

The Powerful Return of God's Son (Part III)

Revelation 19:11-21

Pastor Michael Lynn / West Hampden Baptist Church

August 4, 2024 p.m.

Introduction: Some years ago, on Sunday, July 28th, 2002, the eyes of our nation, & no doubt many other countries around the world, were focused on a small town in western PA. People watched on T.V. screens the rescue of 9 miners who had been trapped underground for over 3 days. As much of the world's attention was directed to that coal mine, it seemed as if a collective sigh of relief went up as each of the miners came out of the earth in that small yellow cylinder that brought them to safety. There is another event yet to happen that will transfix all of the world's attention, perhaps through the avenue of T.V. or computer screens, or witnessed directly. This event will bring a sigh of relief from some, but most people will respond with shock & surprise, or even sorrow & shame. I refer to that momentous event known by believers as the Second Coming of Christ in Glory, spoken of in our text here in Revelation 19:11-21. Having already seen the **rejoicing** of the saints in heaven (:1-10), as they offer praise to the Lord (the 4 Hallelujahs) & as they are prepared for the Lamb, note with me this evening the **revealing** of the Savior on earth & the restricting of sinners in hell. Focus your attention with me upon the person of Christ as we consider on His validation, His visage, & His vesture. Then we will see Christ's victory, Antichrist's captivity, & the remnants' indignity.

II. The **revealing** of the Savior on earth (:11-16)

[distinguish between the Rapture & Christ's Second Coming in Glory:

At the Rapture (Rev. 4:1, John 14:1-6, I Thess. 4:13-18) > (1) Christ meets believers in the air, (2) There is no immediate judgment, & (3) It is witnessed only by believers.

At the Second Coming (Mt. 24:27-31, Zech. 14:3-4, Rev. 1:7) > (1) Christ comes to the earth, (2) Christ comes in divine judgment, & (3) Christ is seen by the entire world.]

A. His **validation** (or confirmation) - The affirmation of Christ (note 4 titles, or designations)

1. He is called "*Faithful & True*" (:11) > speaks of His verity.

a. Spoken of Christ in Rev. 1:5 & 3:7, 14 (& cf. Isa. 11:3-4).

b. Suggests of Christ: "He will keep His word, for His word is true; He is very faithfulness & very truth. And because He is true & faithful & must act in righteousness, He must finally, after long ages of grace & mercy, become the Judge & Warrior" (H. Morris).

2. He has "*a name written, that no man knew...*" (:12) > speaks of His deity.

a. The name given to Jesus? - Philippians 2:9-10.

b. "...the infinite meaning of His ineffable name. We know Him in many wonderful attributes but we can never know Him in His incomprehensible fullness... though no doubt our knowledge of Him will continue to grow throughout eternity, the fullness of His mighty name, only He can know!" (Morris).

3. He is called "*The Word of God*" (:13) > speaks of His humanity.

a. Used of Christ only by the Apostle John - John 1:1, 14; I John 1:1, 5:7.

b. Used of Christ's incarnation (John 1:14, & cf. Col. 1:15, Heb. 1:3), as well as of His identification as God (John 1:1).

4. His name written is "*KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS*" (:16) > Speaks of His

a. Applied to Christ elsewhere: I Tim. 6:15, Rev. 17:14. sovereignty.

b. Aptly speaks that: "Here at last has come One who has a right to rule the earth, One whose power & majesty will demonstrate His authority as He brings His sovereign judgment on a wicked world" (Walvoord) - & see Psalm 2:1-4, 10-12 [Note: His "*armies*" - (1) Refers only to the Church? cf. 19:8 (2) Represents saints of all ages?? Jude :14-15, O.T. saints; Rev. 7:13, Tribulation saints; Mt. 25:31, angels -- "What a magnificent procession that will be when all the angelic hosts of heaven & all the multitudes of redeemed & purified saints of God accompany their victorious Redeemer back to earth again!" (Morris).]

