

Lesson 32 Rev 19:11-21

Revelation 19:11-21 (NASB)

¹¹ 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.

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

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

¹⁵ 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."

¹⁷ 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."

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.

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.

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.

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M. The second coming of Christ ([19:11-21](#))

As John saw heaven open, he saw prophetically Christ's second coming and the events which will follow it. The second coming of Christ is a prominent doctrine in Scripture ([Pss. 2:1-9; 24:7-10; 96:10-13; 110; Isa. 9:6-7; Jer. 23:1-8; Ezek. 37:15-28; Dan. 2:44-45; 7:13-14; Hosea 3:4-5; Amos 9:11-15; Micah 4:7; Zech. 2:10-12; 12; 14:1-9; Matt. 19:28; 24:27-31; 25:6, 31-46; Mark 13:24-27; Luke 12:35-40; 17:24-37; 18:8; 21:25-28; Acts 1:10-11; 15:16-18; Rom. 11:25-27; 2 Thes. 2:8; 2 Peter 3:3-4; Jude 14-15; Rev. 1:7-8; 2:25-28; 16:15; 22:20](#)). So this is obviously a major event in the divine program.

Conservative interpreters of the Bible almost universally recognize this as a yet-future event, as indicated in orthodox creeds throughout the history of the church. Just as the first coming of Christ was literal and was fulfilled in history, so the second coming of Christ which is yet future will be fulfilled in the same literal manner.

Among conservative interpreters, however, the question has been raised whether the Rapture of the church, as revealed in such major passages as [1 Thessalonians 4:13-18](#) and [1 Corinthians](#)

[15:51-58](#), is fulfilled at the time of the second coming of Christ to the earth or, as pretribulationists hold, is fulfilled as a separate event seven years before His formal second coming to the earth.

It should be noted that none of the many details given in [Revelation 19:11-21](#) corresponds to the Rapture of the church. In Revelation Christ returns, but in none of the Rapture passages is He ever pictured as touching the earth, for the saints meet Him in the air ([1 Thes. 4:17](#)).

Most significant is the fact that in [Revelation 19-20](#) there is complete silence concerning any translation of living saints. In fact the implication of the passage is that saints who are on earth when Christ returns will remain on earth to enter the millennial kingdom in their natural bodies. If the Rapture were included in the second coming of Christ to the earth, one would expect to find reference to such a major event in [Revelation 19](#). But no such reference is to be found. For these and many other reasons [chapter 19](#) is a confirmation of the teaching that the Rapture of the church is a separate earlier event and that there is no translation of the living at the time of His second coming to the earth. (For further discussion see John F. Walvoord, *The Rapture Question*.)

1. THE REVELATION OF THE RIDER ON THE WHITE HORSE ([19:11-13](#))

[19:11-13](#). As John gazed into heaven, he saw Christ on a white horse. Though some have identified this rider with the rider in [6:2](#), the context is entirely different. In [6:2](#) the rider is the world ruler of the Great Tribulation, while here the rider is a ruler who obviously comes from heaven itself. The white horse is a sign of His coming triumph. It was customary for a triumphant Roman general to parade on the Via Sacra, a main thoroughfare of Rome, followed by evidences of His victory in the form of booty and captives (cf. [2 Cor. 2:14](#)). The white horse is thus a symbol of Christ's triumph over the forces of wickedness in the world, the details of which follow.

The horse's rider is called Faithful and True for, as John declared, With justice He judges and makes war. His piercing judgment of sin is indicated in the words, His eyes are like blazing fire (cf. [Rev. 1:14](#)), and His right to rule is evidenced by the many crowns He is wearing. Written on Him is a name that no one but He Himself knows, suggesting that Christ is the ineffable, indescribable One. But actual titles are given for Him. [Revelation 19:13](#) says, His name is the Word of God (cf. [John 1:1, 14](#); [1 John 1:1](#)), and [Revelation 19:16](#) states that the name of His robe and on His thigh is KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS (cf. [1 Tim. 6:15](#); [Rev. 17:14](#)). The rider obviously is Jesus Christ, returning to the earth in glory. That He is coming as Judge is further supported by the fact that He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood ([19:13](#); cf. [Isa. 63:2-3](#); [Rev. 14:20](#)).

