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Chapter 19:1-10

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- Today we begin a study of what most students of Revelation would consider to be the climax of this book: the Second Coming of Christ
 - Certainly, the Lord’s return to reign is climactic, especially for those who live through Tribulation and await His rescue
 - But like other events we’ve studied in the book of Revelation, the process of Christ’s return is not a simple affair
 - Nor is it even a single moment, but rather it is a series of events spread out over several days
 - Chapter 19 informs us of Christ’s return, but the details surrounding His return are found outside Revelation in the Old Testament prophets
 - And in particular, the OT’s coverage of Christ’s Second Coming is focused on ending the War of Armageddon
 - That war is called the Great War of God in Revelation, and as we reach the end of Tribulation it becomes focused on the Jews
 - Indwelt by Satan, the Antichrist has lost everything
 - His headquarters is destroyed as is the rest of Babylon, the great city he rebuilt
 - His allies have turned against him and have overrun the city
 - So now he’s sitting in northern Israel with what’s left of his army and only one way to go
 - All that remains is Jerusalem and the last group of Jews on earth still resisting the Antichrist’s reign
 - So now the plan becomes killing that final resistance and in the process, preventing Christ’s return
 - Obviously, this is not the way the story ends...the Antichrist does not succeed in his plans though he tries
 - So we must learn why the enemy wants to kill all remaining Jews and what stops the Antichrist from succeeding in his plans
- So let’s start in Chapter 19 with the preparation in Heaven for the Lord’s arrival
 - In typical fashion, Revelation moves from a discussion of heavenly events followed by their impact on earth

Rev. 19:1 After these things I heard something like a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, “Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God;

Rev. 19:2 BECAUSE HIS JUDGMENTS ARE TRUE AND RIGHTEOUS; for He has judged the great harlot who was corrupting the earth with her immorality, and HE HAS AVENGED THE BLOOD OF HIS BOND-SERVANTS ON HER.”

Rev. 19:3 And a second time they said, “Hallelujah! HER SMOKE RISES UP FOREVER AND EVER.”

Rev. 19:4 And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sits on the throne saying, “Amen. Hallelujah!”

Rev. 19:5 And a voice came from the throne, saying, “Give praise to our God, all

you His bond-servants, you who fear Him, the small and the great.”

- John’s nineteenth chapter opens with *meta houtē houtos* again, that Greek phrase implying a cause-and-effect sequence
 - So the events of Chapters 17 & 18 and these events in heaven are related, and that relationship is somewhat obvious
 - The seventh bowl judgment described in Chapters 16-18 led to several events that precipitated the Lord’s Second Coming
 - First, it made it possible for the Antichrist to move his forces out of Babylon and into northern Israel – Stage I
 - That resulted in the destruction of Babylon, the great harlot, by an attack of rebellious forces – Stage II
 - And now with Babylon’s demise, the way has been paved for Christ’s return because opposition to His rule is quickly disappearing
 - The preparation for Christ’s return begins in the opening of Chapter 19 with the marriage supper of the Lamb
 - The multitude of the heavenly host recognize the significance of this moment and sing out Hallelujah!
 - All human history has been pointing to this moment, and as it arrives, the drama is undeniable even in Heaven
 - They declare that salvation and glory and power belong to God and these characteristics of our God are now ready to appear on earth
 - The Lord has brought His righteous judgment to the ungodly and vile on earth
 - He has avenged those who were persecuted and martyred, just as He promised to the souls under the altar
 - And He has put an end to the chief adversary of the truth, spiritual Babylon in all its forms
- That leads to a moment of worship and praise in Heaven for Who God is and what He has done to bring about the dawn of the Kingdom
 - The elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshipped
 - And all the bond-servants do the same, the great and the small
 - Note that the term bond-servant is a specific reference to the Church saints, so the Church is clearly in Heaven with Jesus
 - This statement refutes any claim that the Church remains on the earth until the Second Coming of Christ
 - In v.5 we see irrefutable evidence that we are already in Heaven at this point
 - Also, note that the leaders in the Heavenly realm are also the worship leaders in that realm
 - Worship is the natural expression of any child of God who recognizes the power, wisdom, grace and goodness of God
 - Never will that be more evident than in Heaven, of course, but we shouldn’t wait until that moment to demonstrate our worship

- Worship isn't merely an inward feeling or thought...it only fulfills its purpose in glorifying God through an outward expression
 - That outward expression takes the form of words, song, posture and other forms of expression
 - So it's a proper and necessary Christian discipline to express our devotion and praise outwardly, both individually and corporately
 - And scenes like this remind us of how important worship is
- So now the stage is set for Christ's return and next we see preparations for that return beginning in Heaven

Rev. 19:6 Then I heard something like the voice of a great multitude and like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, saying, "Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns.

