

Beloved,

What a marvelous picture of victory and power. We sing together from Psalm 2. Wherefore do the nations rage? John sees the picture of the powerful working Christ who is busy on earth even now building and protecting His church while doling out His judgment upon those who reject Him. It behooves everyone to be a child of God. Everyone ought to and must bow their knee to Jesus Christ. Every government of every nation on this planet must obey Jesus Christ. They must bend the knee. They must stand in wonder of His majesty. It is as David wrote- perhaps for the coronation of his son Solomon:

The LORD says to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet." The LORD will extend your mighty scepter from Zion; you will rule amid your enemies. (Psalm 110:1-2)

We see Jesus now, who is the vicegerent of the Father. In our walk through the catechism, we have noted that the Father governs and rules over all. That is true. However, He does that now through His Son, the new Adam Jesus Christ. But Jesus does not rule as a regent or substitute King but as the one who administrates for God. God rules through Him. God has dominion through Him. And this Christ, the head of the new covenant, rules over all things and is the head of the church. As the head of the church, he rules over all things for the sake of the glory of God and the well-being of the church. Our theme and points are:

Jesus Christ is the Coming King: Christ's Glory and the Church's Comfort

Christ's Glory John reveals Jesus on the white horse for us. The wedding supper has happened. ***Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. Fine linen, bright and clean, was given to her to wear.***

The redemptive work of the Lamb has been accomplished! The divine eucharist has been participated in. Now the Lamb turns His attention to the work that He must accomplish on earth. It is not yet time for Christ to come to earth. It is time to wage war and win victory by converting the elect and destroying the wicked. Jesus is ready and glorious and can do this. As the faithful husband, He provides, protects, and watches over the going out and coming in of the one He loves!

The Lamb is on the war charger ready to bring an end to the forces that stand opposed to Him. He will bring judgment on the land. He judges with equity and might. It is as Isaiah wrote of Him so long ago:

The Spirit of the LORD will rest on him--the Spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the Spirit of counsel and of power, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the LORD--and he will delight in the fear of the LORD. He will not judge by what he sees with his eyes, or decide by what he hears with his ears; but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips, he will slay the wicked. (Isaiah 11:1-2)

Jesus is the one who is faithful and truth. Earlier, He has described this way in Revelation 3:14: "The Amen, the faithful and true witness, the ruler of God's creation." Jesus is the rider of this horse and is ready for war against the nations. He sees all. His eyes of fire burn through all and see all. He is the glorious won, and who can stand opposed to Him?

Ask of me, and I will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession. You will rule them with an iron sceptre and dash them to pieces like pottery." Therefore, you kings, be wise; be warned, you rulers of the earth. (Psalm 2)

The covenant people have rejected Him, and he is the head of the new covenant and the leader of a new covenant people. These are the redeemed! These, too, are ready for battle. But there is something about these king-priests. They look different from the King-Priest. They have beautiful, sparkling clean robes. This is how we know that this army is the bride of Christ. It is a Paul wrote to the Ephesians:

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. (Ephesians 5:25-27)

See the rider, the true and faithful one? Look at Him for just a moment. ***He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God.***

It is as David wrote in Psalm 110 also: ***The LORD has sworn and will not change his mind: "You are a priest forever, in the order of Melchizedek." The Lord is at your right hand; he will crush kings on the day of his wrath.***

Look and see, the one called the Word has blood on His robe. He was the Lamb who was slain. But He is alive, and He is the resurrected one. He has a name that is known only to Him. He is set apart, but He stands in the front line. He stands alone with His army ready behind Him. He takes that sword of the Word of His mouth, lays open the righteous, and slays the wicked! We read this morning from Hosea 6:5: ***Therefore I cut you in pieces with my prophets, I killed you with the words of my mouth; my judgments flashed like lightning upon you.*** Now God does this ultimately with the chief prophet the Lamb, who is the word of God.

Our eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord;

He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored.

He hath loosed the fateful lightning of His terrible swift sword.

On his robe and his thigh, he has this name written:

KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

So we confess:

Why is it added: "And sitteth at the right hand of God"?

Because Christ ascended into heaven for this end; that He might there appear as the Head of His Church, by whom the Father governs all things.

What does this glory of Christ, our Head, profit us?

First, that by His Holy Spirit He pours out heavenly gifts upon us, His members; then, that by His power He defends and preserves us against all enemies.

Yes, Jesus is working through and for the body that is His church. He has called them by His spirit. He rules them by His Word and Spirit and fights for them! He is the glorious one for the sake of the comfort of the church!

