

KING of Kings and LORD of Lords

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[0 : 00] Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Let me hear you now.

Alright, alright, before a revival breaks out. Now the children are under three. Sorry. Take out your Bibles and turn with me to this mysterious, wonderful book of Revelation, chapter 19.

Come to the second half of chapter 19, which describes once again, but in more detail, the last battle.

We've had a description of the gathering for the last battle in chapter 16 of Revelation. As the sixth bowl was poured out, Euphrates was cleared up.

All the kings of the earth were gathered to a place called Armageddon. So we have the gathering there. Chapter 17, we were told of the gathering again of all the kings of the world to wage war against the Lamb.

[1 : 22] And yet the Lamb conquered them. So a reference to the last battle there. Now chapter 19, we get a portrayal of this battle from a heaven's perspective.

As the rider of the white horse comes. And then the kings gather. And the battle doesn't last very long.

We will get one more description of this final battle in chapter 20. It says that after the thousand years had ended, then Satan is released. He gathers all the kings of the world for this final battle. And once again, the battle ends quickly. So here we have one of the perspectives. There are several angles that Revelation portrays of this final battle.

I think we need to begin to see Revelation not as a chronological event, but as a sequence of visions that describe the same things from different perspectives.

[2 : 34] We'll see what we do with the thousand years next week. That is the most controversial passage in the New Testament. Not a problem.

Next week. Rick's words reminded me that this book of Revelation continues to show us that not all is as it seems.

In our world, we see confusion. We see unrest. We have battling opinions and spin doctors of news. We say, who can we trust? What is really going on? What Revelation reminds us is that, yes, we see certain things in our world today that portray a certain image.

And what Revelation shows us is God is in complete control behind the scenes. And there is a deeper darkness going on than what we see in our world as well.

[3 : 49] So, with that, let's come to Revelation. I want to read from verse 11 of chapter 19 to the end. And then we'll ask the Lord to give us light and then we'll dig into it.

So, if you're able, please stand as I read from Revelation chapter 19. Beginning of verse 11. John describes another vision. Then I saw heaven open.

And behold, remember, that's kind of a look, look, look, pay attention. A white horse. The one sitting on it is called faithful and true.

And in righteousness, he judges and makes war. His eyes are like a flame of fire. And on his head are many diadems.

And he has a name written that no one knows but himself. He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood.

[4 : 56] And the name by which he is called is the word of God. And the armies of heaven arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses.

From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. And he will rule them with a rod of iron.

He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. On his robe, even on his thigh, he has a name written, King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

Then I saw an angel standing in the sun. And with a loud voice, he called to all the birds that fly directly overhead.

Come, gather for the great supper of God to eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and their riders, the flesh of all men, both free and slave, both small and great.

[6 : 21] And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth with their armies gathered to make war against him who was sitting on the horse and against his army.

And the beast was captured and with it, the false prophet who in its presence had done the signs by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped its image.

these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur. And the rest were slain by the sword that came from the mouth of him who was sitting on the horse.

And all the birds were gorged with their flesh. so it reads. Let us pray. Father, we pray as always that you would grant us eyes to see and ears to hear and particularly hearts receptive to your truth. We have a lot of images to look at today. Father, help us to see the big picture. Help us to see what you are communicating by these pictures. help us most of all to see you to see this king of kings this lord of lords who makes all things right.

[8 : 00] This we pray in Christ's name. Amen. Please be seated. So do you remember as I was reading study this passage and thinking about the concepts involved, I remembered the story in the second chapter of Daniel.

The king of Babylon at that time, the king of kings, the most powerful man on earth, was king of Babylon and he had a dream.

Remember that? Remember he had a dream and Daniel is the interpreter of dreams. It's interesting because it overlaps with our text and has its ultimate fulfillment as Daniel both tells what the dream is and interprets the dream.

It overflows to our text. It actually is ultimately fulfilled in our text as the real king of kings who comes. So let me briefly tell you this story.

So King Nebuchadnezzar had dreams and these dreams troubled him and he could not sleep. So he summons all his magicians, all his enchanters, all his sorcerers and he asks them to tell him his dream and the interpretation.

[9 : 30] and they say okay, just tell us the dream and we'll tell you the interpretation. No, no, no, no. You tell me the dream and the interpretation. This is the king.

We can't. Nobody can do that. No man on earth can do that. So in comes Daniel. Daniel, of course, served in the king's court and heard about this and he meets with his friends, Shadrach, Meshach, and under the bed we go.

These three friends of Daniel, sorry, that's the only way I can remember them, and they get their counsel and they pray and God reveals the dream to Daniel.

