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(Revelation 19:11-16)

Intro. When you preach through Revelation, you cannot help but think of the signs of the times with blood moons & increased volcanic & earthquake activity & world economies & more. Some “friends” of mine recently told me there are signs of the times of being over the hill, but I didn’t believe them. But I’m here to tell you today that when you see your pastor preaching in basketball shoes, it may be because he played basketball with some guys the previous day & sprained his ankle really bad & they are the only shoes which will give him some support. So preaching in jeans is not me trying to be cool (I let our youth pastor try to look cool), but the only thing which goes with basketball shoes. So when you see your pastor dressing like your youth pastor, you know the end is near & Jesus is about to return. Today, we look at a few verses in Revelation 19 on “Heaven’s Celebration—The Return of the King.”

Theme: Christ’s 2nd coming

Background:

- Before dealing with this text, let me give you some background on the 2nd coming of Christ
- 3 main terms for Christ’s return are His “coming” (parousia), “appearance” (epiphaneia) & “revelation” (apokalypsis)
- Dispensationalists have tried to say these terms refer to different aspects, where Christ appears in the sky but doesn’t touch down & tries to distinguish 2 parts to His 2nd coming
- George Ladd was the first scholar to tackle this issue & show how these terms are used interchangeably, as seen in these sample texts:
 - Matthew 24:27—Jesus said His coming (parousia) will be as visible as lightning flashing in the east is seen in the west
 - 1 Corinthians 1:7 mentions believers are waiting for the revealing (apokalypsis) of our Lord Jesus Christ
 - 1 Thessalonians 3:13 claims Christ’s “coming” (parousia) will be with all His saints (like we see in Revelation 19)
 - 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17 says Christ’s “coming” (parousia) will be a descent from heaven with a loud cry & trumpet of God & include the resurrection & rapture of the saints
 - 2 Thessalonians 1:7-8 teaches believers are to rest when the revelation (apokalypsis) of the Lord Jesus Christ from heaven along with the angels of His power in flaming fire—God will recompense affliction to those who afflict believers (judgment) & rest to the afflicted (deliverance)
 - 2 Thessalonians 2:8 teaches Jesus will slay the Antichrist by the appearance (epiphaneia) of His coming (parousia)
 - 1 Timothy 6:14 teaches Christians to obey the Lord until the appearing (epiphaneia) of our Lord Jesus Christ
 - 2 Timothy 4:8 claims believers will receive the crown of righteousness at the day of Christ’s appearing (epiphaneia)
 - Titus 2:13 says believers are looking for the blessed hope, the appearing (epiphaneia) of the glory of the great God and Savior Jesus Christ
 - James 5:7-8 comforts believers to be patient for the coming (parousia) of the Lord is at hand
 - 1 Peter 1:7 says there will be praise, glory and honor at Christ’s revelation (apokalypsis)
 - 1 Peter 1:13 exhorts believers to fully hope in God’s grace that will be brought at the revelation (apokalypsis) of Jesus Christ
 - 1 Peter 4:13 teaches believers suffer in this world until the revelation (apokalypsis) of Christ’s glory
 - 2 Peter 3:4 notes some sinners will scoff, asking “Where is the promise of His coming (parousia)?”
- These verses show that Christ’s coming (parousia), appearance (epiphaneia) & revelation (apokalypsis) are interchangeable & include both salvation for the saints & judgment on the unbelievers at the return of Christ
- With this understanding in mind, let’s look closer at Revelation 19 & “The Return of the King”

1. Look at His Personality (19:11-16)

- a. **He is trustworthy**—Faithful & True (contrast with the Antichrist is turns against the prostitute & spews lies)
- b. **He is righteous**—all sin will be judged rightly when Christ returns—people who were punished too severely will see their captors judged & those who were treated too lightly or who seemingly got away with sin will be judged
- c. **He is convicting**—His eyes like blazing fire means He has penetrating knowledge of all things
- d. **He is Victor**—many crowns means He has unlimited sovereignty, unlike the dragon which had 7 crowns & the beast of the sea with 10 crowns
 - His robe dipped in blood probably doesn't reference His sacrifice but the blood of His enemies (cf. Isaiah 63:1-6)
- e. **He is a mystery**—although Christ has revealed Himself with different metaphors (Good Shepherd, Door, Way, Truth & Life, etc.), He is transcendent & far above us & even has a name which no one knows—while there is much we can learn about Christ, there are some things too great for us to know about Him
- f. **He is Creator**—the Word of God—the same Word who created the universe is all that is needed to strike down the nations who rise up against Him
- g. **He is Ruler**—King of kings & Lord of lords

Illus: When you think about someone or talk to a friend about someone you know, you almost always describe their personality—you may say they are fun-loving, warm-hearted, down-to-earth, egotistical, self-righteous or any number of things, but you describe their personality (when we find faults in others, we almost never consider that others find faults in us!) & the personality of Christ is supreme!

2. Look at His People (19:14; cf. 19:7-8)

- While angels may be included in the army of white, their description is virtually identical to what we saw in 19:7-8, describing the Bride of the Lamb—the Church; moreover, in 17:14, those with the Lamb in war are “called and chosen and faithful”
- This army may not do much fighting, but simply be there as witnesses to Christ's total domination over His enemies

Illus: Sometimes when talking with other pastors, I'll talk about you as “my people” & how you serve or how you give, but I never talk about people outside of Sweetwater as “my people”—God never talks about those outside the faith as His people, but those inside the faith are His people & will be delivered

3. Look at His Performances (19:11-16)

- a. **He judges**—He will judge believers for their works done for Him, but this is about His judgment of unbelievers for failing to trust in Him
- b. **He conquers**—He makes war & strikes down (He made war against sin & struck down the grave & He does the same to His enemies); He will rule the nations (cf. Psalm 2:9) & display God's wrath

Illus: The winepress in ancient Israel was a large vat where grapes were brought after harvest & people would stomp on them to crush them & gather the juice to make wine (or Welch's grape juice) & it became a symbol of God's judgment on sin (Lamentations 1:15; Joel 3:12-13)

- Much of America today doesn't like to think of Christ displaying God's wrath, but the words for “anger” & “wrath” occur 13x in Revelation 6-19 as one of the main themes of the book—you don't get to pick & choose which attributes of God you want as though He is some giant smorgasbord, but you must come to Him for Who He is

Conc. My two oldest daughters have enjoyed riding horses & are pretty good at it, even learning how to feed the horse, brush it, place its saddle on & more. I, on the other hand, have only ridden a horse one time & everything else was done for me—the saddle, feeding & care. I simply rode for a few minutes in an open pasture. But there's coming a day when all the saints will be told by an angel when Jesus is ready to return: “Saddle up! Saddle up! We get to ride with our Lord to victory! Saddle up!” The only way you get to ride with Christ in victory is if you surrender to Him in this life through repentance & faith. Don't delay. The end is near. Trust Him today.