

CONCERNING THE WAY

September 1, 2009

LESSON 72: THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST



Chapter 19 – The Lamb Gets Married and Then Goes to War

In Revelation 16, John was shown the pouring out of the final seven bowls which contained God's wrath. At the pouring of the seventh bowl, God's voice was heard from the Temple saying, "It is done!" (Revelation 16:17). Even though judgment was complete at the pouring of the final bowl, we saw that several more chapters were still ahead before the Kingdom of God finally arrives on earth and Satan is bound in preparation for the Millennial Kingdom to follow (Revelation 20:1-3). In Revelation 17 and 18 John is shown the Prostitute, Babylon the Great (Revelation 17:5, 18)—both her background and ultimate destruction.

In this chapter, John sees the celebration in heaven at the destruction of the Prostitute on the earth below. Then he sees the marriage of the Lamb which is followed by the return of Jesus Christ to earth at His victorious Second Coming. Revelation 19 can be considered the climax of the book of Revelation because it describes the most important event remaining in history.

The kingdom of the Beast has wasted the earth (Isaiah 14:16-17) and great spiritual darkness dominates everywhere. Those who follow God have been more intensely exterminated than at any time in past history. The saints that are still alive on earth don't have the mark of the Beast to be able to buy or sell things that they need (Revelation 13:17) and their lives are in constant danger by refusing to worship the Beast (Revelation 13:15). They are either in hiding, living off the black market, or they are in the special place of protection provided by God. Everything appears to be hopeless, and it brings to mind what Jesus said:

Matthew 24:22 "Unless those days had been cut short, no life would have been saved; but for the sake of the elect those days will be cut short."

Then, at the darkest hour—which is always just before the dawn—heaven is opened and the long awaited Saviour is seen riding out with the armies of heaven in glorious array! The long awaited "KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS" arrives to slaughter the rebellious at the Campaign of Armageddon and to establish the glorious age of His righteous reign that is the Millennial Kingdom.

Not only is the Second Coming of Christ probably the most dramatic event in Scripture, it ends the continual downward trend of history. Although sin and death remain for another one thousand years (Isaiah 65:20-25), the coming of the King to earth starts history on an upward path. The age of the Millennium on earth demonstrates what all of earth's history should have been—with truly righteous rule by a righteous Man. Even this, as great as it will be, will be surpassed in the final eternal state when both sin and death are defeated once and for all and the new heavens and new earth become the final dwelling place for the righteous of all ages with full communion with God (Revelation 21:4).

Revelation 19:1-3 After these things I heard something like a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, "Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God; (2) BECAUSE HIS JUDGMENTS ARE TRUE AND RIGHTEOUS; for He has judged the great harlot who was corrupting the earth with her immorality, and HE HAS AVENGED THE BLOOD OF HIS BOND-SERVANTS ON HER." (3) And a second time they said, "Hallelujah! HER SMOKE RISES UP FOREVER AND EVER."

The voices could be of all those in heaven including: (1) the voices of the Church, having been raptured before the Tribulation, (2) the voices of the martyred Tribulation saints (Revelation 6:9; 7:14; 12:11; 13:7, 15; 15:2; 16:6; 20:4), and (3) the voices of various ranks of angels. They sing in unison as one mighty, thunderous voice (verse 6).

“Hallelujah” is a transliteration of the Hebrew, a command: “You all praise Jah (Jehovah)!” , or actually “Praise the ever-existing one!”. “Salvation” here probably refers to more than just personal redemption, but the rescue of the earth from the corrupting influence of the Prostitute. And we will praise God for the righteousness of His judgments. And it is not only to judge sin, but also to avenge the blood of the martyrs who were murdered during the Tribulation.

Some read these judgments and the wrath of God being poured out in Revelation and think God is being cruel and ugly. How easily they forget how ugly the sin is on earth that will cause God to finally wipe it out. And is there not sufficient sin running rampant today that God would not be justified in destroying the earth now? Of course there is, all of us who have the Holy Spirit living in us long for God to judge sin and set us free from the rampant corruption around us and in us. This shows us just how merciful and longsuffering our Father really is, that he continues to wait, not wanting anyone to perish.