The Church's Comfort John was writing to the church in suffering and tribulation. He wrote about himself, ***"I, John, your brother and companion in the suffering and kingdom and patient endurance that are ours in Jesus, was on the island of Patmos because of the word of God and the testimony of Jesus."*** (John 1) The Jews had turned on the Jewish converts. The Jews were unhappy with the unrest these Christians created by their talk of the coming King, who was the Messiah already come. The unfaithful covenant people thought they had rid the world of Jesus but His followers needed to be cleaned up. Satan turned His fury on the church. John had been given this to see as we read in Revelation 12:

When the dragon saw that he had been hurled to the earth, he pursued the woman who had given birth to the male child. The woman was given the two wings of a great eagle, so that she might fly to the place prepared for her in the desert, where she would be taken care of for a time, times and half a time, out of the serpent's reach. Then from his mouth the serpent spewed water like a river to overtake the woman and sweep her away with the torrent

He battled with two beasts. The beast of the sea was given power and authority. Who can stand opposed to the military might of the evil empire? There was also the beast of the land or the beast out of the earth. He worked against the church through deception. He represented false religion. Thus, we see that Satan turned the Jews to Rome, and the Jews deceived Rome into crucifying Jesus and then turning Rome against the church.

That is the world that the Christians lived in. Can you see the pressures they were facing in what Christ, through the Spirit, wrote to the seven angels of the seven churches? There was persecution, deception, Judaizers, and economic and social tribulation. What hope could there be? Who could stand against Satan and His power and wrath? How would the church stand against the gates of hades?

The church cannot stand but Jesus would! Jesus is the rider on the white horse. The angel invites the people of God to a new banquet. The blood of Abel cries out, and now God will avenge through the power of His son! Israel will be

destroyed. Jerusalem is to be wiped out. They crucified the Lamb of God and persecuted the people of God. It pleased Jesus to rule all things by turning Rome against Israel in AD 70, even as we read Hosea 6, and He turned Assyria against Israel when they turned to the foreigners instead of Him.

Now the church in tribulation can see the bride, the army standing behind Jesus and the destruction of those who reject the King and would not kiss the Son! The armies of the wicked are destroyed and they like Jezebel are left to an inglorious death. The birds eat their corpses. The beasts are thrown alive into the sea of fire.

What, then, shall we say in response to this? If God is for us, who can be against us? ³² He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all--how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things? Who will bring any charge against those whom God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus, who died--more than that, who was raised to life--is at the right hand of God and is also interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? ³⁶ As it is written: "For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered." No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. (Romans 8:31-36)

There is no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus. Jesus is the Judge, and His robes still bear the bloody stains of the death of redemption and resurrection of reconciliation. The church looks and sees the death of her enemies.

And so, even now, we can cry out in this world: ***Be still and know that I am God!*** (Psalm 46:10) We must cry out to the nations that ***they must kiss the son lest He is angry with them!*** (Psalm 2)

In Sudan, there are some 100,000 Christians in slavery. In Canada, the tyranny of liberalism and secular humanism are threatening our freedom. Islam rises in fury against our God and His prophet, priest and King Jesus Christ. The Middle East is filled with the fury of Ishmael and Esau. The Christians all over the world are being attacked, and the church is under attack, but just as in each generation, the rider on the horse rules for the redemption and salvation of His beloved bride, so in this generation, we will be justified, and we will be vindicated. *Soon and very soon, we will go to see the King.* He is coming to bring a final judgment. Then books will be opened. Then the final judgment will come. Jesus must rule for some time yet it appears.

Then the end will come, when he hands over the kingdom to God the Father after he has destroyed all dominion, authority and power. For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy to be destroyed is death. For he "has put everything under his feet." Now when it says that "everything" has been put under him, it is clear that this does not include God himself, who put everything under Christ. ²⁸ When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him, so that God may be all in all.

So be of good cheer, beloved. See the rider on His charger. As Peter preached on that Pentecost Sunday: ***For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said, "The Lord said to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet." ' "Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."***

What comfort is it to you that Christ "shall come to judge the living and the dead"?

That in all my sorrows and persecutions, I, with uplifted head, look for the very One, who offered Himself for me to the judgment of God, and removed all curse from me, to come as Judge from heaven, who shall cast all His and my enemies into everlasting condemnation, but shall take me with all His chosen ones to Himself into heavenly joy and glory. Glory, glory, hallelujah, the truth is marching on! Amen