B. His **visage** - The appearance of Christ

1. Note His eyes (:12a) >
 - a. Reminds us of Rev. 1:14 & 2:18.
 - b. Refers us to their "...piercing & penetrating in holiness" (Ryrie) as well as to "His righteous judgment upon sin" (Walvoord).
2. Note His head (:12b) >
 - a. Crowned with many crowns ("*diadema*") - cf. "*stephanos*" in 4:10.
 - b. "...the crowns He is wearing as He parades in triumph are the crowns which had once been usurped by the kings of the earth (Rev. 12:3, 13:1, 17:9-12)" (Morris).
3. Note His mouth (:15) "*out of His mouth goeth a sharp sword.*" >
 - a. Its description: the sword indicated here is a long, Thracian sword, larger & longer than most other swords; a sabre or broad cutlass.
 - b. Its depiction: "Here the word is used symbolically to represent a sharp instrument of war with which Christ will smite the nations & establish His absolute rule" (Walvoord).
[Note the power of His word: (1) He speaks the world into existence (Heb. 11:3); (2) He sustains the world by the word of His power (Heb. 1:3, Col. 1:17) & (3) He subdues the world by His word (Rev. 19:15 & 21) -- Illustrate: John 18:4-7.]
[Note also (1) the rod of His rule: Compare Ps. 2:8-9 & Isa. 11:4 ("*rod of His mouth*") - "It represents unyielding, absolute government under which men are required to conform to the righteous standards of God" (Walvoord) & note (2) the "*rule*" with His rod: the word "*rule*" is "shepherd" (our word "pastor") - "Christ will be their pastor, but He will demand absolute obedience. It will be a dictatorship of love, but a dictatorship nonetheless" (Morris).]

C. His **vesture** - The attire of Christ

1. The anticipation of bloodshed (:13) - "*a vesture dipped in blood*" -- cf. Isa. 63:2-6 > God's judgment upon the wicked; the shed blood of His enemies.
2. The participation in bloodshed (:15) - "*he treadeth the winepress...*" -- cf. Rev. 14:20 > "...the two terms ("*fierceness*" & "*wrath*") are essentially synonymous & express with doubled intensity the unleashed ferocity of a long-suffering God, whose unrequited patience has endured for ages the wickedness & rebellion & blasphemy of the men & women He had loved & sought to redeem" (Morris).

Review > This morning we saw the **rejoicing** of the saints in heaven (:1-10); & then we looked at the **revealing** of the Savior on earth (:11-16). We continue now with:

[II. The **revealing** of the Savior on earth (:11-16)]

III. The **restricting** of the sinners in hell (:17-21).

We have all perhaps at one time or another seen large birds circling in the air a hundred yards or so above the ground. Down south we call them "buzzards," but they are properly known as "vultures." They are said to gather & begin circling over an injured or dying animal, even before it has succumbed. The presence of these large carrion birds speaks of death, decay, & stench. In the verses of our text tonight, we have a contrast to the glorious & magnificent wedding feast of the Lamb referred to in 19:7-9. Here we see another "great" supper (same word as in vs. 9, the main meal of the day), one that involves birds of prey consuming the flesh of defeated armies. Note with me in these verses, which describe the ultimate **restricting** of sinners in hell, 3 things: Christ's victory, antichrist's captivity, & the remnants' indignity.

A. **Christ's victory** (:17-21)

1. The *declaration* of victory (:17-18).
 - a. The messenger - "*an angel standing in the sun.*"
 - (1) Standing in the light of the sun, but shining even greater (brilliance of God's glory).
 - (2) Sounding out with a loud voice (cf. 6:10; 7:2 & 10; 10:3; 14:15; 18:6 - an important message is about to be delivered).

b. The message - "*Come & gather...*"

["God will declare His victory before the battle even begins."]

(1) Who? all the birds of prey (hawks, ravens, crows, vultures) -- While the armies gather to do battle against the Lord "...the birds of prey also begin to gather together, but in the air, circling over the masses of humanity stretched out below them, darkening the sky & undoubtedly filling the hearts of the armies on the ground with great gloom & dread" (Morris).

(2) Why? to eat the flesh of the defeated armies (cf. Mt. 24:28) -- "Despite the circling vultures & the fresh memory of the global earthquake & the fall of mighty Babylon, somehow they still hoped that they would be delivered. The Devil that deceived them, through the demonic miracles of the prophet, still holds sway" (Morris).

2. The *description* of victory (:19-21).

a. Foretold in the past > Joel 3:14 & Isa. 34:1-2 > The beast, false prophet (& the Devil) gather to do battle against Christ, believing that they can defeat Him (see Rev. 16:13-16).

b. Fulfilled in the future > The victory is due solely to Christ ("*which sword proceeded out of His mouth*"), though the armies of saints & angels are with Him.

B. **Antichrist's captivity** (:20)

1. His *detention*:

a. The beast & the false prophet are "captured" ("*taken*").

b. They are seized by angels? or, simply snatched away by the word of Christ?

2. His *destruction*:

a. He (with the false prophet) is cast alive into the lake of fire - in some sort of "body" - See Mark 9:43, 45, & 47 as well as Rev. 20:14-15.

b. The first inhabitants of this place, prepared for the Devil & his angels (Mt. 25:41) - "As the greatest & most blasphemous of all human rebels against their Creator, they will be given the distinction of being the first to be separated forever from His presence" (Morris).