“Forever and ever” - From the time of her destruction and throughout the Millennial Kingdom, the area which was once Babylon will be burning pitch and a prison for demons (Revelation 18:2). The text implies that her destruction is so permanent that the land itself will be continually dangerous and unavailable to humans:

Isaiah 34:9-10 *Its streams will be turned into pitch, And its loose earth into brimstone, And its land will become burning pitch. (10) It will not be quenched night or day; Its smoke will go up forever. From generation to generation it will be desolate; None will pass through it forever and ever.*

Does forever mean forever? Or does it mean just until the new heavens and the new earth, when the first earth passes away (Revelation 21:1)? Some believe it does, and some believe that the earth will be the same earth but renovated, so that this literal area of Babylon will still be there burning, and the land of Israel will still be there, which satisfies the promises of God to the descendants of Abraham that the land of Israel would be their's forever. We'll discuss this more in chapter 21.

Revelation 19:4-5 *And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sits on the throne saying, "Amen. Hallelujah!" (5) And a voice came from the throne, saying, "Give praise to our God, all you His bond-servants, you who fear Him, the small and the great."*

We first saw the 24 elders in Revelation 4:4, and we determined that they are probably representatives of the Church. The four living creatures we saw in verse 6 of that chapter, and discussed that they are of a high angelic order, probably cherubim. This whole scene is much like the scene in chapter 4 when John was transported to heaven. These elders are continually falling down worshipping God:

- In 4:10, praising Him for His great works of creation
- In 5:8-9, singing a song of redemption
- In 7:9-11, praising God along with the martyrs who have come out of the Tribulation
- In 11:15-16, at the sounding of the seventh trumpet, when the kingdoms of this world are declared to have become the kingdom of God and His Christ
- In 19:4, praising God for the destruction of Babylon

The voice from the throne is probably a high ranking angel, possibly one of the four living creatures.

Revelation 19:6 Then I heard something like the voice of a great multitude and like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, saying, "Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns."

"The loudest electronic amplification system of any earthly praise will dwindle to insignificance in comparison to the thunderous praise from heaven at the accomplishment of God! Imagine the largest stadium in the world, filled to overflowing with a thundering crowd. Now multiply that by one thousand, ten thousand, even myriad of myriads (Revelation. 5:11)! Gather all the world's instruments together with all the heavenly instruments—instruments and sounds and voices of unimaginable purity, power, and magnificence. On command, they all shout forth: ALLELUIA! Surely, in the spiritual realm, this thunderous praise is already beginning to erode the strength of the dragon and his unclean spirits who, at this very hour, are gathering the kings of the earth to their impending slaughter below (Rev. 16:13-14)." Tony Garland

Revelation 19:7 "Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready."

The time has arrived for Christ to marry His bride. We believe the bride is the Church, having been previously taken to heaven in the Rapture. The Church, consisting of all those baptized into the body of Christ by the Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:13), is spiritually joined with Christ in a unique way. She is His Church (Matthew 16:18) which He now weds.

How did the bride prepare herself? I think this has to do with the relationship between faith and works. The Bible teaches that true Biblical works are a result of faith (James 2:17-18). It also teaches that faith is a gift from God (John 6:44; Acts 11:18; Romans 12:3; Ephesians 2:8; Philippians 1:29). So she has made herself ready by the power of God working in her (also Colossians 1:27-29).

The Marriage of the Lamb

We have been through this before, but I'd like to discuss it again, so we don't miss the significance of this event. Since all of Scripture, with the exception of the books written by Luke, was written by Jews and Jesus was born in a Jewish lineage, it is not surprising to find that the marriage of the Lamb is patterned after a Jewish wedding. By learning about Jewish wedding practices, we can better understand the marriage of the Lamb as taught in Scripture.

"First, the father of the groom made the arrangements for the marriage and paid the bride price. The timing of the arrangement varied. Sometimes it occurred when both children were small, and at other times it was a year before the marriage itself. Often the bride and groom did not even meet until their wedding day. The second step, which occurred a year or more after the first step, was the fetching of the bride. The bridegroom would go to the home of the bride in order to bring her to his home. In connection with this step, two other things should be noted. First, it was the father of the groom who determined the timing. Second, prior to the groom's leaving to fetch the bride, he must already have a place prepared for her as their abode. This was followed by the third step, the wedding ceremony, to which a few would be invited. Prior to the wedding ceremony, the bride underwent a ritual immersion for ritual cleansing. The fourth step, the marriage feast, would follow and could last for as many as seven days. Many more people would be invited to the feast than were to the marriage ceremony. In the Marriage of the Lamb all four of these steps of the Jewish wedding ceremony are evident." Arnold Fructenbaum