So Daniel comes and the king says to him, are you able to reveal the dream and the interpretation? And Daniel says, no man of earth can do that, but there is a God of heaven who sets up kings and removes kings, who reveals hidden things and he has made known the matter of the king's business.

So Daniel then begins to reveal the dream. He says, your dream was you saw a great image. It was mighty, it was exceedingly bright, and it was terrifying to you.

[10 : 54] He said, this image had a head of gold, and then a chest of silver, a middle and thighs of bronze, legs of iron, and feet of iron mixed with clay.

And Daniel said, as you looked, oh king, there was a stone cut by no human hand that struck the image on the feet and broke it in pieces, and then as a result toppled the whole image.

stone. And the rest of the image became like chaff and was blown away, never to be seen again. The stone that struck the image became a great mountain in your dream, and this great mountain filled the whole earth.

That was the dream that you saw. Then Daniel said, here comes the interpretation from God. you, O king, king of kings, God has given a kingdom, a power, a might, a glory.

God has given you to rule over all men, all beasts, all birds. You, O king of kings, are the head of gold in the image.

[12:13] Following you, the next kingdoms that come after you are inferior to you, but they too will rule all the earth, and we come to understand that Babylon being the head of gold, the next kingdom would have been Persia, after that would have been Greece, after that would be Rome.

Spoken hundreds of years before those kingdoms came. So he said, then the fourth kingdom, during the kingdom of that iron mixed with clay, God will set up a kingdom.

During that Roman empire, God will set up a kingdom that will be internal, eternal, will break to pieces all the other kingdoms of the earth.

There is your interpretation, O king, King Nebuchadnezzar's response to Daniel, God is God of gods, and Lord over kings.

He is the revealer of mysteries, for you have been able to reveal this mystery. history. And Nebuchadnezzar was called, by Daniel himself, the king of kings.

[13:46] He was it. Every king following him would be inferior to him, though they would be gifted with the rule of the world. What Nebuchadnezzar found out about himself was not only was he not really king of kings, he was something much less.

And that everything that he had was a gift from God above, which God revealed to him through this dream.

We come to Revelation 19, and now we have revealed the real king of kings, the real Lord of lords, someone much greater and eternal than Nebuchadnezzar or Alexander or Caesar or anyone else to follow.

So Revelation 19 portrays the return of Christ, the return of the king. Jesus' return fulfills many Old Testament promises, including Isaiah 11 that says, with righteousness he shall judge the poor and decide with equity for the meek of the earth.

He shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth. With the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. Many of these phrases from the Old Testament show up now in Revelation 19.

[15:19] The rod of iron, the treading of the wine press, the ruling of the nations. Revelation 19, we're seeing the fulfillment of all the promises of the return of the Lord.

Jesus spoke of his own return in Matthew 16. He said the son will come in his glory to repay everyone for their deeds. In John 14, he told the disciples in the upper room, I go away to prepare a place for you.

I will come back for you and take you to where I am. Paul talked about Christ's return as an expectation. He wrote it over and over again.

1 Thessalonians 3, we expect the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, so therefore we live in such a way. James chapter 5 describes the coming of the Lord is at hand.

1 John 2, John says to his readers, abide in him so that when he appears, which will be soon, we will not be put to shame.

[16:27] the coming of the Lord motivates how we act today. We live 2,000 years later. It's hard, isn't it, to think of the coming as soon?

But a day of the Lord is like 1,000 years. It's only been a couple days. If the disciples and Jesus in the first century said the time is short, that it's imminent.

In fact, in Revelation, Jesus said, I am coming with the clouds. Hold fast until I come. I am coming soon. Chapter 16, I'm coming as a thief. In other words, I will come in an unexpected way.

There's nothing holding Jesus back from coming today. We're not waiting for something to be fulfilled. Jesus said in Matthew 24, my coming will be like the days of Noah.

They will be eating and drinking and thinking everything's fine and normal, and then I come. I will come like a thief. It will be unexpected. And the book of Revelation closes with three times Jesus says, I am coming soon.

[17:47] I am coming soon. I am coming soon. So we have the promise. There's lots of promises. Old Testament from Jesus, from the apostles, that the Lord is coming again.

All these promises, now we come to Revelation 19, which gives us the portrayal of his actual coming, of his actual return.

Before, we've heard about this gathering for the war as if it's earthly, thing that comes about, the gathering of the kings, the gathering. Revelation 19 gives us the picture now from heaven.

I saw heaven opened and here's the rider on a white horse. Now, heaven decides when this happens. When heaven is open, we're given a picture of a new vision.

