

#2095—February 19, 2012—“The Seven Last Things of Revelation—History”

[Gauger:] Face it—we’re curious. It doesn’t matter how young or how old we are; we’re just plain curious, and perhaps more curious about the future than anything else. If that’s you, then stay right where you are, because this broadcast coming up is especially for you. I’m Jon Gauger, welcoming you to *Moody Presents*, an outreach of Moody Bible Institute, where Dr. Paul Nyquist serves as president. We’re continuing our series in the book of Revelation, the last book in the Bible, looking at chapter 19, where today Dr. Nyquist underscores that history really is His story. Here’s Dr. Paul Nyquist.

[Nyquist:] Open your Bibles to Revelation chapter 19, the Seven Last Things of Revelation. Revelation 19. There exists in our present world two competing theories of history. One says history is cyclical. That is, this teaches that history is not really going anywhere; it just repeats itself over and over and over again. You find this taught in Eastern countries, especially in cultures that believe in reincarnation. What is reincarnation but the same soul going through the same experience in a different bodily form, so it just happens over and over again. It’s like *Groundhog Day*—all over again for millennia.

But there’s a different view of history, and this view teaches that history is not cyclical but it’s linear. That is, it’s not just a cycle that repeats itself over and over again, but rather history has a progressive movement to it. History is going somewhere, to a particular end. This is the right view of history, because this is the biblical view of history. God has revealed to us in His Word that history had a beginning point. He always existed, but He chose to create. He chose to launch human history. He did so with one man, one woman, in one garden. And from the beginning then history has been progressively moving according to His sovereign plan to a particular end. And this Book records all the key moments of that history. There was a global flood, but that was not the end in view. There was a formation of a covenant people, but that was not the end in view. There was the coming and then the execution of a Messiah, but even that was not the end in view. There was the formation of a spiritual body, the church, of which we are a part, but even that is not the end in view. No, the end, the *telos*, the climax of everything that history has is still ahead in the second coming of Christ. For unlike His first coming, which happened in the backwaters of Judea and was only broadcast to people by word of mouth powered by the Spirit, the second coming will be on a global stage. Everyone will know it. Every person on this planet will realize it. Every man, every woman, every child will know that the King has returned, and it will put a massive exclamation point on history.

But, do you know what it will be like? This greatest of all events—do you know what it will be like? If someone were to ask you to describe it for them, could you do so? And could you do so accurately? Could you describe it in such a compelling fashion that, if this person were not yet a believer in Jesus Christ, they would be motivated to become one? See, that’s part of our responsibility as His children. Furthermore, we need to know this event because we are going to be involved in it. Yes, you and me as believers who will be in heaven already, either because of the rapture or because of death, we will not be just mere spectators of this, looking down from some cloud somewhere, but we will be actively participating in it—this, the greatest event in all of history! So do you know what it will be like?

Come with me and let’s read from what John describes in Revelation 19. Our passage is Revelation 19, and we’re going to be looking at the middle of that chapter, verses 11–16. Revelation 19, beginning in verse 11. What will this event be like? John describes it beginning in verse 11, saying this:

And I saw heaven opened; and behold, a white horse, and He who sat upon it is called Faithful and True; and in righteousness He judges and wages war. And His eyes are a flame of fire, and upon His head are many diadems; and He has a name written upon Him which no one knows except Himself. And He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood; and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses. And from His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may smite the nations; and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty. And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, "King of Kings, and Lord of Lords."

Now, before we dig into these verses, I think it's important to note that this event is separate and distinct from the rapture. The rapture is Christ's return for His church; the second coming is His return with the church. In the rapture, Christ meets His saints in the air; in the second coming He meets His enemies on earth. The rapture is all about God's deliverance of His people; the second coming is all about God's judgment on His enemies. So this is a separate event, separated by seven years from the second coming. We're talking here about the second coming, which is His return to earth in order to fulfill all of His prophecies.

But what will it be like? If you were to describe it to someone, I want to give you some handles to deal with here. I want to give you five key terms that come out of the text here, five key words that will help you describe and understand what this event will be like. You will be able to list them just like five fingers on your hand.