Step	Description	Scriptures
Marriage Covenant	The father pays for the bride and establishes the marriage covenant.	Acts 20:28; 1Cor. 6:19-20; 11:25 Eph. 5:25-27
Bridal Chamber Prepared	The son returns to his father's house and prepares the bridal chamber.	John 6:62; 14:2; Acts 1:9-11
Bride Fetched	At a time determined by the father (Mtt. 24:36), the groom fetches the bride to bring her to his father's house. Although the bride was expecting her groom to come for her, she did not know the time of his coming. As a result, the groom's arrival was preceded by a shout, which warned the bride to be prepared for his coming.	John 14:3; 1Th. 4:13-18
Bride Cleansed	The bride undergoes ritual cleansing prior to the wedding.	1Cor. 3:12-15; Rev. 19:7-8
Wedding Ceremony	The private wedding ceremony.	Rev. 19:7
Consummation	In the privacy of the bridal chamber the bride and groom consummate the marriage.	Rev. 19:7
Marriage Feast	The marriage feast celebration - many are invited.	Mtt. 22:1-14; 25:1-13; Luke 2:36

The first step in the wedding has already taken place. The Father established the marriage covenant at the Messiah's first coming. Whenever a person places their faith in Jesus Christ, they enter into the New Covenant, and become part of His bride. Since His ascension, He has been preparing the bridal chamber:

John 14:1-3 "Do not let your heart be troubled; believe in God, believe also in Me. (2) "In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. (3) "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.

So Jesus is preparing the bridal chamber at this time. The third step is the next event in the marriage, when Jesus will come and "fetch" His bride from the earth and bring her to heaven (the Father's house). That is the Rapture of the Church.

It's also important to understand the roles of the wedding party. It's easy to identify the groom and the bride, but there are other members of the wedding party. Read what John the Baptist said in John 4:

John 3:28-30 "You yourselves are my witnesses that I said, 'I am not the Christ,' but, 'I have been sent ahead of Him.' (29) "He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. So this joy of mine has been made full. (30) "He must increase, but I must decrease.

From this we learn that

1. Jesus is a bridegroom
2. He has a bride
3. John is not of the bride, but a friend of the bridegroom

Jesus also referred to His disciples as "friends of the bridegroom" (Matthew 9:15, Mark 2:19, Luke 5:34). We also learn about the roles of the bridal party from the parable of the foolish virgins (Matthew 25:1-13), which we studied just before Revelation. The only members of the party that are mentioned are the ten virgins and the bridegroom. The virgins are not getting married; they are just attending the wedding. The bride is not mentioned in the story anywhere. Many people try to equate this story with making sure that we are ready for the Rapture. The virgins are not representative of the Church! They are waiting for the bridegroom so they can attend the wedding, not so they can get married. There is no doubt that this parable, in the context of the chapter, is about the Jews during the Tribulation period, which is why the bride is not mentioned, because the Church is not on earth at this time. Just as some virgins were

prepared for the coming of the bridegroom and some were not, some Jews will be ready for their Messiah when He comes and some will not be.

"Just as the Bridegroom comes not alone, but with attendants, companions, and a long train of rejoicing ones who make up his party, the whole of whom together are called the Bridegroom's coming, whilst, strictly speaking, there is a wide difference between him and those with him; so it is on the side of the Bride. She has her companions and attendants too,—“virgins which follow her.” They make up her company and train. In coming to wed her the Bridegroom comes also into near and close relation to them. To a blessed degree they share the Bride's honours. . . [but] the Bride has relations to the Bridegroom which belong to her alone.” J. A. Seiss

The nation Israel cannot be the bride because she is already married to God the Father:

Jeremiah 3:14 "Return, O backsliding children," says the LORD; "for I am married to you. I will take you, one from a city and two from a family, and I will bring you to Zion.

Israel turned out to be an unfaithful wife, and God divorced her:

Jeremiah 3:8 Then I saw that for all the causes for which backsliding Israel had committed adultery, I had put her away and given her a certificate of divorce; yet her treacherous sister Judah did not fear, but went and played the harlot also.

Hosea 2:2 "Bring charges against your mother, bring charges; For she is not My wife, nor am I her Husband! Let her put away her harlotries from her sight, And her adulteries from between her breasts;

Even though Israel has been unfaithful, God promises to stand by her. Their husband-wife relationship will be restored:

Hosea 2:16 "And it shall be, in that day," Says the LORD, "That you will call Me 'My Husband,' And no longer call Me 'My Master,'

Hosea 2:19-20 "I will betroth you to Me forever; Yes, I will betroth you to Me in righteousness and justice, In lovingkindness and mercy; (20) I will betroth you to Me in faithfulness, And you shall know the LORD.