That's chapter 4 began that way, heaven was open, I saw the throne, everything around the throne, etc. chapter 15, heaven was opened, chapter 11, heaven was opened, then we come to this new vision of Revelation 12 of Christ at the beginning.

[19 : 04] So, this is showing us it's a whole new series of visions, in other words, coming with this, I saw heaven opened. So, heaven is opening and giving us this revelation. So, here is Christ returning.

From here to the end, I think, of chapter 20, shows us kind of a series of the end, different pictures of the end, again. So, here's the portrayal, verses 11 through 21, the return of the king.

What we find here are two actual sketches. So, verse 11 starts with, I saw, so that tells us he witnessed a vision, he saw something, right?

So, that scene goes from verse 11 through 16. What he sees is this picture of the king, the king of kings. He has several names, he has a description, he sees who the king is.

He sees the supremacy of the king. So, verses 11 to 16 focuses on who he is. Then, in verse 17, we see he has a second vision. I saw, then, an angel that calls the birds, and then, again, in verse 19, I saw the beast.

[20 : 16] So, he has two more visions in this same picture, in this same overall vision. So, in verses 17 to 21, whereas we saw who he is in the first verses, now in 17 to 21, we see what he does.

Okay, so that's kind of a change there that we see who he is and now here comes the battle. Here he is. Okay, so that's how we're breaking it down. So, let's look at the first section, his supremacy.

Who is this king of kings? What is revealed in verses 11 to 16? What's revealed is Christ, this is certainly Christ, fulfills his promises as conqueror king and judge.

He is the conqueror. Who he is, is the rider on the white horse, white horse symbol of conqueror, victor, overcomer.

He fulfills all those promises that he will be the conqueror, that the Messiah will be the rod of iron, slaying with his mouth, king and judge.

[21 : 38] He's fulfilling all those images before that were prophesied. So I want you to notice some things here in these verses. Verse 11, he's given a designation.

Actually, verses 11 through 16, he's given several designations, four names that he's called. He's got many, many names. Remember, what does a name do?

A name describes the character, the quality of a person, describes the nature. A name is the reputation of something. We think of things that we buy.

We buy a Volkswagen because it has a reputation, well, it used to have a reputation for being a little get-around thing. Rolls-Royce has a different reputation than a Volkswagen.

They're different. They have a different reputation. Name is a reputation. Name is what you stand for. Here he has several names, several designations.

[22 : 39] He is called, verse 11, he's called faithful and true. That's his character. He is faithful. He is trustworthy. He is true. He speaks truth.

His witness, his testimony is true and right and valid. Verse 12, now this is curious, verse 12, he has another name midway through verse 12.

He has a name that has been written that no one knows but himself. Interesting. What does that mean? So he has a name that's not yet been revealed.

Or, more accurately, a name that has not been discerned. So it says no one knows, no one has come to understand. No one has come to discern it.

No one has come to see it in its fullness. Well, that makes sense. Jesus, when he came, revealed certain things about himself. And yet there was still something mysterious about him.

[23 : 39] There's still something bigger about him. And so, remember in chapter 1 of John, when John sees the vision of Christ the first time, right? The blazing eyes, the glowing face, and all of this, the sword that comes out of his mouth.

Remember, John sees this vision and what does he do? He says, I fell at his feet, dead man. I'm done. And then this figure comes and touches him on the shoulder and says, hey, John, it's me.

He doesn't say it's just me. It's me. You know, alpha, omega, beginning, end, one who died for you and rose again and lives for, you know.

oh, hadn't seen you like that before. New revelation to John. Jesus, oh, much bigger.

So I think that's part of the sense. He has a name that nobody's got yet. There's something more to him that we have not yet fully discerned. And that makes sense.

[24 : 50] And in his return, he's going to show something about himself we haven't seen before. We know has been true in essence, but in its fullness, we've never seen fully how he judges, how his eyes pierce, how his word, his tongue can slay.

Okay, so then in verse 13, we see he has another name. He's also called the word of God. Oh, we remember that. John knows all about that. Remember how the gospel of John begins? In the beginning was the word.

And the word was with God and the word was God. And then he skipped down into verse 14. And the word became flesh and dwelt tabernacled among us.

And we beheld, came to understand, his glory full of grace and truth. So he revealed, the word became revealed, the word became flesh.

So he's the word of God. He's the word of God. That's significant. And that goes with, you know, he has a sword that comes out of his mouth. And then in verse 16, he has an ultimate name, verse 16.

[26 : 08] He's also got a name written on his robe and his thigh. Now, it could actually read, be translated, it has a word on his, or he has a name written on his robe and as he sits on the horse, the robe goes over his eye.