Here's the first key term, the first key word: horse. He will come, and He will come riding a white horse. Verse 11: "And I saw heaven opened; and behold, a white horse, and He who sat upon it is called Faithful and True; and in righteousness He judges and wages war." John says, "I saw heaven opened," and this is the second time in this book in which he says that. He saw heaven opened. It happens in chapter 4; heaven opens up for John to go up. Now it happens again in chapter 19; it opens up in order for Christ to come down. So God pulls back the gates of heaven at this perfect moment in history, and John's eyes become fixated on this One who appears. He says He's riding a white horse.

Now, you might think, *horse? Really? Horse?* Why not an F15 bomber? How about a tank? A horse? We think that way because we tend to think of a horse as a farm animal, or maybe a runner on a racetrack, but that wasn't true in ancient times. A horse was a military machine. It was used for battle because it was so surefooted and swift. And Jesus is coming for battle, so He's riding a horse. This shows that His entrance into Jerusalem is different than it was the last time He came into Jerusalem. The last time was at the triumphal entry; then He came riding in on a lowly donkey. This time He comes riding in on a mighty steed. He's riding a horse.

Now, you'll notice that He's given the first of four different titles in this first verse in this passage. That is, as He comes riding it says He is called Faithful and True. Now, that's curious, isn't it? Here it is, this climactic moment in history, and Jesus is not given a fancy title like Almighty God or Conquering Hero; He's called Faithful and True. Why? Well, here's why. It's because in His return He's showing that He is faithful to His promises. He promised He would come back. He promised He would return. Remember what the angel said to the disciples after the ascension in Acts 1:11? He said to the disciples, "This Jesus whom you saw ascend will return in just the same way as you saw Him leave." Well, here He is! Faithful and True!

And when He comes, it says here's why: In righteousness He comes to judge and wage war. When Jesus comes, He is coming to wage war, and if there ever was a just and righteous war, this will be it. He's waging war, it says, in righteousness. He's coming to set everything right. All the oppression, all the sin, all the ungodliness, all of it He's going to set right. It's bad today, isn't it? It's real bad. Just look at the latest headlines. Unfortunately, it's still going to get worse. In Revelation 9, when the judgments are being poured out on man, it says that these don't cause them to repent, to turn to God, but rather to continue to just blaspheme God. It says this in verse 20 after the trumpet judgments: "The rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands." And it says in verse 21, "They did not repent of their murders nor of their sorceries nor of their immorality nor of their thefts." I mean, this is sad.

But we shouldn't be surprised, because Romans 3 says there is no one who seeks after God, no one, not even one. The heart of man is deceitfully wicked, and God's patience will one day run out, and that day is here in Revelation 19. He will appear, and He will be riding a white horse.

Now, the second key term that you can use to describe the second coming ... The first is *horse*. He'll be riding a white horse. The second key term: *crowns*. When He comes He'll be wearing many crowns. Look at verse 12. It says, "And His eyes are a flame of fire, and upon His head are many diadems; and He has a name written upon Him which no one knows except Himself." That shows that Jesus didn't come for a party. He's not coming for a picnic. Notice the awesome way in which He is described here. First notice how it describes His eyes. It says, "His eyes are a flame of fire." Have you ever been around someone whose gaze is so penetrating that it looks like they can see right through you? I mean, it's a little unsettling, isn't it? That's what happens here. It says His eyes are like a flame of fire. Nothing will be hidden from Him, as it says in Hebrews 4:13: All things will be "laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do." So when He appears, His eyes will be like a flame of fire. He will see everything, and He will evaluate everything.

Then notice what's on His head. It says, "Upon His head are many diadems." Now, there's a difference in the New Testament between a *stephanos* and a diadem. Both are crowns. The *stephanos* is the victors' crown. It's worn by athletes. The diadem is the royal crown. It's worn by kings. These are diadems.

Now, if you look in chapter 12 you'll see that Satan appears as a red dragon, and he is wearing seven crowns, seven diadems. In chapter 13 the beast appears, the antichrist. He's wearing ten crowns, or ten diadems. But now when Jesus appears, it says He is wearing many crowns, many diadems. Not just a few, many. Why? Because He's coming to reign over the earth. The Father has promised Him this as an inheritance, as it says in Psalm 2:8: "Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Thine inheritance." Nations, plural—the whole earth. And He's coming now to receive that inheritance, so appropriately on His head are many diadems.

