

The Second Coming of Jesus Christ (Revelation 19:11-16)

Jesus is coming again! The doctrine of the Second Coming of Jesus Christ is fundamental to the historic Christian faith. First and foremost, Jesus Himself declared that He would return (Matthew 16:27; 24:27, 30, 31, 44; Mark 13:26; Luke 21:27-28). In addition, the early church expected Jesus to return (Acts 1:11) and the apostles predicted His return (Philippians 3:20; 2 Thessalonians 1:6-10; Hebrews 9:28). These predictions fall in line with the Old Testament prophecies about the nature of the Messiah and His earthly kingdom, prophecies that Jesus did not fulfill in His First Coming (Daniel 7:13-14; Zechariah 14:3-9; Malachi 3:1-2). Of course, the book of Revelation predicts the Second Coming as well (Revelation 16:15; 19:11-16). Taken as a whole, the prophecies about Jesus' Second Coming indicate that He will return personally, visibly, unexpectedly, gloriously, and triumphantly. Revelation 19:11-16 provides a graphic description of the Second Coming. From this passage we learn that the Lamb who redeemed us is the Lord who will reign over all. His return will usher in dramatic changes, some of which are revealed in this passage.

When Jesus returns, His justice will prevail (19:11).

One consequence of human sin is a persistent injustice in the world. However, when Jesus comes to establish His kingdom justice will again prevail, justice that flows from His holiness.

The emblem of Jesus' holiness—John saw heaven opened and a white horse whose rider is called Faithful and True (19:11a).

The next image revealed to John through a new vision was that of Jesus Christ. John saw heaven opened. That which was previously hidden from earth's view now became visible. The centerpiece of this vision was a white horse and its rider. The color white within prophetic literature often refers to purity or holiness. Although the white horse in Revelation 6:2 mimicked holiness, the white horse in Revelation 19:11 comes from heaven and presents true holiness. Its rider is called "Faithful" and "True." Jesus Christ is faithful to His character, to His purpose, and to His people. He is true (Revelation 3:7), meaning genuine and without deception. Jesus is trustworthy because He embodies absolute truth (John 14:6).

The enactment of Jesus' justice—the rider on the white horse judges and conquers with perfect justice (19:11b).

The rider on the white horse both "judges" and "makes war," but does so with perfect justice. He is a righteous judge and warrior. Jesus Christ will never condemn the righteous nor acquit the wicked. He will fight against those who oppose God, proving righteousness to be victorious. When Jesus returns, justice will prevail.

**When Jesus returns,
His glory will be revealed (19:12).**

At His First Coming, Jesus entered the world amid humble circumstances. However, at His Second Coming, Jesus will appear in the fullness of His divine glory.

The glory of Jesus' countenance—the rider on the white horse is stunning in appearance (19:12a).

The rider on the white horse, Jesus, has eyes like a flame of fire, piercing, penetrating (compare Revelation 1:14). He will wear “many diadems,” many kingly crowns on His head. Crowns represent conquest, authority over nations. Jesus has authority over all the nations of the earth. His appearance will be stunning.

The glory of Jesus' name—the rider on the white horse will bear a name known only to Him (19:12b).

The name “Jesus” means “Savior.” In addition to this personal name Jesus has many other descriptive names and titles—the Word, Emmanuel, Prince of Peace, Messiah (Christ). On the cross Jesus was mockingly assigned the name “King of the Jews,” that name being written on a plaque for all to see. But at His Second Coming, Jesus will bear a name known only to Him. This name carries mystery and authority, a name far surpassing human comprehension. No matter how highly we might venerate Jesus, it will never be enough. No matter how much we know about Him, it will never reach the lofty reality of who He is and what He’s done. At His return His glory will be revealed.

**When Jesus returns,
His redemption will be proclaimed (19:13-14).**

At His First Coming, Jesus provided redemption by dying on the cross. At His Second Coming, Jesus’ redeeming work will become eminently evident.

The price of Jesus' redemption—the rider on the white horse is dressed in a robe dipped in blood (19:13).

