He was going to come and make the world the paradise that You intended it to be. But only for those who love His appearing, who name His name. And we would say with the Apostle John, "Even so, come Lord Jesus, the sooner the better." Who needs anymore of this? The only reason we're reluctant to say come now is that we would wish that more could come to faith in Christ. We are not eager for the damnation of the lost and nor are You. And that's why during those final days of the Tribulation the gospel will be preached more far and wide than ever in history. And men will have a greater opportunity to hear and believe than they've ever had because You're not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance, You find no pleasure in the death of the wicked.

But, Lord, we want the gospel preached, we want people to believe but at the same time we want Christ to come and be exalted and receive the honor that He is due. And we want to be a part of the kingdom, the glorious kingdom over which He reigns. We could only wish that the thing we read about here in Revelation 19, that heaven was opened, was in fact a reality that heaven was opened and Jesus was coming soon. Thank You for the promise that we are not set for wrath but before that unfolding wrath comes You're going to take us to be with Yourself and that we'll return with You in the glory of Your coming.

give us a love for Your appearing that affects our life, the way we live, the way we think, the way we invest our time and money. Help us to live in the light of eternity and not the passing world. Help us to lay up our treasure in heaven where moth and rust do not corrupt and thieves can't steal. Help us to take that which is carnal and purchase that which is eternal. Help us to set our affections on things above and not on the things on the earth, to remember that we are not citizens of this world but our citizenship is in heaven from which we wait for the Lord who will come to change us into His own image. Give us a love for the appearing of Christ that affects us. Knowing these things shall come to pass, may we remember as Peter did that we are to be blameless and holy in our living, growing in grace and in the knowledge of Christ. Help us to live in the light of our returning King and until then to be faithful to serve Him and to call many to righteousness that they might glorify Him with us in whose name we pray. Amen.

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