So it could be not that it's written twice, but that it's written on his robe, indeed, as it flows over his thigh. Could be not a big deal, but there's a picture. But the name is what's important.

The name is king, all caps of kings, all lowercase, lord, all caps of lowercase lords, ruler of all, sovereign ruler, controller of all.

Okay, so that's his designation. Notice the names kind of flow through this text. And then he describes his appearance. Verse 11, he comes on a white horse, he's a rider of a white horse.

Now, we saw a white horse way back in chapter 6. Remember, the seals are broken, right? First there was a white horse, and then there was a red horse, and then there was a black horse, and then there's the pale rider, right?

[27 : 22] So, which sounds like a movie. Oh, yes, it is. I know it is. Good one, too. Following him is hell, which is a mistranslation of the word.

anyway, so the white rider, what was the white rider in chapter 6? He was a conqueror.

He was a conqueror, came to conquer. White is the symbol of a victor. eyes when they conquered.

So when Caesar conquered, he rode back into Rome on a white horse.

He didn't ride into battle with a white horse. He rode in victory on a white horse. Because the battle horses are red and black and pale.

so that's the idea of the white horse. He's a victor. He's a conqueror. Then he has eyes, just like in chapter 1, the eyes of fire, right?

[28 : 25] The eyes that are penetrating, the eyes that pierce through anything that none can hide from. And he has many diadems. Contrast with the dragon who has seven, contrast with the beast who has seven or ten horns.

This figure in the white horse has many. He's unlimited. It's not just represented. He has many diadems.

Okay? And then he has a robe dipped in blood, verse 13. Now, my first thought as you see the blood, because all through Revelation we see blood related to Jesus.

It's of his own blood, his death. And that's what I thought this was. And then if you read further, that's not how he's coming this time. He's not coming as a savior.

He's coming as a warrior and a judge. He's going to tread the wine press, right, of the grapes of wrath. And we saw that image before, the grapes of wrath, in chapter 14, the vision of a harvest, right, as they're tread, they become wine, and the wine becomes picture of blood.

[29 : 40] So likely more his robe is dipped in red because he has been treading the grapes, and it's splashing up and dipping in that juice.

So picture blood. He's a warrior, judge. And then verse 14 talks about his armies, his armies. Now, we would think, well, that must be the host of heaven.

Well, when it's angelic armies, it's usually said the host, angelic host. Here it's called a regular army. And how they're described in verse 14 is they're arrayed, how?

In fine linen, white and pure, following on white horses. Well, that's the exact description back in verse 8 of chapter 19 that describes who the saints are.

The saints are, remember, given clothing that is bright and pure, linen, which is representative of their deeds, their righteous deeds.

[30 : 42] So I think the army is the believers. And interesting. Now, this is a battle, right? Would you dress in white linen for a battle?

I didn't catch this. Dylan brought this up in class this morning. I didn't think about this. You go into battle, you'd be wearing armor. You'd have weapons. They're just riding along with white, pure, white horses.

Everything's white. Not a real sensible way to go into a bloody battle. But, not that kind of battle. Interesting.

They're not armed, they're not weaponized. The only one with the weapon is the rider, the white horse, that has a sword not in his hand, but in his mouth, which is significant.

Okay? Now, we also see in verse 15 and 16, he's the king of kings, right? So he has dominion.

[31 : 49] Look at how it describes him in verse 15. From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations and he will rule them with a rod of iron.

He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. Three different images, a sword from his mouth, a rod of iron, apparently, doesn't say in his hand, but apparently rod, staff, like a shepherd has a rod, staff.

Right? The word can also mean scepter because from the hand of Judah, right, the tribe of Judah, the scepter, the staff, the rod will never depart, so it's the staff.

Same wording in Psalm 2, the staff, the rod, the scepter. So interesting. So he strikes with the sword from his mouth. Now we've seen this all through Revelation.

the phrase from the mouth, right? So the dragon, what does he do? How does he attack the church? With his mouth.

[32 : 58] He deceives, just like from the beginning. He says to Eve, has God really said? Right? It's words.

The plagues that talk about from the mouth of the dragon come the frogs that deceive, right? From the mouth of the horses come the such and such.

The mouth. The words. So Jesus' sword, or excuse me, gave it away, it's Jesus.

How surprised! You didn't see how it come in, did you? No, he just didn't know the clue. So the sword from his mouth, the words, the judgment, the verdict.

Hmm. And then the rod of iron is the scepter with which he rules, more likely judges. Because what, how does he judge?

[34 : 06] How does he rule? the end of verse 16, he's treading the winepress of the fury, the wrath of God. That's a judgment. That is a judgment.