The rider on the white horse will be wearing a garment that had been “dipped in blood.” Isaiah 63:1-6 describes the triumphant arrival of the Messiah as a conquering warrior whose garments are splattered with the blood of His enemies. However, that passage describes the completion of the Messiah’s conquest. Revelation 19:13 presents the departure of Jesus from heaven to initiate His conquest. Therefore, it seems best to consider the blood on His garments as redemptive blood, His own sacrificial blood.

Jesus, called Faithful and True in verse 11 and having a name known only to Himself in verse 12, is further identified as “the Word of God.” This name is reminiscent of John 1:1 and 14 where Jesus is simply called the “Word.” He is the incarnate expression of the invisible God, the full expression of God’s divine nature. Jesus is the Word of God.

The recipients of Jesus' redemption—the rider on the white horse will lead the armies of heaven (19:14).

When Jesus returns to earth He will be accompanied by “the armies of heaven.” This vast force will ride on white horses and be clothed in fine linen, white and clean. In other words these will be people who have experienced the redemptive grace of Jesus Christ. They have been cleansed by His blood, made perfect and holy. This army, therefore, will consist of Christians and possibly redeemed Israelites. Although angels aren't mentioned in this context, they will also accompany Jesus at His Second Coming (Matthew 25:31). This vast army will follow Jesus. Jesus will lead because He is preeminent.

**When Jesus returns,
His victory over sin will be complete (19:15).**

Jesus, at His return, will put down all spiritual rebellion and establish His righteous rule on earth. His victory will be complete.

The nature of Jesus' victory—the rider on the white horse will decisively defeat His enemies (19:15a).

A sharp sword will proceed from the mouth of Jesus. This imagery refers to the power of His spoken word. He created the universe by His spoken word. In the future He will judge the world by His spoken word. His declared judgment will be sufficient to conquer every enemy. By His decree, He will smite the nations. His victory will be swift and decisive.

The promise of Jesus' victory—the rider on the white horse will precisely fulfill prophecy (19:15b).

At this point John quotes Psalm 2:9, a Messianic Psalm predicting the victory of God's Messiah over the rebellious kings of the earth (compare Revelation 2:27). “He will rule them with an iron staff.” The word “rule” is literally the verb “shepherd.” Ancient rulers were often designated as shepherds, those who had responsibility for protecting and feeding their people. Jesus will establish His kingdom on earth, shepherding His people. He will rule with “an iron staff.” His justice will be powerful and inflexible, guaranteeing peace, prosperity, and joy.

The justice of Jesus' victory—the rider on the white horse will satisfy God's righteous wrath (19:15c).

The fierce nature of Jesus' spoken-word conquest is described in terms of a winepress (compare Revelation 14:19-20). Jesus will tread “the winepress of the wine of the anger of the wrath of God.” This complex phrase emphasizes the horrendous nature of sin and its deeply dire consequences. Like crushing grapes underfoot, Jesus will defeat the armies of His enemies. Like juice spilling from the winepress, the blood of Jesus' enemies will flow in judgment. This

destruction is necessary as the just penalty for God's offended holiness expressed in His righteous anger. When Jesus returns, His victory over sin will be complete.

**When Jesus returns,
His kingdom will never end (19:16).**

Having defeated His enemies, Jesus will establish His messianic kingdom on earth, a kingdom that will flow into eternity.

The declaration of Jesus' reign—the rider on the white horse will prominently wear His title (19:16a).

At His Second Coming, Jesus will be clothed in a garment dipped in blood. On that garment, on the thigh of that garment, will be yet another name for Jesus. The location of that name speaks of prominence. His title will be visible for all to see.

The supremacy of Jesus' reign—the rider on the white horse is King of kings and Lord of lords (19:16b).

The name that Jesus will so prominently wear at His return is a powerful title— King of kings and Lord of lords. No earthly king will equal Jesus. No earthly master will stand above Him. None ever have. None ever will. Jesus will reign with full authority forever and ever. Because Jesus is already King of kings and Lord of lords, we as His people would do well to readily surrender our lives to Him. He deserves our unreserved devotion, obedience, and love. He is our Lord, the Lamb who is Lord. The Lamb who redeemed us is the Lord who will reign over all.