2. THE COMING OF THE KING AND HIS ARMIES OF HEAVEN ([19:14-16](#))

[19:14-16](#). The drama of the scene is further enhanced by the multitude of the armies of heaven described as riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean (cf. [v. 8](#)). In Christ's mouth was a sharp sword (cf. [1:16](#); [2:12, 16](#); [19:21](#)) which He would use to strike down the nations. The word for "sword" (*rhomphaia*) was used of an unusually long sword and

To great
or
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sometimes used as a spear, thus indicating a piercing action. In addition to using the sword for striking down, He will use an iron scepter for ruling (cf. [Ps. 2:9](#); [Rev. 2:27](#)). Christ is also described as the One who treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty (cf. [14:19-20](#); and cf. "Almighty" in [1:8](#); [4:8](#); [11:17](#); [15:3](#); [16:7, 14](#); [19:6](#); [21:22](#)). This scene is a dramatic indication of the awfulness of the impending judgment. [Matthew 24:30](#) indicates that those on earth will be witnesses of this impressive scene.

The scene on earth is the final stage of the great world war that will be under way for many weeks. With armies battling up and down the Holy Land for victory, on the very day of the return of Christ there will be house-to-house fighting in Jerusalem itself ([Zech. 14:2](#)).

Combatants will have been lured to the battle site by demons sent by Satan to assemble the armies of the world to fight the armies of heaven (cf. [Rev. 16:12-16](#)).

3. THE DESTRUCTION OF THE WICKED ([19:17-21](#))

[19:17-18](#). The armies of earth are no match for the armies from heaven. The sharp sword in Christ's mouth ([v. 15](#)) is symbolic of His authoritative word of command that destroys earth's armies by divine power. Millions of men and their horses will be destroyed instantly. In keeping with this, John recorded that he saw an angel standing in the sun, who cried in a loud voice to all flying birds to gather together for the great supper of God to eat the carcasses of kings, generals, horsemen, and all people slain by Christ.

[19:19-21](#). The beast and his armies will gather to fight against Christ and His army. The outcome of this battle—referred to in [16:14](#) as "the battle on the great day of God Almighty"—is summarized in [19:19-21](#). The world rulers—the beast and the false prophet—will both be captured. Their former miraculous demonic power will no longer be sufficient to save them. Both of them will be thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur.

The wicked who have died throughout the history of the world up to this point are in hades ([Luke 16:23](#)). The fiery lake, a different place, was prepared for the devil and his angels ([Matt. 25:41](#)), and will not be occupied by human beings until later ([Rev. 20:14-15](#)).

The armies themselves will be killed by Christ's sword ([19:21](#); cf. [1:16](#); [2:12, 16](#); [19:15](#)). The number of dead will be so great that the vultures will have more than they can eat. The defeat of the earth's wicked will then be complete, and will be finalized as later judgments search out the unsaved in other parts of the earth and also kill them (cf. [Matt. 25:31-45](#)).

The same inspired Word of God which so wonderfully describes the grace of God and the salvation which is available to all who believe is equally plain about the judgment of all who reject the grace of God. The tendency of liberal interpreters of the Bible to emphasize passages dealing with the love of God and to ignore passages dealing with His righteous judgment is completely unjustified. The passages on judgment are just as inspired and accurate as those which develop the doctrines of grace and salvation. The Bible is clear that judgment awaits the wicked, and the second coming of Christ is the occasion for a worldwide judgment unparalleled in Scripture since the time of Noah's flood.

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The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures by Dallas Seminary Faculty.

Open it

1. Who do you think is the greatest military leader of all time?
General Patton, tough no nonsense leader for the period he was in
2. How do most people characterize Jesus?
Loving, kind, white, brown hair
3. What, to you, is the value of faithfulness?
Absolute trust that what is said will be done

Explore it

4. What did John see in heaven as this portion of his vision began to unfold? ([19:11](#))
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.
5. How did John describe the appearance of the rider he saw? ([19:12-13](#), [16](#))
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.** ¹³ **He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God.** ¹⁶ **And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."**
6. Who followed the rider of the white horse? ([19:14](#))
¹⁴ **And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses.**
7. What did John note about the rider's mouth? ([19:15](#))
¹⁵ **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.**
8. What message did an angel deliver? How? ([19:17-18](#))
¹⁷ **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."**

9. What battle took place? ([19:19-21](#))

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.

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. 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.

10. Who fought against the rider of the white horse, and what was the outcome? ([19:19-21](#))

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.

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. 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.

11. What happened to the beast and the false prophet? ([19:20](#))

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.

Get it

12. Why is Jesus depicted as a rider on a white horse?

A white horse in those days meant the ~~leader of the victorious side~~ was riding it
triumphant side

13. What do all the symbols in this passage tell us about Jesus?

That he loves and cares for those who are his, those who are not are placed in hell

14. What enables us to be "white and clean" in the sight of God?

Because of our standing in Jesus, he is what God sees, not us, for we are not perfect beings yet

Apply it

15. How can you develop faithfulness and integrity in your work or home life this week?

Do all that you say you will without deceit