It's a picture of judgment. And then he's called king of kings, lord of lords. He's overall, he is supreme. So I want you to listen to the words from Psalm 2 that echo so much of what we have here.

The phrase king and the ruling with a rod of iron, the words of nations and rulers and kings all come from Psalm 2.

Psalm 2 is a messianic psalm. No one disputes that, Jew or Gentile. It is a messianic psalm. It is clearly speaking of God's anointed, which is the word for Messiah.

It speaks of the Messiah. So I want you to listen to the words of Psalm 2. And this is Christ fulfilling all these promises about the Messiah who will be a conqueror.

[35 : 16] So Psalm 2 begins this way. Why do the nations rage? And the peoples plot in vain. The kings of the earth set themselves and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against his anointed, literally his Messiah.

Messiah means anointed one. Christ means anointed one. The king, right? King. Saying, they've set themselves against the Lord and against his anointed, saying, let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us.

Rebellion. He who sits in the heavens laughs. Really? You can try that. the Lord holds them in derision.

Then he will speak to them in his wrath and terrify them in his fury, saying, as for me, I have set my king in Zion, my holy hill.

I will tell of the decree. The Lord said to me, now new speaker, the Lord said to me, you are my son. Today I have begotten you. Sound familiar?

[36 : 39] Son of God, begotten one. Ask of me and I will make the nations your heritage and the ends of the earth your possession.

You shall break them with a rod of iron and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Now therefore, O kings, be wise, be warned, O rulers of the earth.

Serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling, kiss or bow down, worship the son, lest he be angry and you perish in the way for his wrath is quickly kindled.

Good news, blessed are those who take refuge in him. There is escape, there is safety.

Psalm 2 prophesies all of, I think not just the last coming of Christ, but I think it prophesies about all of his ministry. He's always been the begotten son.

[37 : 53] He's always been God's king with a rod of iron. Remember on earth how with a word he conquered over and over and over again.

Remember as he preached that, remember in Mark, we went through the gospel of Mark, remember that as he preached often demons would, or demonized people would speak up and interrupt him. And what does Jesus do?

with a word, with a word he silences or casts them out, conquers them, slays them, right?

With a word. With a word he silenced Sadducees and Pharisees. He silenced them with his answers.

They had no more to say. They were stunned at his answers. Oh, one time when they came to capture him in the garden with 600 Roman trained soldiers to arrest him in the garden, they, Jesus says, who do you look for?

[39 : 04] We look for this Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus said what? I am, and what does John say happen?

The entire squad fell to the ground. he just spoke I am.

Maybe a little glory slipped out, a little power. He has the power to vanquish with a word, even in his ministry. What did he do time after time?

He spoke to the blind, they see. He tells the lame to stand and walk, they stand and walk. He calls out to Lazarus in the tomb, four days dead and says, Lazarus, come.

And he comes. The power of the word, just like a creation. In the beginning, God said, let there be light.

[40 : 10] And? Oh, okay, I gotta go, no, and there was. There was. Jesus is the word of God.

He is the execution. He is the putting into motion of God's word. word. So at the final battle, right, it will be the word of his mouth that will silence all, will vanquish all, will cast down all rebels.

We see his supremacy here in the first things, by his name, by his description, by his dominion. It fulfills all that the promises said he would be a conqueror.

So now in the second part, then in verses 17 to 21, we see now the act, now it unfolds. We have the description of the rider on the white horse, now we have what he does, his actual sovereignty.

Now he's called king of kings and now he will prove it. So it comes in three parts. His sovereignty, I might summarize it this way, whereas before Christ is fulfilling his promise as a conqueror, now he does something, now he ends, now he ends, he finishes the forces of false religion with his word.

[41 : 39] He brings to an end. He doesn't just vanquish them, he ends them. He slays them, he condemns them with his word.

And I say the forces of false religion because that's the focus of what's described by his enemies. The enemies are the beast and the false prophet and the kings of the earth and their armies, but what takes the focus there in the description is this false prophet who did the signs and deceived those, right?

He gets the focus. So it's false religion, you know, the beast works through the false prophet, false prophet, and remember these are not two people.

Remember we're talking about the beast is not just one person. The beast we saw as representative in chapter 17 as it explained who the beast was and all the heads, right, is representative of all world rulers in rebellion against God.

And then the false prophet is the one speaking. It's not one person, but a group of people perhaps designated as the ten kings in one reference, but they are the ones speaking for and deceiving.

[43 : 07] They're deceiving. Deceiving people to what? To commit an immorality, a picture of idolatry, and to worship an image, false worship. Again, idolatry.