Rev. 19:7 "Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready."

Rev. 19:8 It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.

Rev. 19:9 Then he said to me, "Write, 'Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.'" And he said to me, "These are true words of God."

Rev. 19:10 Then I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, "Do not do that; I am a fellow servant of yours and your brethren who hold the testimony of Jesus; worship God. For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

- In the heavenly realm, a declaration is made by a great multitude (an uncountable number) that Christ reigns!
 - The composition of this multitude then becomes the focus for the next few verses of the chapter
 - The first group called out from within the multitude the Bride, who has made herself ready for the Lamb
 - The "Bride of Christ" is a New Testament reference to the Church saints, those who are baptized in the Spirit by faith in Jesus
- We are given this association by Paul in Ephesians 5

Eph. 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her,

Eph. 5:26 so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word,

Eph. 5:27 that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless.

Eph. 5:32 This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church.

- Paul compares the Church’s relationship to Christ to one of a bride to a husband
 - Elsewhere Paul defines the term “Church” to mean all who have the indwelling of the Holy Spirit
 - And the only ones with that distinction are the saints who lived between Pentecost and the Resurrection (rapture) of the Church
 - Certainly, there are saints who lived before the Church and there are saints who lived after in the Tribulation
 - But only those who fall within this special period are called the Bride of Christ in the Bible
- The Lord has chosen to call His Church a Bride and Himself our Groom to picture our relationship to Him and the events that lie ahead
 - The Lord uses the metaphor of a wedding to reflect the process He follows to bring us to Him and ready the world for our return
 - We studied this connection between marriage and our future as the Church in an earlier lesson
- I compared the Church’s removal from the earth at our resurrection to a Jewish betrothal
 - In this process, the betrothal happens before the bride and groom meet, just as we entered into a covenant with Jesus without meeting Him
 - Next there is a period of waiting for the groom to claim the bride, which is the period the Church is in presently on earth
 - Later the Groom will come for His Bride at the resurrection and we will return to the Groom’s home for a time in Heaven
 - After time with the Groom, the wedding is held and a celebration at the Groom’s house
 - This is followed by the Groom and Bride traveling back to the Bride’s home for another celebration
 - That step will happen after the Second Coming of Christ
 - But now we see the marriage supper at the Groom’s home preparing to happen
 - This is the moment that Jesus told the disciples would take place while He was still with them

Matt. 26:26 While they were eating, Jesus took some bread, and after a blessing, He broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, “Take, eat; this is My body.”

Matt. 26:27 And when He had taken a cup and given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, “Drink from it, all of you;

Matt. 26:28 for this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins.

Matt. 26:29 “But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father’s kingdom.”

- The Lord suspended the Passover meal with a cup of wine still waiting, and He says that final cup awaits the Kingdom

- That celebration will begin with the wedding supper
- Then back in v.8 John hears how the the Bride (i.e., the saints) is prepared for the wedding
 - We receive bright clean linen to wear which are the righteous acts of the saints
 - We discussed the way linen represented our works earlier when we studied the letters to the churches
 - The Church is preparing to go to earth and receive our inheritance and the rewards for our service in the Kingdom
 - So as we prepare to make that journey with Jesus, we receive a token representing their good work done by faith and in service
 - But notice that the linen represents only works that are righteous
 - We will do many works “for” Jesus over the course of our life walking with Him, but not all are righteous
 - Some of those works are done with selfish or insincere motives or are not a result of the leading for the Spirit
 - These are bad works in the sense that they are not directed by and for Jesus... they are simply done for our own sake
 - And those don't count for reward

2Cor. 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.

- So the first group mentioned in the throne room are those who are the Bride (the Church) and we are preparing by donning proper garments
 - Meanwhile, every wedding needs a wedding party to share in the moment and celebrate with the Bride and Groom
 - And there will be guests invited to the wedding in Heaven also
 - In v.9 John is told that those who are able to view this wedding moment in Heaven are blessed by that opportunity
 - So who will be present in Heaven and able to attend this wedding moment and yet will not be the Bride?
 - The Bride isn't invited to her own wedding, so these are saints other than the Church
 - So the guests must be the Old Testament and Tribulation saints
 - Every believer from Abel to John the Baptist and all those who die in Tribulation will be in Heaven at this moment
 - They remain there in spirit form only, without bodies, awaiting their opportunity for resurrection
 - We will study their resurrection moment later in the study
 - Meanwhile, they look on as we participate in the marriage supper of the Lamb

