

# He is Dressed in a Robe Dipped in Blood, And His Name is the Word of God

## 19: 11-18 and 21

**DIG:** What commands your attention about this scene? Who are the armies of heaven? What weapon does the Rider yield? What happens to the army of the beast?

**REFLECT:** What hopes and fears does this glorious appearing (Titus 2:13) bring out in you? Why? How has Jesus Christ been your deliverer recently?

This is the Second Coming of the Judge and the incarnate Word of God, Jesus Christ, returning in righteousness to rule the nations. John saw heaven standing open and there before him was a Rider on a white horse (19:11a). The first time Jesus came into Tziyon He came riding on the colt of a donkey (Matthew 21:5), but the next time He will be riding on a white horse. Yeshua will be riding a cherub in the form of a white horse (see my commentary on [The Life of David Eh - David's Song of Praise: ADONAI's Coming to Help](#)), and the Shekinah glory will precede the holy character of its Rider: **For as lightening that comes from the east is visible even in the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. Wherever there is a carcass, there the vultures will gather; the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory (Matthew 24:26-30).**

John tells us that the Rider is called Faithful and True (19:11b). There is no more fitting name for Jesus, who was earlier called **the faithful and true witness (3:14)**. He is **faithful** to His promises (Second Corinthians 1:20) **and** what He speaks is always **true** (John 8:45-46; Titus 1:2). The description of Christ here is very different from the unfaithfulness and lies of the devil (12:9). The very fact that He is coming again, just as He had promised, proves that Jesus is the **faithful and true One**.

No longer the suffering Servant of Isaiah 52:13 to 53:12, Yeshua Messiah will then be seen as the warrior King (Psalm 45:3-4; Isaiah 11:4-5) who makes war and judges with justice (19:11c). He will slaughter the wicked, as seen when He warned the worldly believers at Pergamum: **Repent! Or I will soon come to you and fight against you with the sword of My mouth (2:16)**. This is in keeping with God's character, for after the deliverance from Pharaoh and his chariots at the Sea of Reeds, Isra'el sang: God, or ADONAI is a warrior; ADONAI is His name. Pharaoh's chariots and his army He has

hurled into the sea. The best of Pharaoh's officers are drowned in the Sea of Reeds (Exodus 15:3-4). But unlike other conquerors the world has seen, ambition, pride or power will not motivate this Conqueror. He will come in absolute righteousness and perfect holiness. Heaven cannot be at peace with sin, for **God's eyes are too pure to look on evil and He cannot tolerate wrong (Habakkuk 1:13)**. There is a limit to Christ's patience. Justice cannot tolerate injustice, truth cannot tolerate lies forever, and rebellion cannot be permitted to go on without end. Incurable, hardened sinners will eventually face destruction; mercy abused and grace rejected will ultimately bring judgment.<sup>409</sup>

**He is coming with the Shechinah glory, or with the clouds.** The Shechinah glory is the visible manifestation of God's presence, which is seen in the form of a light, fire, smoke, clouds, or combination of these (see my commentary on [Isaiah 60:1-3](#) - **The Glory of the LORD Rises Upon You**). Both the Tabernacle (Exodus 40:34-38) and the Temple (First Kings 8:10-12) were filled with a cloud symbolizing God's glory at their dedications. Jesus ascended to heaven on a cloud (Acts 1:9), and He will return with the clouds. The prophet Daniel prophesied: **In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a Son of Man, coming with the clouds of heaven (Daniel 7:13)**. His glory will be obvious to the entire human race because **every eye will see Him (1:7)**.