So all false religion is false. Why? It calls people, seduces people to worship anything besides the God.

That's idolatry. We make an idol for ourselves, right? We bow down and worship it. It can be an idea. It can be a person. It can be anything that we put ahead of God.

And so world rulers work through a system. Maybe it's an ideology of worshiping other things. We saw Babylon as the picture of the harlot.

It's a symbol of that worldliness, that idolatry, that everyone, that's what our soul wants, right? We want the quick things now. We want the good things now.

[44 : 13] We don't want just what we need. We want more than what we need. So we saw that list in 17 of all these extravagances, right?

Not just food, but delicacies. Ooh. Your, uh, what's my favorite ice cream? Dulce de leche.

Oh, caramel ice cream. See, that can't be a daily thing. It just can't. Even a weakness.

Okay. Sorry. My weakness. Sorry. Okay. So, he ends the forces of false religion with his word.

Three parts here. The birds, and there's the beast who gathers and is captured, and then we see the birds again. So it begins and ends with the birds.

[45 : 13] The birds, the birds, the birds. Why the birds? What do birds have to do with any of this? So 17, I saw an angel, a very impressive angel, by the way, standing in the sun with a loud voice.

He called to all the birds that fly directly overhead. In other words, the birds that circle in mid heaven, the birds that hover around. What kind of birds are those?

Vultures, predators, right? Buzzards. Jesus said where the vultures gather. I mean, what does that sign when you see that?

The birds, there's death or imminent death. They're waiting. That's the picture of the birds. The birds that circle, the vultures, the predatory birds, not just any bird, not the dev's, not the lovebirds, but predatory, circling, ready to gorge kind of birds.

The hawks, the eagles, the air force falcons, the vultures, sorry, predatory birds. It's a picture, it's a picture of the end of the battle.

[46 : 30] Like you say, when you see that picture, so he's giving us a picture. What I saw was this. Oh, what does that usually mean? It means death is soon, or death has happened.

It means it's over for someone here. They're circling somebody who's done. That's the picture.

Picture. When the king has spoken, when he speaks at the end, that's when the birds will come back.

All who rebel, great or small, free or slave, will be vanquished, ended. So the war begins.

Then we're told, verse 19, how the war begins. He sees the beast and the kings of the earth with their armies gathered to make war against him who's sitting on the horse against his army.

Now, again, we've seen that phrase. We saw it in chapter 16. The kings gather at the place called Armageddon. They're gathering for the final battle. They gather to battle against the Lord or against the Christ or against the great, the holy city.

[47 : 47] Right? So chapter 17, again, they gather to war, battle against the lamb. chapter 17, 14. But the lamb conquers them.

We see it here in 19. We're going to see it again in chapter 20 that after the thousand years, once again, we see that now the dragon is released, whereas before it's the beast who gathers, now it's the dragon in chapter 20 who gathers the people of the earth, the kings.

Now it's referred to as Gog and Magog. We'll get into that later. But the same thing, gather for the war. Now if we read Revelation, does that mean, okay, there's a war in 16, there's a war in 17, there's a war in 19, there's a war in 20, are there four different wars?

Are there four different final battles? Or are they four different views of the same ending? So we'll look at that next week.

Because controversial attacks. A thousand years. That blows my mind. I used to have it all figured out.

[49 : 02] Now I've got it all figured out. Yeah, right, yeah. 30 years later, we're dealing with what's likely.

So the beast comes, so verse 19, he sees the beast and the kings of the earth with their armies gathered to make war against the one sitting on the horse and his army.

So here comes the gathering for war. Then we see verse 20, wait a minute, what happened? The beast was captured. Wait, what happened? How did that happen?

Where's the engagement? the beast was captured. How's it? Worst word. Beast was captured and with it the false prophet, here comes the focus, a false prophet who in its presence had done the

signs by which he deceived, who?

Those who received the mark of the beast and those who worship its image. In other words, everyone involved in idolatry, false religion of any kind. These two, not two people, these two, what represents, what the beast represents, what the false prophet represents, these two ideas, these two representatives are cast alive into the lake of fire.

[50 : 37] It's the first time we hear about the lake of fire. We're going to hear three or four more times about the lake of fire, so we'll pick up on that later. But it is called, the lake of fire is called in chapter 20, the second death.

So they're cast into the lake of fire after their physical body has died. It's a second death, death meaning separation. A physical death is a separation of our soul from flesh.

Right? Adam died in the day in which he took fruit, right? In the day that you eat of it, God warned Genesis 3, you shall surely die.

Adam and Eve ate of the fruit and they did not physically die that day. But something radical changed. There was a separation between them and God.