- At the thought of all this, John is moved to spontaneously drop down and worship his escort angel, but the angel tells him to stop
 - He says he is just a servant of God and of believers
 - Instead, worship only God because Jesus is the spirit of all prophecy
- The angel means Jesus by His Spirit is the source of all revelation and the angel was just the messenger of that revelation
 - The author of the message deserves glory, not the conduit of that message
 - So when we are dying of thirst, we praise the water coming through our tap, we don't praise the pipes
 - Similarly, we praise Jesus the Author of this plan, not the messenger who told us about it
- Now at this point in Revelation 19 at v.11, John moves to describing the return of the Lord, but we're not ready to take that step with John
 - We have events on earth that we left hanging, and we need to know how those events conclude before we come back to Chapter 19
 - So on earth at this point, the world had been rocked by unbelievable devastation and turmoil
 - The Kingdom of Satan was wiped out, but the Antichrist is still ruling and persecuting the remaining Jews in Jerusalem
 - His army is now on the move southward, to take the only city still remaining on earth, Jerusalem
 - Since his headquarters is gone, he has no choice but to make Jerusalem his new capital
 - So the great war of God is now about to take place, the war we call Armageddon
 - We've already studied Stages I and II of the battle so let's review them again briefly
 - Stage I was the movement of the Antichrist's forces from east to west, from Babylon to the Jezreel Valley
 - That move was triggered by the Lord drying up the blood river Euphrates and setting the Antichrist's mind to attack Jerusalem
 - Stage II was the invasion of the armies of the northern kings who wipe out Babylon and seize control of the Antichrist's headquarters
 - But then shortly thereafter, the Lord destroyed the city completely with the final bowl judgment
 - So the armies and the city itself cease to exist, but that attack has motivated the Antichrist to move toward Jerusalem
- So now Stage III of the war begins and will be the next part of our study
 - Stage III involves three different locations in the Middle East:
 - Jerusalem, the Mt. of Olives and Botzrah
 - Let's start with an overview from the book of Daniel

Dan. 11:36 “Then the king will do as he pleases, and he will exalt and magnify himself above every god and will speak monstrous things against the God of gods; and he will prosper until the indignation is finished, for that which is decreed will be done.

Dan. 11:37 “He will show no regard for the gods of his fathers or for the desire of women, nor will he show regard for any other god; for he will magnify himself above them all.

Dan. 11:38 “But instead he will honor a god of fortresses, a god whom his fathers did not know; he will honor him with gold, silver, costly stones and treasures.

Dan. 11:39 “He will take action against the strongest of fortresses with the help of a foreign god; he will give great honor to those who acknowledge him and will cause them to rule over the many, and will parcel out land for a price.

- In this passage we studied earlier, we learned that the Antichrist would dominate the world and take control with the power of Satan
 - But then we read this...

Dan. 11:40 “At the end time the king of the South will collide with him, and the king of the North will storm against him with chariots, with horsemen and with many ships; and he will enter countries, overflow them and pass through.

Dan. 11:41 “He will also enter the Beautiful Land, and many countries will fall; but these will be rescued out of his hand: Edom, Moab and the foremost of the sons of Ammon.

- First, notice in v.40 that Daniel says “at the end” meaning at the end of the seven years
 - So we know these events are related to the end of the Tribulation, right before and during Christ’s Second Coming
 - At that time, two of the seven kings will take action against the Antichrist
 - The kings of the South and North collide with the Antichrist, and the Hebrew word for collide is push, as in press in
- These are the two kings that come against Babylon as we studied in Chapter 18
 - They storm against the city of the Antichrist with chariots and horsemen and with ships traveling up river
 - Meanwhile, as that attack is happening, v.40 says the Antichrist is entering other countries, namely Israel, passing through the land
- Then in v.41 Daniel confirms that the Antichrist has entered Israel by calling it the Beautiful Land, which to a Jew means only one place
 - He successfully invades Israel, which we also studied earlier in Chapter 17
 - But notice that three areas of the world will be rescued out of his hands: Edom, Moab and Ammon
 - These are ancient names for roughly the same region, which is present-day

Jordon, a strip of land east of the Jordan River

- This is also the region that includes Botzrah
- So if this area is rescued out of his hand at the end, then it means the Antichrist must attack this area at the very end
 - And the prophet Jeremiah confirms that the Antichrist will attack Botzrah at the very end

Jer. 49:13 “For I have sworn by Myself,” declares the LORD, “that Bozrah will become an object of horror, a reproach, a ruin and a curse; and all its cities will become perpetual ruins.”

Jer. 49:14 I have heard a message from the LORD,
And an envoy is sent among the nations, saying,
“Gather yourselves together and come against her,
And rise up for battle!”