**His eyes are like blazing fire (also see 1:14b)**, searching, revealing, and penetrating to the very depths of His followers. Nothing escapes the notice of His penetrating vision. The world shall see this in His piercing judgment of sin. Jesus said: **There is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known (Matthew 10:26b)**. In Daniel's vision of the Messiah, he said His eyes were like flaming torches (Daniel 10:6). Those eyes reflected the tenderness and joy as He gathered little children to Himself. They reflected compassion when Jesus saw distressed and hopeless people, wandering meaninglessly through life like sheep without a shepherd. And His eyes reflected forgiveness when He restored Peter, who was crushed with guilt over his denial of his Master. The eyes that wept over the fate of unrepentant Jerusalem and over the sorrow, suffering and death in this sin-cursed world, John sees flashing with the blazing fire of judgment (19:12a).<sup>410</sup>

**And on His head will be many crowns (19:12b)**. This crown comes from the Greek word *diadema*, which refers to the ruler's crown (12:3, 13:1). This points to Messiah's royal authority. The word many shows that He will collect all of the rulers' crowns. He alone will be the supreme ruler of the earth. Collecting the crown of a deposed ruler was customary in the ancient world. After defeating the Ammonites, King David took the crown from the head of their king and it was placed on David's head (Second Samuel 12:30). Thus, the many crowns that Christ will wear during the messianic Kingdom will replace His crown of thorns that He wore at His crucifixion (Philippians 2:8-11).

Describing the final aspect of **Messiah's** appearance, **John** tells us that **Jesus has a name written on Him that no one knows but He Himself (19:12c)**. It is kind of humorous that the Bible tells us **that no one knows** what His **name** will be; yet the commentators proceed to tell us what it is! So really, all speculation as to the meaning of His **name** is pointless. Even **John, the disciple whom Jesus loved (John 13:23)** didn't know. So I sure don't. It will probably be made known after His return.

Illustrating the final element of **Christ's** appearance, **John** writes that **He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood (19:13a)**. This is not His blood shed on the cross, it is the blood of His mutilated enemies. As **Isaiah** stood in Jerusalem, **he** saw a giant vision of **the Lord** coming from Petra (**Isaiah 63:1**). As **Christ** worked His way up the Valley of Jehoshaphat toward Jerusalem, **He Himself** says: **I trampled them in My anger and trod them down in My wrath; their blood spattered My garments, and I stained all My clothing (Isaiah 63:3)**. **He** will slaughter the Gentile nations that want to oppose Him, and in the process, His white robe of justice will be **dipped in their blood**. The red blood of **Messiah's** enemies will come from the red place, or Edom.

**And the name of the warrior is the Word of God (19:13b)**. Here is a striking link with **John's** gospel where **Jesus is the Word who became flesh (John 1:1 and 14)**. But here in the book of **Revelation**, the title isn't so much to tell us who **He** is, as it is to tell us how the nations are destroyed. In Hebrew the word of **God** is not a lifeless sound but an active agent that achieves the intention of the one who speaks, like the creation account in **Genesis**. **The Word of God is God** fulfilling His divine purpose (**Hebrews 4:12**).<sup>411</sup>

When the conquering **Messiah** returns **the armies of heaven will be following Him (19:14a)**. These **armies** will be made up of **His angels (Matthew 16:27)**, the righteous of the TaNaKh, the Church and the Tribulation martyrs respectively. **Jude** saw it this way: **See, the Lord, as revealed in the second person of the trinity Jesus Christ, is coming with thousands upon thousands of His holy ones to judge everyone, and to convict all the ungodly of all the ungodly acts they have done in the ungodly way, and of all the harsh words ungodly sinners have spoken against Him (Jude 14-15)**.

These **armies** will be **riding on white horses (19:14b)**, which are not literal horses any more than the four horsemen of the apocalypse (6:1-8). Although **the armies of the Lord** return with Him, they will not participate in the fighting. **Christ** will fight this battle by **Himself** (see my commentary on **Isaiah Kg - The Second Coming of Jesus Christ to Bozrah**). The believers who accompany Him will be unarmed. They will not come to fight with Him, but to **reign with Him for a thousand years (Revelation 20:4-6; 1 Cor 6:2)**. They will be **dressed in fine linen, white and clean, reflecting their righteousness (19:14c)**.

**The activity of Christ as the warrior Messiah is seen in three figures taken from the TaNaKh.** First, out of His mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations (19:15a). John had seen that sword in an earlier vision (1:16), where it was used to defend the Church against the attack of the Adversary. Here it is the sword of judgment, delivering death to ADONAI's enemies. **He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth; with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked (Is 11:4).** Therefore, the battle will merely consist of a spoken word, symbolized by the sword, which comes out of His mouth.