Then on Him it says is this curious name. It says, "He has a name written upon Him," verse 12, "which no one knows except Himself." Now, that's interesting. "He has a name written upon Him which no one knows except Himself." What does that mean? As you probably know, in the ancient culture names usually were given to reflect the nature of a person. The name Peter meant he was a rock. The name Barnabas meant he was the son of encouragement. In chapter 13 when the antichrist appears, it says he is covered with blasphemous names. It means he's a blasphemous person. Here it says Christ is wearing a name that no one knows except Himself. What does that mean? It means He has a name that no one knows except Himself. You don't know. I don't know. And I think it's futile for us to speculate on what this name will be. It's

beyond us. If you were to hear it, you wouldn't understand it. If I were to hear it, I wouldn't comprehend it. But it's a name He's going to be wearing that no one else will have, and no one will understand except Himself. And He'll come wearing it along with many crowns.

Now, a third key word to capture and describe the second coming of Christ ... The first is *horse*. He'll be riding a white horse. Secondly, *crowns*. He'll be wearing many crowns. The third key word to describe the second coming of Christ: *robe*. He'll be wearing a blood-dipped robe. Verse 13: "He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood; and His name is called The Word of God." John says when this One comes He is wearing a robe that is stained with blood, a garment that is dipped in blood.

Now, the obvious question is, whose blood is this? Whose blood is on the robe? Some people think this is Christ's blood that He sacrificed for us on the cross of Calvary, so therefore it represents what He has done for us, something that we memorialize at the Lord's Table every time. That's possible. I think it's more likely that this is not His blood, but this is the blood of His enemies. This is the blood of his opponents. I say that because there is a strong parallel between this passage and Isaiah 63, and you need to see this, so put your finger here and turn with me, if you would, to Isaiah 63. Here he's describing this very same day of judgment. Notice how he describes it. Isaiah 63:1 says, "Who is this who comes from Edom, With garments of glowing colors from Bozrah, This One who is majestic in His apparel, Marching in the greatness of His strength? 'It is I who speak in righteousness, mighty to save.'" So he's talking about Christ, but here's the question: "Why is Your apparel red, and Your garments like the one who treads in the wine press?" Here's His answer: "I have trodden the wine trough alone, and from the peoples there was no man with Me. I also trod them in My anger, and trampled them in My wrath; and their lifeblood is sprinkled on My garments, and I stained all My raiment." He describes His garments and says they're red, and He likens it to the person who would trod around in the winepress. You know how that works. They drop the grapes into the winepress, and people tromp around in it, and as they do the juice splashes up on their clothes and it becomes all red. He says, "My clothes are red, but not from juice—from blood." He says, "I have trod them down in My anger... and their lifeblood is sprinkled on My garments." This same event that's being described here is the event of Revelation 19, so I believe what He's talking about here is that this blood on His garment is not the blood of Jesus; it's the blood of His opponents.

You might say, "Well, if that's true, how can that be if the battle hasn't even started yet? The battle hasn't even begun." Friends, this is not Jesus' first rodeo. This is not His first battle. He's a veteran warrior, and His greatest battle was when He defeated Satan at the cross.

[Music: "Jesus Paid It All"]

[Gauger:] The music of the Moody Men's Collegiate Choir, "Jesus Paid It All," that song conducted by H. E. Singley. You know, as you're listening and thinking back on today's message from our teacher Dr. Paul Nyquist, it might interest you to know that you can sign up for free automatic downloads of all our messages. It's called podcasting, and it's available at our website, [moodypresents.org](http://moodypresents.org). Also there you'll find online audio, so you can just click a button and hear it again right at your computer. We've got printed transcripts you can print out and share with a friend. They're free as well. Also, audio CDs and MP3s for purchase. Also at [moodypresents.org](http://moodypresents.org), valuable links to other ministries here at Moody that I think you'll find very, very helpful. Again that website: [moodypresents.org](http://moodypresents.org). Our series in Revelation continues next week. I hope you'll be back then for more *Moody Presents*, a presentation of Moody Radio.