

By the witness of our living, by our willingness to obey what God tells us; by our level of commitment and purity; by our standard of faith; **where do you and I actually stand with the King of Kings?**

Rev 19

11. Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a **white horse**. And He who sat on him was called **Faithful and True, and in righteousness** He judges and makes war.

12. His **eyes were like a flame of fire**, and on His head were **many crowns**. He had a **name written that no one knew except Himself**.

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

14. And the **armies in heaven**, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses.

15. Now out of His **mouth goes a sharp sword**, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a **rod of iron**. He Himself **treads the winepress** of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

16. And He has on His robe and **on His thigh a name** written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

As the scene opens, it is an abrupt change from where we've been so far. So far, it has been a grim picture of evil and wrath. The message has been to **hang in there; endure**. But now heaven opens in blinding splendor and a King of terrifying beauty invades this dark world. And we are given a description. But **where did this imagery come from?**

Without any doubt, it is Christ, but the imagery is **deeply Jewish**, borrowed from rabbinical teaching. Christ is not the meek and lowly servant we know from the New Testament. He is the conquering warrior as envisioned by the Old. **So what's He like?**

He is: Faithful: pistos; absolutely to be trusted. There have been horrible trials. And during those trials, His promises seemed to be far off; wishful thinking. But now, He proves it.

He is: True: alethinos; which has 2 meanings: 1. True with no falsehood 2. True as opposed to unreal.

Our human perception of reality is inconstant. We have a good day and reality is good. Have a bad day, fall into a depression and life is barely worth living. Our view is a wave on the sea of circumstances.

Let me ask you a question: **If God is the creator and sustainer of the universe, what is more real God or our circumstances?** ...The reality of God does not change, despite what we feel or think at any given moment.

What else do we know about this returning King?

He has: Eyes of fire- Consuming, nothing can escape them. There are times we sense God peeling back the layers; looking behind our delusions, masks, and rationalizing: but there will come a time He will burn all that up, and there will be no place to hide.

He has: Many crowns- a known custom at the time of John's writing. A king might wear many crowns at the same time. And these crowns were not laurels of victory, but royal diadems. It showed he was king of as many nations as he had crowns.

He has: A Robe dipped in blood- that is, the blood of the enemy. People sometimes say, "I like the God of the New Testament, but not the God of the Old." -That's to say, they like the warm and fuzzy God, but not the stern, even wrathful God. **That is not a true understanding of God at all!** God is perfect and infinite. Tozer puts it well when he says; **what God loves, He loves with all His infinite being. And what He hates, He hates with equal completeness.** There is a business side to God that is not warm or fuzzy, but it is from the same nature. It is from the same nature that allows Him to love us beyond our comprehension. They are part and parcel of God, whether we like it or not.

He has: The power in which He comes; which is beyond victorious. Sometimes the divine story is presented as a battle where Satan and his followers are almost as strong as God. But God's a little stronger so He eventually comes out on top. But the imagery used in both the Old and New Testament is of a **master trampling out the winepress**. Do you think there's really much of a contest between the grapes and the person trampling? The grapes are defenseless; it isn't a contest in any sense of the word! The image is the same for God and all who oppose Him; even Satan. There is no question of the outcome!



QUESTIONS

WHY DO YOU THINK GOD GIVES MORE OF AN OLD TESTAMENT IMAGE OF HIMSELF HERE, THAN A NEW TESTAMENT IMAGE?

EXPRESS THE QUALITIES MENTIONED THIS FAR IN YOUR OWN WORDS: GOD IS...

He has: a name.

In Hebrew culture a name is more than just a name; it is a glimpse into the very nature of a person. So it is not surprising that the revelation speaks of God's name. *So what is it?*

He is named: By a name only He knows. Christianity teaches us to be familiar with God. He is even in us. But that isn't the whole truth. There will always be a part of God that is **beyond us**. Even His name is something we can never say.

He is: Called "The Word of God"- If God has a name we can never know, then what's with this name? God is beyond us, but He connects with us. He connects through His Word we call the Bible. **Everything God has said**; every warning, every promise, every prophecy is embodied in Christ. And in His return, He will come in the **full force of all of them**.

His Name is on His Thigh- The thigh or the loins, are a Biblical symbol for one coming from a human bloodline. Jesus came from the line of King David. He is spiritually and humanly- KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

The fact that Jesus has lived the human experience **means two things**:

- 1) He can identify with our suffering and temptation.
- 2) He did not fail, so He leaves us with no excuse.

? QUESTIONS

CHRIST IS GIVEN THREE DIFFERENT NAMES IN THIS PASSAGE, WHAT ARE THEY?

IN A SINGLE WORD WHAT QUALITY WOULD YOU SAY GOES WITH EACH NAME?

He comes in power: With a mouth as a sharp sword- This description of the warrior Christ comes from two Old Testament passages put side by side. Isaiah says of the heavenly king: "*He shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked*" (Isa. 11:4). The Psalmist says of the Messianic king: "You shall break them with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel" (Ps.2:9).

And this Jewish idea is reflected in the New Testament: Heb 4

12. For the word of God is living and powerful, and ***sharper than any two-edged sword***, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

13. And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but ***all things are naked and open to the eyes of Him*** to whom we must give account.

? QUESTIONS

IN WHAT WAYS WOULD YOU SAY THE POWER OF CHRIST IS EXPRESSED IN THIS PASSAGE?