Okay, so death, that's the main idea, death. death. There will be another severing, in other words, in a second death, another separating from God and blessedness.

[51 : 50] So the focus is on this false religion deceived into idolatry. Okay, then not so much of a battle, not so much. Verse 21, and then the rest. The rest were slain by the sword that came from the mouth of him who was sitting on the horse and all the birds were gorged with their flesh.

So the birds are announced at the beginning of this picture, right? Get ready. Why are they called to gather? Because when the battle happens, it's not going to take very long.

This is not a drawn-out battle of weeks and months, even hours. Gather. Ready? Because it's going to be quick.

And that's the picture of the birds. It'll be fast. And then the rest are slain by the sword from his mouth. Again, from his mouth. Not a sword in his hands.

Not a battle sword. But a legal sword. A word. He's conquered or slain or executed or judged by the word of Christ.

[53 : 03] This is not so much a physical battle. This is a legal battle. This is a judgment scene. We're given a description that we get as, okay, it is a battle, but I don't think it's likely to understand the book of Revelation as a literal Jesus riding on a white horse, us riding on white horses, and then a literal sword coming out of his mouth to start, right, getting the imagery here.

This is an end. This is a picture of how it ends. It's by his word, just like all through his ministry, it is by what he says things happen.

Creation, let there be light, there's light. Jesus, let there be ears to hear, you hear. Lazarus, raise, he raises. At the end, come with me, or go into the fire.

That simple. That's more exciting when John puts all the picture together. I want you to notice the emphasis of how Christ will judge at the end.

Jesus himself tells this, describes this scene of the final judgment. This comes from Matthew 25. Jesus says, and notice how he emphasized this, when the Son of Man comes in his glory, okay, when he comes back, and all the angels with him, then, so when he comes, then he will sit on his glorious throne.

[54 : 46] No description of battle here, but a throne. and before him will be gathered. There's that word, the gather, gathering of all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats.

by the way, the word in Revelation 19, 15, that says he will rule them with a rod of iron, the word is shepherd them with a rod of iron.

Psalms 2, the same thing. He will shepherd them with a rod, because shepherds have a rod. They have a staff. he will separate.

Interesting, Jesus picking up on this language. So he will separate the sheep from the goats. That's judgment, by the way. You make a separation.

It just means you make a decision. You separate. Okay? This is how he's going to do it. He will place the sheep on the right, and he put the goats on the left. Then the king will what?

[56 : 08] say. He will say a word to them on the right. He will say to them what? Come, you who are blessed by my father, inherit the kingdom that has been prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

Wow. He will say. Sword of his mouth. He will say. Come, inherit. Why? Why do they get to inherit it?

Because I was hungry, and you gave me food. I was thirsty, and you gave me drink. I was a stranger, and you welcomed me. I was naked, and you clothed me. I was sick, and you visited me. I was in prison, and you came to me. And the righteous, confused, will answer him, say, Lord, when did we see you hungry, and feed you, or you thirsty, and give you drink, and when did we see you a stranger, and welcome you, or naked, and clothe you?

When did we see you sick, or in prison, and visit you? We don't remember that. And the king, notice Jesus calling himself king, too.

[57 : 28] He called himself the son comes, and now he's calling himself the king. The king will say, the king will answer them, oh, oh, when did you do that? I truly say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.

Who's he talking about? Who are the least of these my brothers? He's standing among the sheep, and he's saying, when you did it to the least of one of these my brothers, these sheep, these followers, these, now we call them the church.

How you treat the church, not the institution, how you treat the brethren of Christ is what you're judged for.

Why do we get to come in and inherit the kingdom? Because of how you treated me, by which I mean my body on earth.

Right? What about the other ones? So then he's going to say to those on his left, again, he's saying, not slaying with the sword, he is saying something to them.

[58 : 53] He says to those on his left, what? Depart from me, not blessed of my father, but cursed. not into the kingdom that has been prepared for you, but into the eternal fire that's been prepared for the devil and his angels.

And then he gives the opposite answer. Why? Because when I was hungry, you didn't feed me. When I was thirsty, you didn't give me a drink. When I was in prison, you didn't visit me. When did we not do that to you, Jesus? When you didn't do it to the least of these, my brothers. How you treat Christ's church, how you treat Christians, the sheep, believers, determines your destiny.

Why? Isn't it if I believe in Jesus? Well, if you believe in Jesus, what are you going to do? You're going to gather with the sheep and you're going to love the sheep.

If you rebel against Jesus, what are you going to do? You're going to hate the church. Oh, you might appreciate it here and there. You might attend once in a while. now. But this dawned on me.