Israel in her land was the wife of Jehovah (Jeremiah 3:14-20; Isaiah 54:1), but the wife was divorced because of her sin. Israel, though, is to be reinstated in Jehovah's favor. But a divorced wife can never again be a virgin, and it is not a divorced wife but a virgin Jesus marries.

The marriage of Israel to Jehovah is also seen in promises of God about the city, Jerusalem. In her restoration at the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom, God will rejoice over the city as a bridegroom rejoices over the bride:

Isaiah 62:1-5 For Zion's sake I will not keep silent, And for Jerusalem's sake I will not keep quiet, Until her righteousness goes forth like brightness, And her salvation like a torch that is burning. (2) The nations will see your righteousness, And all kings your glory; And you will be called by a new name Which the mouth of the LORD will designate. (3) You will also be a crown of beauty in the hand of the LORD, And a royal diadem in the hand of your God. (4) It will no longer be said to you, "Forsaken," Nor to your land will it any longer be said, "Desolate"; But you will be called, "My delight is in her," And your land, "Married"; For the LORD delights in you, And to Him your land

will be married. (5) For as a young man marries a virgin, So your sons will marry you; And as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, So your God will rejoice over you.

Isaiah 54:5-7, 11-12 "For your husband is your Maker, Whose name is the LORD of hosts; And your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel, Who is called the God of all the earth. (6) "For the LORD has called you, Like a wife forsaken and grieved in spirit, Even like a wife of one's youth when she is rejected," Says your God. (7) "For a brief moment I forsook you, But with great compassion I will gather you. (11) "O afflicted one, storm-tossed, and not comforted, Behold, I will set your stones in antimony, And your foundations I will lay in sapphires. (12) "Moreover, I will make your battlements of rubies, And your gates of crystal, And your entire wall of precious stones.

As the earthly Jerusalem is considered the wife of Jehovah, the The New Jerusalem which comes down from heaven at the end of the Millennium is also called the bride of the Lamb (Revelation 21:2,9).

"In the new heavens and the new earth, the bride concept will be expanded to include not only the church, but also all the redeemed of all ages as the New Jerusalem becomes the bridal city (Rev. 21:1-2)." John MacArthur

"[The New Jerusalem] is called the Bride, because it embraces the Bride, and because it is the Bride's everlasting home and residence. But for the very reason that it is the home and residence of the Lamb's Wife, it must include her retinue, her companions, and her attendants, who share the glory with her, but who are not strictly the Bride herself." Seiss

So we cannot confuse Israel and the Church on this issue:

"If one makes the Wife of Jehovah and the Bride of Messiah one and the same, he is faced with numerous contradictions because of the different descriptions given. Only when one sees two separate entities, Israel as the Wife of Jehovah and the Church as the Bride of the Messiah, do all such contradictions vanish" Fructenbaum

There are also verses in the NT epistles which speak of our relationship with Christ as a bride to a groom:

2 Corinthians 11:2 **For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for I betrothed you to one husband, so that to Christ I might present you as a pure virgin.**

Romans 7:4 **Therefore, my brethren, you also have become dead to the law through the body of Christ, that you may be married to another—to Him who was raised from the dead, that we should bear fruit to God.**

Also read Ephesians 5:25-27, 30-32.

"[The Church] is both the body of Christ and the bride of Christ, as Eve was the body of Adam and also his bride." Arno C. Gaebelin

"Some may question why the church age believers should be granted the honor of being the bride, while believers from other ages are merely guests. But one may equally ask why God singled out Israel to be the covenant people. The only answer to both questions is that God sovereignly purposed that it be so (cf. Deu. 7:7-8)". MacArthur

A typological hint as to the bride of the Lamb is also found in a study of the book of Ruth. The story involves Naomi (a Jew), Ruth (a Gentile), and Boaz (the kinsman-redeemer). Through the events of the story, Boaz (who represents the Messiah) takes Ruth as his Gentile bride (representing the Church) and Naomi (representing Israel) is restored to her land. Now back to Revelation chapter 19:

Revelation 19:8 **It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.**

In one of His parables, Jesus compared the kingdom of heaven to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son (Matthew 22:2-14). Those who were invited to the feast would not come. So the king sent his servants out to invite whoever would come. At the time of the supper, the king saw a man who did not have on a wedding garment. Because of his lack of proper clothing, he was cast out into outer darkness.

In this parable, the king is Father God and His Son is Jesus Christ, the Lamb. The wedding feast is the wedding feast of the Lamb. Those who were invited are the nation of Israel. Those from the nations who eventually attend are those who accept the gospel as it went out to all nations after the rejection of Jesus by Israel. You can see how important it is to have the wedding garment, by what the king did to the man without one.