**The second figure** is that of the rod of iron. After judging the nations as the righteous Judge, **He will rule as King, with a rod of iron (2:27; 12:5; 19:15b NASB).** He will judge all sin swiftly and instantly put down any rebellion. Murder will not be tolerated. Rape will be stopped before it begins. Even psychological abuse will be repressed. This iron-handed rule is rooted in **Psalm 2:9**, and will be necessary because the Gentile nations will still have a sin nature. After the first generation of the believing **sheep** Gentiles (**Matthew 25:34-40**) their children will need to accept **Christ** to be saved and will have a hundred years to do it or face death (**Isaiah 65:20**). But millions will not and the natural result of this sin nature will have to be restrained. As a result, **the Kingdom** will not be a democracy, but an absolute monarchy. The rule of **Christ**, the messianic **King**, will be a strict one, and the righteous laws radiating from Jerusalem will have to be obeyed.<sup>412</sup>

**The third figure** is that **He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of ADONAI, God of heaven's armies (19:15c).** The clear symbol of the wrath of God comes from the ancient practice of treading on grapes as a part of the wine making process. The splattering of the grape juice points to the pouring out of the blood of **Christ's** enemies (14:18-20). The two nouns translated **wrath** or **anger** are found thirteen times in **Chapters 6 through 19.**

The Gentile armies of the world will experience **the wrath of God** at the Second Coming and **He** will rule over them. **Christ** will wear a banner on His long robe and hanging down across His thigh, and on it **He** will have this name written: *Melekh HaM'lakhim*, **KING of kings and LORD of lords (19:16).** The TaNaKh points to ADONAI as **God of gods and Lord of lords (Deuteronomy 10:17)**, and **Jesus Christ** is the visual manifestation of the Trinity. He will return as a **King** to establish His **Kingdom**. All the earthly **kings** will submit to Him. Presidents, dictators, and **kings** rule over their nations. Our **King** is greater than all of these. To **Him** all power and authority belong, and all knees shall bow. Every person will call Him **Lord** and **Master**.

Because of the massive slaughter of all the armies of the Gentile nations, another invitation is given. Then, as if to heighten still further the suspense of this dramatic movement, **John saw an angel standing in front of the sun**, partially eclipsing it. He stood in a very eye-catching place to get everyone's attention. It seems that the fourth blackout had been lifted because the sun will be visible again. That would also explain how the smoke from Babylon could be seen all the way from the Valley of Jezreel in Isra'el where they are gathered for the first stage of the Campaign of Armageddon (18:9-19). But darkness would soon cover the earth during the fifth, and last, blackout to accentuate the flashing brilliant Shechinah glory of the returning Christ (Matthew 24:29-30).

This prominent angel will cry out in a loud voice to all the birds flying in midair, inviting them to **feast** on the carnage that would immediately follow. Consequently, the angel declares **Messiah's** victory before the battle even begins. This reminds us of Christ's very words: **For as lightning comes from the east and flashes to the west, so will be the coming of the Son of Man. Wherever there is a carcass, there the vultures will gather** (Matthew 24:27-28).

The angel commands the birds to come and gather together for the great feast of God (19:17). This will not be the first time that birds have feasted on human carrion in the Bible. Isaiah related a similar feast after the judgment of Cush, or modern Ethiopia, when he wrote: **They will all be left to the mountain birds of prey and to the wild animals, the birds will feed on them all summer, the wild animals all winter** (Isaiah 18:6). And Jeremiah prophesies that after the Babylonian destruction of Jerusalem **the carcasses of this people will become food for the birds of the air and the beasts of the earth, and there will be no one left to frighten them away** (Jeremiah 7:33). Likewise, the dreadful Day of ADONAI will result in an unparalleled slaughter, with millions of dead bodies scattered up and down the two hundred miles from Bozrah to Jerusalem.

