

## **88. The Coming of the King**

### **With what marvelous spectacle does the final series of prophetic visions begin?**

"And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True; in righteousness does He judge and make war." Revelation 19: 11.

With this scene begins the final series of visions which portray chronologically the dramatic events connected with the return of Christ, the millennium, and the establishment of the everlasting kingdom of God.

First, John is shown the glorious spectacle of the coming of the divine King. During His earthly life, Jesus came "lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass" (Zechariah 9: 9), in order to reveal the depths of His humiliation on man's behalf. Now he appears as a Warrior upon a war-horse. In "majesty" He rides "prosperously" forth (Psalm 45: 4) to meet and triumph over the rebel kings of earth.

That it is a white horse indicates the dignity of the Rider and the righteousness of His cause. The names by which the divine Rider is designated are also peculiarly appropriate, for He is about to prove Himself "faithful" to all His promises and "the" in the execution of the judgments He has decreed.

### **How striking was the appearance of the divine Rider?**

"His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns." Revelation 19:12. Fire is a symbol of purity and judgment, and both shine from the eyes of the conquering King as He speeds into the battle of the day of God.

In chapter fourteen, John saw upon the divine Reaper's head "a golden crown." Revelation 14:14. That was a crown of victory (stephanos), suggesting His triumph over Satan who had sowed tares in His field. Similar crowns are worn by the twenty-four elders who stand before the throne of God (Revelation 4:4,10), and will be given to all the "overcomers" in the day of final awards. (1 Corinthians 9:25; 2 Timothy 4:8; James 1:12; 1 Peter 5:4.)

A victor's crown would have been equally appropriate here upon the head of the conquering Christ, but instead John notes that He is wearing "diadems" or kingly crowns. It is possible to be a victor without being a king, but Jesus is both Conqueror and Kings of kings. Hence He wears "many diadems."

### **Besides the two names already mentioned, what secret name did Jesus also bear?**

"And He had a name written, that no man knew, but He himself." Revelation 19:12. We have been told that He is called "Faithful" and "True" and later He is described as the "Word of God" and "King of kings, and Lord of lords." But as to what this secret name is we have no certain clue. It will be remembered, however, that the saints are each to receive a "new name" which will be understood only by themselves. (Revelation 2:17) This, we suggested, will be the "surname" (Mark 3:16,17) which the Lord will give to each of His children, summing up their earthly experience. Perhaps, therefore, the secret name which Jesus bears will gather up all that He has experienced in accomplishing man's redemption. In eternity, if faithful, we may learn that wonderful name!

### **How was Jesus clad?**

"And He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood." Revelation 19:13. These blood-dyed garments provide a link between the now conquering King and the once suffering Savior, for it was on Calvary's cross that His garments were stained by His own blood.

### **For the accomplishment of the judgment now due, what proceeds from His mouth?**

"And out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should smite the nations: and He shall rule them with a rod of iron: and He treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God" Revelation 19:15

In Revelation 2:16 Jesus declared that He would fight against the unrepentant "with the sword of My mouth," and here He is seen about to do so.

### **By what name on His blood-stained vesture is the outcome of this last conflict with the forces of evil indicated?**

"And He bath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, King of kings, and Lord of lords." Revelation 19:16.

Long have "the kings of the earth set themselves," and the rulers taken "counsel together, against the Lord, and against His anointed." Psalm 2: 2. Hitherto they have been permitted to wield their power in the earth almost unchecked, but now their ill-used authority is to be wrested from them; their power is to be utterly taken away. "Yet have I set My King upon My holy hill of Zion," God says (Psalm 2: 6), and "the government" is henceforth to be "upon His shoulder." Isaiah 9: 6.

**By what final name is the identification of the divine Rider completed?**

"And His name is called The Word of God." Revelation 19:13.

If His vesture links the Rider with the Son of man, this name identifies Him with the Son of God. John opens his gospel with the declaration: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." John 1:1. This "eternal" Word became the "incarnate" Word for the purposes of human redemption. (John 1:14; 1 John 1:1.) Now John sees the "Word" coming again in glory to claim that which His sacrifice has so dearly bought.

**By whom is the conquering King followed?**

"And the armies which were in heaven followed Him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean!" Revelation 19:14.

Long ages ago, amid the increasing iniquity of the antediluvian world, the grand climax of the struggle between good and evil was revealed to that faithful prophet of God, Enoch. "Behold," he warned his sinful contemporaries, "the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints [lit. holy ones], to execute judgment upon all." Jude 14, 15. Centuries later, another Old Testament prophet, Joel, after naming the scene of the final conflict as "the valley of Jehoshaphat," cried: "Thither cause Thy mighty ones to come down, O Lord." Joel 3: 11.

The apostle Paul, among New Testament writers, depicts the same fateful day in these vivid terms: "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power." 2 Thessalonians 1: 7-9.

In this vision, John sees these "holy ones" and "mighty ones," appropriately dressed in "fine linen clean and white" and mounted upon white war-horses, following their Leader into battle.

**As John gazed in awe at the vision, who appeared upon the scene?**

"And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the heaven of the great God. That you may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great." Revelation 19:17, 18.

That the issue of the battle will not for a moment be in doubt is evident from the fact that even before the battle is joined the fowls of the air are called to assemble in anticipation of the grim feast.

**Whom did John see arrayed to oppose the Rider of the white horse and His angel armies?**

"And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him that sat on the horse, and against His army." Revelation 19:19.

In the seventeenth chapter, which is chiefly concerned with the nations comprising the kingdom of the beast, we saw that they would "make war with the Lamb!" Revelation 17: 14. Here we have a more comprehensive picture, for not only the kingdom of the "beast" but also the kings of the rest of the - earth with their armies are "gathered together to make war against Him that sat on the horse!"

**To what speedy end does the battle come?**

"And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone." Revelation 19: 20.

This is the first time that the "lake of fire" is mentioned. It is, therefore, appropriate to inquire how and where it will be prepared. When God destroyed the antediluvian world in the Flood, we are told that "the windows of heaven were opened and "the fountains of the great deep" were broken up. The waters thus came down from above and up from beneath, engulfing the lost world.

Peter, by inspiration, draws a parallel between the Flood and the destruction of the earth by fire (2 Peter 3:5-7), and it may be that there will be terrible correspondence in the manner in which the judgment will come. For the Scriptures seem to suggest that not only will fire rain down from God out of heaven, but that the fires deep in the bowels of the earth will break forth to form a vast lake of fire.

**By what will the destruction be completed?**

"And the remnant were slain with the sword of Him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of His mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh." Revelation 19:21.

Who this remnant can be presents a problem, for with the overthrow and absorption of the kingdom of the dragon, the systems of the beast and the false prophet really comprise the whole of humanity. Perhaps we are to understand that only the leaders of the kingdoms of the beast and of the false prophet are consigned to the lake of fire, leaving the remnant of their deluded followers to be dealt with in the subsequent judgment. This seems to be suggested by Jeremiah's vivid description of the fatal day. (Jeremiah 25: 31-31)

The closing words of the vision complete the fearful picture. Out of the darkened heavens the fowls of the air swoop down to gorge themselves upon the carcasses of the wicked, at the very time that in heaven the righteous are partaking of the marriage supper of the, Lamb!