The proper wedding clothing is provided by the redemption of Christ. It is the imputed righteousness of God (Romans 3:21-26). The man who was cast out of the marriage feast tried to get in by his own righteousness. He rejected the wedding garment given by the king and so was not qualified to participate.

The bride is given the fine linen by her groom in heaven and will be seen wearing them when she rides out with Christ in verse 14. The wedding definitely takes place in heaven before the 2nd coming.

“One further matter of reconciliation requires a separation of the wedding itself (Rev. 19:7) from the wedding feast (Rev. 19:9). It is necessary to have the marriage initiated in heaven after the Rapture of the saints, because when Christ’s army of saints return with Him to earth, they will have already put on their wedding apparel (Rev. 19:8, 14). So the initiation of the union happens in heaven, but the celebration of that union with a grand wedding feast ensues on earth.” Robert Thomas

“Fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints” – This is most likely referring to the acts which survived the Judgment Seat of Christ, those works which were not burned up in the fire and for which they will be given rewards. What we do for Christ in this life will last forever!

Isaiah 61:10 **I will rejoice greatly in the LORD, My soul will exult in my God; For He has clothed me with garments of salvation, He has wrapped me with a robe of righteousness, As a bridegroom decks himself with a garland, And as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.**

If you’re not praising God right now, you better get on your knees and tell Him you want that fine linen!

Revelation 19:9 **Then he *said to me, "Write, 'Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.'" And he *said to me, "These are true words of God."**

Those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb are blessed because it will take place in the Kingdom! Make sure you have your invitation!

“Those who are invited?” Wait a minute, the bride doesn’t need an invitation, does she? This must be a separate group of people, because it can’t be the Church. This is the “friends of the bridegroom”, as John the Baptist said he was and Jesus called His disciples. It is believers before Pentecost and after the Rapture. In other words, this is Old Testament saints and Tribulation saints who are invited to the marriage supper. And this has to be during the Millennial Kingdom, because in order for Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to sit down at the feast, you would think they have to be resurrected into their glorified bodies.

Luke 14:15 When one of those who were reclining at the table with Him heard this, he said to Him, "Blessed is everyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!"

It is in the kingdom of God, when the Messianic Kingdom comes on earth, that Jesus will once again eat the Passover:

Luke 22:15-18 Then He said to them, "With fervent desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer; (16) for I say to you, I will no longer eat of it until it is fulfilled in the kingdom of God." (17) Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, "Take this and divide it among yourselves; (18) for I say to you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine until the kingdom of God comes."

“Since the marriage supper consistently is used in reference to Israel on the earth, it may be best to . . . view the marriage of the Lamb as that event in the heavens in which the church is eternally united to Christ and the marriage feast or supper as the millennium, to which Jews and Gentiles will be invited, which takes place on earth, during which time the bridegroom is honored through the display of the bride to all His friends who are assembled there.” Dwight Pentecost

Revelation 19:10 Then I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, "Do not do that; I am a fellow servant of yours and your brethren who hold the testimony of Jesus; worship God. For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

John is apparently overcome by all the things he has seen and the glory of the angel, and he is rebuked by the angel. It may have happened to any of us in that situation! But what this verse does is remind us that we are not to worship angels. Angels, like us, are created beings, and no matter how fascinating they may be to us, they are not objects of worship (Colossians 2:18). Only God is worthy of worship. It seems to be part of our depraved minds that we would rather worship created things than our creator (Romans 1:25). Be careful that you don’t spend lots of time focusing on angels and forgetting the God who made them.

Unlike Satan, who hates men and can’t stand the idea of being subservient to them, this holy angel sees us in the right way, that we are both servants of God and even brothers in that we share the same mission, to carry out God’s will. We are also both sons of God (Genesis 6:2, 4; Job 1:6; 2:1; 38:7).

“The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy” – the angel seems to be saying that everything about Jesus was prophetic, and all of prophecy leads to Him. Jesus appeared to His disciples in Luke 24 and explained, “**all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me**” (Luke 24:44). Jesus told the Pharisees, “**You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life, and these are they which testify of Me**” (John 5:39). Paul said that to Jesus, “**all the prophets witness**” (Acts 10:43a). Peter said, “**As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful searches and inquiries, seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow.**” (1 Peter 1:10-11).