[60 : 22] We are in a day that I believe God is testing the church.

And maybe he's separating. Maybe he's pruning. Maybe he's cleansing the church. church. Because we're in a time when it's easy to say, I can't come.

Or I won't. This is bothering me as a pastor. Now, I'm not talking about people that physically can't come. I'm not talking about that.

I'm not talking about risking your health. I'm not talking about that. There are plenty of people that could come that have stopped. I'm not talking about judging them.

It just bothers me. What's going on? It's not just our church. It's across the board. I talk to other pastors. We're worried.

[61 : 22] But is God, I mean, because Christ is sitting on the throne, right? My king's on his throne. He knows what he's doing. Is he bringing about this time to purge the church?

Purify the church? Because ultimately what it comes down to is how do I treat Christ's body? That's about how do I treat Christ, because how is Christ represented right now? By his body. We're his body. We're his representatives. We're him. God, everyone will be judged on the basis of how they respond to Christ.

In other words, his church. That's where I went with this.

Let me just meddle with you just for a moment, okay? Just a moment. Just a moment. So here's his word to the sheep on the right, to the goats on the left. What will be his word to you? I got to listen to this too.

[62 : 34] What's his word? Is his word, come blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you? Or well done.

will his word be, depart from me. I never knew you.

Rick always talks about the scariest version of the Bible is that one Matthew 7, Jesus says, you know, you did all these things for me, but I never knew you. I never knew you. You're busy, but I never knew you. We can do that as believers. We can get real busy. We can do lots of good things. We can do church things. We can, but am I, am I walking with Jesus? Am I spending time with him? [63 : 42] I'm the only reason I do all the other things. is because of him. Not because I get to pat myself on the back.

I get to feel good. I get to, I mean, there's other motives, but the real reason I do what I do, I sacrifice the time I go and I visit or I go and do whatever.

The reason I forgive and love and bear with others is why? Because it earns me brownie points. because it pleases him.

Because that's what he did. How can I do any less? So what's the difference between hearing the one who's come, inherit the kingdom, and the depart?

What's the difference? Well, his sheep, remember, it's his sheep that he's talking to. his sheep know his voice. They don't just hear it, they know it. They don't trust another voice, they hear his voice, they know what his voice sounds like.

[64 : 48] They know the words that come from his mouth, they know what's truth and what's not truth. They hear his voice and they follow him. Right? Why do they do that?

Because they have to? No. No, those are the ones that he says that other word to. The ones that did it because they had to are the ones that he says, I don't even know you.

It's the ones that Jesus has spoken to their heart. That word of his mouth has come to them.

Remember, we quote often, faith comes from what?

Hearing. How do I get faith? Don't I just believe? No. Faith is a gift. Faith comes from hearing.

Hearing what? The word of Christ.

Romans 10. The word about Christ. The word of the gospel. The word, I think it means word from Christ. Because I'm deaf and suddenly I hear.

[65 : 58] I'm blind and suddenly I see. Right? I'm dead and suddenly I want to obey him.

I want to please. That's how I'm transformed. It's not me. Like Jesus said to Peter, you didn't figure that out, buddy. Good word, but you didn't.

That was a gift. Peter, oh, I know it all now. Okay, now get behind me Satan. That's me.

The other's the gift. Faith comes from hearing. It's the word of God that comes specifically to me as I hear the gospel and the Holy Spirit says, now, I depend on his word to me.

I can't make that happen. But it is absolutely biblical for me to keep asking for it. Not only for me, but for my daughter and for my friend and for my father, my brother, my...

[67 : 17] You have a list, don't you? Yeah. And I believe if he's put that prayer in our heart, he's going to answer it.

I may not get to see the answer, but he's going to answer it. Because he put that on my heart. I'm going to keep... All right. That's a different sermon. Have you been transformed by his word?

Final word here. Have you been transformed by his word? How do you know? You know by how you treat the body of Christ. That's how you know. It's not about just me and Jesus.

I've heard that a lot. Especially by people who leave the church. just me and Jesus. No, it's not. No, no, no, no, no. I know what you mean, but yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

No, that's not how it shows itself. We are lights. We are salt. We are witnesses. It's not a private issue.

[68 : 19] All right. We're supposed to stop sooner. Let's pray. Father, we thank you for your word. Thank you for this incredible picture of who Jesus is.

He is so much bigger, so much grander, so much more impressive and sovereign and supreme than we can know at this time.

But we do believe, Lord, that as you show through this text, that he will come in a way that no one will debate who he is. No one will question.

So, Father, we pray that we will hear your word. We pray that your word will take root in us and change us.

This we pray in Christ's name. Amen.