IN YOUR WORDS, WHAT IS THE MEANING OF A SWORD COMING FROM HIS MOUTH?

WHAT DOES WILL BE THE CONSEQUENCES FOR NON-CHRISTIANS? FOR CHRISTIANS?

This part of the revelation ends with the first few verses of chapter 20:

Revelation 20

1. Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.
2. He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years;
3. and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while.

What is happening here *is the opposite of what happened at the cross*. At the cross, Christ was sealed behind a stone, but it couldn't hold Him. Now, it is Satan who is sealed but he cannot escape. (*Matt.27:66*).



QUESTIONS

IN YOUR OWN WORDS, WHAT IS THE MILLENNIUM?

And again, the idea is completely Jewish in origin. In fact, this is the only passage in the entire New Testament that even refers to a millennial reign. But even so, where did this idea come from?

In earlier times, the general belief was, the Messianic kingdom would last forever. (Dan 2:44) But the idea continued to evolve; from 100 BC onwards, the belief was; the world was so incurably evil that when the Kingdom of God did finally come, the Messiah would reign for a limited time, and then there would be a final judgment.

The big discussion among the Rabbis was; how long? How long would the Messiah reign on this earth before a final, cataclysmic judgment? Some said 40, others 100, 600, 1000, 2000, even 7000 years.

It was common Jewish thought that the creation of the world was a 7000 year process. Each day represented a thousand years. Based on, "**A thousand years in thy sight are but as yesterday**" (**Ps.90:4**)

It was believed that the **age of the earth would correspond to the time taken to create it**. The Messianic age would be the seventh, or Sabbath day, that is; the last 1000 years.

And during that time, there would be spiritual and material blessing unlike anything the world had ever known.

The point is, ***the concept of a millennial reign of the Messiah was not a new idea; it was deeply rooted in Jewish thinking.***

As well, Jewish phrasing didn't mean a ***literal 1000 years***. (For example; Ps.50:10 says that the cattle on a thousand hills belong to God; and Jb.9:3 says that a man cannot answer God once in a thousand times. Thousand is simply used to describe a very large number. ~Barclay) ...Revelation is speaking of a ***long period of time*** when evil is restrained, and Christ is given free reign.

Let's go back to the ***main premise in understanding*** this revelation:

- 1) It was written to a first century Christian of Jewish background who would be communicating to His contemporaries. ***So God made the imagery historically Jewish.***
- 2) He was writing to a ***severely persecuted group*** of people who hung on the hope of what the Messiah would soon do.
- 3) The basic purpose of this revelation is to ***encourage them to endure***. Stay the course but be warned; things are going to get worse before they get better. But when it does, it will be beyond worth it!

Horrible persecution did follow from the "beast" of Rome. Then two hundred years after that, Constantine stopped the persecution of Christians (313 AD; *Edict of Milan*). Three hundred years later, Christianity became the sole religion of the Roman Empire (380 AD). It was the flourishing of "the church age."

A thought: From the 4th century to the 19th century, a little over 1000 years, Christianity was given the freedom to grow. ***God opened a window of time in which the world could hear the truth.***

Now consider where we are in the twenty-first century. With alarming increase, ***Christianity is suffering assault from every side***. Philosophy has claimed God is dead; hostile ideologies have martyred more Christians in the last hundred years than all of pagan Rome. There is a global rise in neo-paganism, witchcraft, and a new trend called, "militant atheism." What we once called intolerable a few decades ago is now the norm. What was once called good is openly ridiculed.

But at the same time, there is a movement in Judaism that hasn't been seen since the early church, that is, Jews coming to Jesus. The church has gone out to the four corners of the world.

In short, ***the darkness is returning*** even as there is a ***sense of nearly completed mission for the church***. –Satan had been affectively bound for around one thousand

years; and current events would suggest he is now on the loose. Isn't that the basis of the millennium?

Now, we might consider the church age to simply be a foreshadow of the "real" millennium to come, or we might see it as something more; but it all points to the same fact: **God has given humanity time to decide, and now, time is running short.** The question is this: **How will it be for you and me?**

The fact that His eyes are like fire brings meaning to this passage:

1 Cor 3

13. There is going to come a time of testing at Christ's Judgment Day to see what kind of material each builder has used. Everyone's work will be put through the fire so that all can see whether or not it keeps its value, and what was really accomplished.

14. Then every workman who has built on the foundation with the right materials, and whose work still stands, will get his pay.

15. But if the house he has built burns up, he will have a great loss. He himself will be saved, but like a man escaping through a wall of flames.

When we look into His face, we'll know what really mattered. At that point; will we wail as we see the wasted efforts of our life? Or will we hear "well done, good and faithful servant"?

Everything in Revelation is rooted in history, and much has already happened; it is the basis and proof of what's to come. ... **Where do you and I stand with the King of Kings?** Will the standard of our faith, and the value of what we've done with our days, *days just like today*, **survive His perfect fire?**

The focus of God's message today is a serious wakeup call, to look inside and make sure we're doing more than just going through the motions.



QUESTIONS

DO YOU THINK THE MILLENNIUM IS A LITERAL EVENT?

WHY DO YOU THINK GOD PLANNED A MILLENNIAL REIGN?

IF WHAT YOU BELIEVE ABOUT THIS SEGMENT OF THE REVELATION IS TRUE, WHAT SIGNIFICANCE IS THAT TO YOUR LIFE RIGHT NOW?