Many people ignore the prophecies of scripture or try to spiritualize them away, but they don't realize that by doing so you're doing away with many things that Jesus said about Himself (Matthew 24:27, John 14:3). Everything He said about Himself was prophecy and has been or will be fulfilled.

Revelation 19:11-12 **And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war. (12) His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems; and He has a name written on Him which no one knows except Himself.**

This is the Lamb, the Messiah, Jesus (Yeshua), riding out of heaven as a glorified man. The time has finally come to take His kingdom and assume David's throne. This is the climax of the entire Bible! The Old Testament prophets prophesied about it; Jesus predicted it; and the New Testament writers wrote about it. Everything we've studied in Revelation, in fact the whole Bible, has been building up to this event. It will be a precious sight to those believers who are still left on earth, but a terrifying sight to the antichrist and his followers.

If you remember, the first seal judgment (Revelation 6:2), a rider appeared on a white horse and went out to conquer the earth. That was the antichrist attempting to deceive the world into thinking that he was Christ and should be crowned king of kings and worshipped. That was a pitiful imitation of the true Christ here who comes to defeat His enemies and establish His kingdom on earth. It is rightfully His.

He is called Faithful and True because He is the personification of those words. He always keeps His promises and He always does everything His Father wants Him to do.

Because He is faithful [Rev. 19:11] He must discharge His office as judge, not shrinking from the administration of discipline or punishment where it is needed. Because He is true [Rev. 19:11] He cannot alter the standards of God which condemn sin. Favoritism and laxity cannot be found in Him, for He is the perfect administrator of justice in a world where injustice has long since reigned. . . . The meekness of Calvary and the sternness of Armageddon may seem inconsistent, but wherever sin exists, they may both be found. Merrill C. Tenney

The first time He came as a suffering servant. This time He is coming to "wage war". Because His judgment is righteous, the Campaign of Armageddon will be a just war (Psalms 45:3-4, Psalms 96:13). The horrible slaughter about to happen will be completely just and a reflection of the absolute truth of man's sinfulness and rebellion. Man judges on a curve. God judges on an absolute scale. His "eyes like flame" matches John's description of Jesus in Revelation 1:14.

It's hard to believe, but there are some preterists who don't see Christ coming back in these passages. They allegorize it as the continuing warfare of the church through the proclamation of the gospel. It's hard to know how to respond to people who try so hard NOT to take God's word plainly. If you can't see the 2nd coming of Christ in these passages, then you can't see anything in the Bible correctly.

The many diadems (crowns) indicate His right to rule and possibly the fact that He will rule as both priest and king. And Jesus apparently has a name that no one knows. This is very interesting, because there have been times in the Old Testament where we have seen the "Angel of the Lord", whom we have speculated is a preincarnate appearance of Jesus Christ. When Jacob wrestled with the man at Peniel, he asked the name of the man, but the man (the Angel of the Lord) did not give it (Genesis 32:29). When Jehovah instructed Israel to follow the Angel He would send before them, He warned them not to provoke the angel, "for my name is in Him" (Exodus 23:21). When the Angel of the Lord appeared to Samson's mother-to-be, she mentions He did not tell her His name (Judges 13:6). Later, when Samson's father met

the Angel and asked for His name, the Angel replied, “Why do you ask My name, seeing it is wonderful?” (Judges 13:18). (Wonderful is one of the known names of Messiah, Isaiah 9:6.).

I think this name of Jesus is a secret that only He and the Father know, and it looks like they may reveal it here at the 2nd coming. And you can be sure that when we do learn it, it will reveal some wonderful truth about His character, like His other names. Overcomers in the church at Philadelphia were promised to have the name of the Father and of the New Jerusalem written upon them as well as Jesus’ new name (Revelation 3:11). Maybe Jesus’ new name is this secret name.

Revelation 19:13 He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God.

Some think this may be His own blood that stains His robe, but that is very unlikely. His blood was spilled at the cross during His First Coming for redemption. This is His Second Coming which is in judgment and wrath. This is not His own atoning blood which is associated with His First Coming (Leviticus 14:51; Revelation 1:5; 5:9). This is the blood of His enemies from His trampling them in the “winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God” (Isaiah 63:3; Luke 19:27; Revelation 14:20; 19:15). This is going to be a literal bloodbath.

The “Word of God” is also used as a name of Jesus by John in his gospel, which gives us evidence that John actually wrote Revelation (John 1:1; 1 John 1:1; 2:14; 5:7; Revelation 1:2; 19:13). This name for Jesus can only be found in John’s writings. Like God’s literal word which He has magnified above His name (Psalms 138:2), God highly exalted Jesus and has given Him the name above every name (Philippians. 2:9).