It is an important fact to consider that every year millions of birds of many species migrate south from Europe to Africa. They fly over the land of Isra'el on their journey. The numbers of these birds and their migrating patterns have been the special study of the Israeli government because of the threat they pose to aircraft. This can certainly answer the question as to where such vast numbers of birds will come from. The geographical setting of Isra'el, situated between the Mediterranean Sea on the west and the vast expanse of barren desert to the east, forms a natural corridor for these migrating birds.<sup>413</sup>

At this future great feast, **the birds will eat the flesh of kings, generals, and mighty men, of horses and their riders, and the flesh of all people, free and slave, small and great (19:18)**. This is a bloodthirsty picture. It tells of the greatest of **men** being made food for the vultures - **of kings** and leaders, strong and confident, devoured on the field of battle with no one to bury them. Those who thought they ruled the world will be rendered helpless against timid **birds**, no preference will be given to rank or station. This feast for **the birds** is also described in **Ezekiel 39:17-20**, and the prophet closely associates it with the final redemption of Isra'el in **Ezekiel 39:21-29**.<sup>414</sup>

Aside from the beast and the false prophet, who will be taken captive, **the rest of them will be killed with the sword that came out of the mouth of the Rider on the white horse**. The number of dead will be so great that the vultures will have more than they can eat, **and all the birds gorged themselves on their flesh (19:21)**. **In Judaism, following biblical practice, the honored dead are buried. Not to be buried is a disgrace (2 Kings 9:34-37), and being torn apart by vultures and animals is the ultimate disgrace.**<sup>415</sup> This verse is a reference to the second coming of **the Lord** in the clouds, the return will be clearly evident as lighting flashing across the sky and if you see vultures then there must be carrion on the ground.

Then suddenly it will be all over. In fact, there will be no war at all, in the sense that we think of war. There will be just a word spoken from **Yeshua Messiah**. Once He spoke a word to a fig tree and it withered away (**Matthew 21:19**). Once He spoke to the howling winds and heaving waves, and the storm clouds vanished and the waves fell still. Once He spoke to a legion of demons bursting at the seams of a poor man's soul, and instantly they fled. On the Day of **ADONAI** He will speak a **word**, and the Campaign of Armageddon will be over. The beast, the counterfeit Son, will be killed where he stands; and the false prophet, the counterfeit Holy Spirit, will receive no mercy. They will both be hurled headlong into the lake of fire. Another spoken **word**, and the panic-stricken armies reel and stagger, only to fall down dead. Field marshals, generals, admirals, soldiers and sailors, air commanders, once and for all. They all fall. Then the vultures will descend and cover the scene.<sup>416</sup>

The same inspired **Word of God** that so wonderfully describes the grace of **God** and the salvation that is available to all who believe is equally plain about the judgment of all who reject **His** grace. The tendency of some to emphasize passages dealing with the love of **God** and to ignore passages dealing with **His** righteous judgment are completely unjustified. The passages on judgment are just as inspired and accurate as those that develop the doctrines of grace and salvation. The Bible is clear that judgment awaits the wicked, and the Second Coming of **Jesus Christ** is the occasion for a worldwide judgment unparalleled in Scripture since the time of Noah's flood.<sup>417</sup>

But while **God's Word** doesn't come to us with condemnation - as His judgment does to the rebellious nations - it does have the power to shake us up. It is **living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart (Hebrews 4:12).** We have all had times when we have felt **the Word of God** touching those places that need our attention - areas of unforgiveness, anger, lust or pride. We might even call it "God's X-ray machine," because it always sees right through us!

When we are convicted by **the Word of God** it may hurt a little bit, but it helps us to realize how far we still have to go **to be conformed to the likeness of Christ (Romans 8:29).** But unlike the criticism the world dishes out, **the Word of God** carries with it the love of **the Holy Spirit**, prompting us to change our ways and also giving us the grace to do so. We can be thankful that the Bible works not only to take us away from sin, but also to bring us to new life. Truly, the Scriptures are the **imperishable seed (First Peter 1:23)** that can lead us to **Jesus.**

*Father, thank You for Your word. Give me a hunger to feast on its nourishment. Send me the fire of Your Holy Spirit that I may be conformed to the living **Word, Jesus Christ.** May the Scriptures penetrate my heart and change my life.<sup>418</sup>*