[Note: 1,000 years later (20:10) they (the antichrist & false prophet) are still there - the lake of fire is not annihilation, nor some sort of purgatory, but it is eternal fire & torment (see II Thess. 1:9).]

3. Hell's *description*:

"A lake of fire burning with brimstone" - literally, "the lake of fire of the burning with brimstone" ("*brimstone*" - sulfur, a yellowish nonmetallic substance found in gun powder; sulfur melts at 248 degrees Fahrenheit, turns fierce red at 482 degrees, & boils & turns pitchy dark brown at 832 degrees Fahrenheit; that with which God destroyed Sodom (Lk. 17:29) [from Minnick's "The Doctrine of Eternal Punishment"]

a. In the O.T. > Isa. 66:22, 29; Dan. 7:11.

b. In the N.T. > Mark 9:43-48; Mt. 5:22, 30; 10:28; 18:9; 23:15; Lk. 12:5; Rev. 14:10-11.

"Hell is an ultimate destiny where men & women experience eternal, conscious torment in fire that is nothing less than literal" (Minnick).

C. The **remnant's indignity** (:21)

[Note: the O.T. pictures of this type of indignity (flesh eaten by birds) > Deut. 28:26; Ps. 79:2; Pro. 30:17; Isa. 18:6; Jer. 7:33; 16:4; 19:7; 34:30; Ezk. 29:5.]

1. They are *defeated* - slain with the sword proceeding out of the mouth of Christ -- "A mighty wind will sweep through the long valley where the armies of the millions are gathered, the sharp sword striking forth from the mouth of the offended King. Bursting arteries will spew their blood until the great trough flows in blood & the press is full" (Morris). See Rev. 14:14-20; Joel 3:13; Isa. 34:3-6; Jer. 25:29-33; Zeph. 1:17, 18; 3:8; & Zech. 12 & 13.

2. They are *devoured* - "Then will the great cloud of ravenous birds swoop down from the heavens, gorging themselves on the flesh & blood of the once high-and-mighty rebels against a long-suffering God" (Morris).

Conclusion: Where will you be when this scene unfolds? If you are saved, born again into the family of God, you will be in that great army, clothed in white raiment, riding upon a white horse, & offering a shout of victory at Christ's return. If you are not saved & somehow manage to survive the awful judgment of the Tribulation, you may offer a sneer of disgust, realizing Christ comes to judge the world & set up His righteous reign. In light of His coming, the Psalmist David (Psalm 2) gives a divine invitation which includes 5 commands: (1) "*Be wise*" (2) "*Be instructed*" (3) "*Serve the Lord with fear*" (4) "*Rejoice with trembling*" & (5) "*Kiss the Son*". The choice is clear in verse 12 - reject Christ & perish from the way (experience Christ's wrath) or receive Christ & experience God's deliverance & blessing. What attention are you giving to Christ today? How do you respond to His invitation?

Do we really believe that the fate of lost men & women is a conscious, eternal torment in a place called hell, the lake of fire? If so, what are we doing to warn people about its reality? Do we love people enough to tell them the truth? Consider these words from Dr. Mark Minnick's sermon entitled "The Doctrine of Eternal Punishment"

"These are terrible descriptions ("*torments*" - tortures, grievous pains, & acute agonies; Lk. 16:23), but before you refuse them, I want to appeal to you to consider soberly that sinners are not warned, or alarmed, or awakened to their fearful danger by preaching which delicately minces this awful truth out of a distorted sense of discretion. It is indiscreet *not* to alarm people with these things! It is unconscionable not to do so! People *need* to be discomforted & delivered over to distress by indomitable preaching that insists that if they refuse the love of God extended to them in the Lord Jesus Christ, they are going to be physically tormented! It will be 'torment' in Hades, & it will be 'torment' when, following the reuniting of their bodies & souls at the final judgment, they are cast into Gehenna... Your shrinking from this truth is not due to your sympathy with people's pain. It is due to your *lack* of sympathy with their pain. God is the one who is sympathetic. He is the one who gave His only begotten Son to rescue us from this misery & to inform us insistently, dogmatically, & compassionately that we are in for an awful end if we persist in unbelief."

It was Charles Spurgeon who said, "When men talk of a little hell, it is because they think they have only a little sin, & believe in a little Saviour; it is all little together. But when you get a great sense of sin, you want a great Saviour, & feel that, if you do not have Him, you will fall into a great destruction, & suffer a great punishment at the hands of the great God." How does this description of the restricting of sinners in hell affect you? Do you know for sure that you are saved? If so, are you warning those without Christ about the awful torments of a place called hell? May God increase our burden & move us to compassionately proclaim the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ to a lost & dying world.