Psalms 33:6 By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, And by the breath of His mouth all their host.

This title also shows Jesus’ role in creation (John 1:1-3; Ephesians 3:9; Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 1:2; Revelation 3:14). That explains why He has the ultimate right to retake the earth at His 2nd Coming.

Revelation 19:14 And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses.

We know from Revelation 17:4 that this army includes believers (the called, chosen, and faithful). And we won’t be wearing battle fatigues, but fine linen. And brother Paul tells us that angels will also be included:

2 Thessalonians 1:7-10 ... when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, (8) dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. (9) These will pay the penalty of eternal destruction, away from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power, (10) when He comes to be glorified in His saints on that day, and to be marveled at among all who have believed--for our testimony to you was believed.

Most likely only believers will be on horseback, but Zechariah 1:8-11 does describe what appears to be angels on horses. And, as I mentioned before, it’s possible that the human element of the army will only include Church saints, because OT saints and Tribulation saints will not have been resurrected yet.

Revelation 19:15-16 From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down 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. (16) And on His robe and on His thigh He has a

name written, "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."

If Jesus literally and physically kills His enemies at His Second Coming (verse 21), how is it that the sword is figurative—coming out of His mouth? It represents the sword of the Spirit, the word of God, His spoken will (Ephesians 6:17). He will speak and they will fall. The rebels are killed because they are judged by God's righteous word (Hebrews 4:12). They have violated its precepts and standards and their destruction has been prophesied. This is why Jesus destroys His enemies with His lips (Isaiah 11:4). His mouth is like a sharp sword (Isaiah 49:2). So, when Antichrist is destroyed, he is consumed "with the breath of [the Lord's] mouth" (2 Thessalonians 2:8). The written law is His word, so the weapon is said to come from His mouth.

They are actually killed twice by His word. First, the enemies of Christ are physically killed at His Second Coming (verse 21). This is the first death. Next, the enemies of Christ are judged by God's Word before the Great White Throne and cast into the Lake of Fire (Revelation 20:12). This is the second death.

The "rod of iron" speaks of how violent His reign will be at first, as He will begin by destroying His enemies (Psalm 110:1-2). This is a fulfillment of Daniel 2:44-45 and Daniel 7:13-14,27. But His reign will also be strong. Crime will not be tolerated. There will be no deception, no lies, no murder, no war. God's brand of righteousness will rule for a thousand years, and Jesus will finally receive the worship He deserves.

"treads the winepress" is speaking of the reaping of the earth we read about in chapter 14:

Revelation 14:18-20 Then another angel, the one who has power over fire, came out from the altar; and he called with a loud voice to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, "Put in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters from the vine of the earth, because her grapes are ripe." (19) So the angel swung his sickle to the earth and gathered the clusters from the vine of the earth, and threw them into the great wine press of the wrath of God. (20) And the wine press was trodden outside the city, and blood came out from the wine press, up to the horses' bridles, for a distance of two hundred miles.

Isaiah also speaks of this event, and this passage tells us that, even though He has armies with Him, Jesus appears to be doing the work of judgment Himself. Not one soldier in this heavenly army will get his clothes dirty or bloody:

Isaiah 63:1-6 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." (2) Why is Your apparel red, And Your garments like the one who treads in the wine press? (3) "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. (4) "For the day of vengeance was in My heart, And My year of redemption has come. (5) "I looked, and there was no one to help, And I was astonished and there was no one to uphold; So My own arm brought salvation to Me, And My wrath upheld Me. (6) "I trod down the peoples in My anger And made them drunk in My wrath, And I poured out their lifeblood on the earth."

So it looks like we will just be "along for the ride", so to speak, just observing the action. Jesus will be giving us great honor by bringing us along to share in His glory. I wonder how we will feel from that perspective? Will we be thrilled to see our Savior finally put an end to the evil on the earth and come into His kingdom? I'm sure we will. Will we be saddened to see the vast carnage of human beings destroyed? Very possibly. Or will the evil that these earth-dwellers have committed reach to such an extent that we will

have a feeling of grim satisfaction to see judgment carried out? It may be similar to when we hear of a mass murderer being executed. There is no sadness at such an event, the only sadness is for the victims of these evil people. It is just and necessary to destroy them.

Revelation 19:17-18 Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he cried out with a loud voice, saying to all the birds which fly in midheaven, "Come, assemble for the great supper of God, (18) so that you may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of commanders and the flesh of mighty men and the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them and the flesh of all men, both free men and slaves, and small and great."

Those who are slaughtered for this supper share in the curse of Deuteronomy 28:26. Jesus talked about this feast for birds in Matthew 24:27-28 and Luke 17:24-37. Normally, men were to offer up animals in sacrifice to God. Here, as when God judges Gog on the mountains of Israel, He reverses the normal roles and offers up men as a sacrifice to animals (Ezekiel 39:17-20).

Revelation 19:19 And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies assembled to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army.

The angel previously told John, "These [the Beast and the ten kings] will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them" (Revelation 17:14). This is the gathering which was instigated by the three unclean spirits like frogs "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" (Revelation 16:14). This is also the ultimate fulfillment of Psalm 2.

There may be hundreds of millions in the armies of the beast and the kings, possibly with the most advanced weapons the world has ever seen. But it won't be any help against the spoken Word of God that will obliterate them in an instant.

"We may wonder how rational men could be carried with one impulse into an attempt so daring and so absurd; but when people put the truth from them, and submit themselves to the Devil's lead, what is there of delusion and absurdity into which they are not liable to be carried?" Seiss

Revelation 19:20 And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone.

The false prophet is the guy we met back in chapter 13, who deceived the earth dwellers into worshiping the first Beast who was miraculously restored and to cause them to receive his mark and worship his image (Revelation 13:12-17).

These two are given special treatment. They are not killed immediately like everyone else that followed the beast, but become the first ones to be sent to hell, and the only ones who are thrown in alive. They don't even get to stand before God at the Great White Throne Judgment at the end of the Millennium. This could mean that they are given a higher degree of punishment and torment.

Today, no one is in the Lake of Fire (hell). The Lake of Fire becomes populated when:

1. The Beast and the False Prophet are cast alive into the Lake of Fire at the Second Coming of Christ (Revelation 19:20).
2. After the Second Coming, immediately before the Millennial Kingdom, the non-believing goats

among the nations are sent “into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels” (Matthew 25:41).

3. The devil is cast into the Lake of Fire at the end of the Millennial Kingdom (Revelation 20:10). His angels, having been imprisoned in the scorched regions of Babylon and Edom during the Millennial Kingdom, are probably also cast into the Lake of Fire at this time (Matthew 25:41).
4. After the Millennial Kingdom and the Great White Throne Judgment, the unsaved dead, who are not written in the Book of Life, are cast into the Lake of Fire (Revelation 20:15). These awake from the dust of the earth to everlasting contempt (Daniel 12:2).

The lake of fire burns with brimstone, but the occupants are never burned up. After a thousand years when Satan is thrown in there, the beast and the false prophet are still there. Everyone will exist for eternity, but for the unsaved it will be eternal death, not eternal life. The Lake of Fire causes everlasting torment. It is unquenchable (Matthew 3:12; 25:41, 46; Mark 9:43-46; 2 Thessalonians 1:9; 2 Peter 2:17; Jude 1:13; Revelation 14:11; 20:10).

Revelation 19:21 *And the rest were killed with the sword which came from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh.*

The rest of the armies gathered against Christ will be killed by Him as His coming. Their souls will go to Hades, where they will be tormented until the Great White Throne judgment at the end of the thousand years.

Many unbelieving Jews will die as well. Both Ezekiel and Zechariah are given a revelation that in the end times two thirds of Israel will be cut off and die with only one third remaining:

Zechariah 13:8-9 *"It will come about in all the land," Declares the LORD, "That two parts in it will be cut off and perish; But the third will be left in it. (9) "And I will bring the third part through the fire, Refine them as silver is refined, And test them as gold is tested. They will call on My name, And I will answer them; I will say, 'They are My people,' And they will say, 'The LORD is my God.'"*

That surviving third will recognize their Messiah and turn to Him at some point in the Tribulation. Most of the Jews who survive the Second Coming will be in the special place which God has prepared for them.

"The most graphic portrayal of Christ's second coming is found in Revelation 19:11-21. In this extended passage Jesus Christ is described as leading a procession of angels and saints or armies in heaven to claim the earth, destroy the armies of the world, and defeat the Antichrist[5.2.3] and False Prophet. This passage shows that Christ's return will be one that entails great physical destruction and many deaths. For those who are not Christ's own, it will be a terrifying and terrible event. For those of us who know Him as Savior, it will be a time of great joy, vindication, and anticipation. . . . Let us remember that for the believer this present life on Earth is the worst things will ever be for us. But, for the unbeliever, this present life will be the best they will ever experience." Thomas Ice