Jer. 49:15 “For behold, I have made you small among the nations,
Despised among men.

Jer. 49:16 “As for the terror of you,
The arrogance of your heart has deceived you,
O you who live in the clefts of the rock,
Who occupy the height of the hill.
Though you make your nest as high as an eagle’s,
I will bring you down from there,” declares the LORD.

- What remains of the Antichrist’s armed forces are located largely in two places
 - First, the bulk of his army is concentrated in the Jezreel Valley in northern Israel ready to attack Jerusalem
 - But there are still others scattered around the ruins of Babylon
 - They escaped the invaders and watched the city’s destruction from afar as described in Chapter 19
 - So Jeremiah says in v.14 that the Antichrist sends an envoy probably on horseback to the nations back in Babylon and instructs them to attack
 - Their target are the Jews at Botzrah
 - Remember that at the mid-point of Tribulation the Lord escorted believing Jews out of Jerusalem into the desert to be protected
 - He prepared a place for them in present-day Southern Jordan, in a rocky canyon area that can’t be easily breeched
 - In the Bible, the place is called Botzrah (Petra), which is Hebrew for a sheep’s fold or pen as Jews will be protected there like sheep
 - And though the enemy will desire to attack and destroy them, he won’t have the ability because the Lord defends His people there
 - But at the very end of Tribulation, the Antichrist will try again to destroy the Jews hiding in Petra
 - And when he does, Jeremiah says that Botzrah in Edom will become a ruin

- He means that the Antichrist's forces there will come to ruin
- Notice in v.15 the Lord says He has made the Antichrist's army small among the nations
- This army has been reduced greatly by the judgments and yet it will still try to defeat the Jews in protection

Jer. 49:21 The earth has quaked at the noise of their downfall. There is an outcry! The noise of it has been heard at the Red Sea.

Jer. 49:22 Behold, He will mount up and swoop like an eagle and spread out His wings against Bozrah; and the hearts of the mighty men of Edom in that day will be like the heart of a woman in labor.

- And in vs.21-22 Jeremiah says the Lord will swoop down like an eagle to defend His people
 - The Lord's Second Coming involves an appearance at Botzrah, to defend those waiting in protection there
 - We will come back to this moment a little later, but for now let's move to the second major theater of this war: Jerusalem
 - And that takes us back to our overview in Daniel 11

Dan. 11:42 "Then he will stretch out his hand against other countries, and the land of Egypt will not escape.

Dan. 11:43 "But he will gain control over the hidden treasures of gold and silver and over all the precious things of Egypt; and Libyans and Ethiopians will follow at his heels.

Dan. 11:44 "But rumors from the East and from the North will disturb him, and he will go forth with great wrath to destroy and annihilate many.

Dan. 11:45 "He will pitch the tents of his royal pavilion between the seas and the beautiful Holy Mountain; yet he will come to his end, and no one will help him.

- As the Antichrist rampages throughout the remaining inhabitable lands of the Middle East, he receives a report, a rumor, from the East and from the North
 - In v.44 Daniel says these reports from the East and North will disturb him
 - This reminds us of what we learned last week when we studied the destruction of Babylon
 - The Antichrist, while in the land of Israel, hears of the defeat of Babylon at the hands of the king of the North
 - Those are the rumors that disturb him here, and notice they bring him to great wrath and lead him to annihilate many
 - Then in v.45 Daniel says this news also causes him to move his forces from the Jezreel Valley to the west side of Jerusalem
 - It says he pitches his tents of his royal pavilion, which is proof that this is a

military encampment on the move

- He locates his encampment between two familiar places in Israel
 - On the east stands the beautiful Holy Mountain, a reference to Mt. Zion where the temple is located
 - On the west he has the seas, and the only sea touching Israel is the Mediterranean Sea
 - So he will be located in the Shephelah, the foothills on the western side of the country
- Once again notice that this battle will also not go his way
 - In v.45 Daniel says that he will come to his end and no one will help him
 - He will have no allies or other forces come to his aid and of course nothing will be able to stand against Christ anyway
- So the Antichrist's deployment of his forces to Botzrah and Jerusalem is Stage III of the War of Armageddon
 - These movements are triggered by the news that his headquarters is gone
 - It enrages the Antichrist and leads him to go forth in anger to annihilate many, specifically the Jews in Botzrah and Jerusalem
 - The third area of action at Christ's Second Coming will be on the Mt. of Olives, but we will wait to address that scene later
 - For now, let's stay with the action near Jerusalem and consult a few other texts to understand how that battle develops
 - The armies of the Antichrist siege the city and prepare to breach what defenses remain
 - Remember, the Tribulation has reduced men to attacking on horses using ancient weaponry
 - And stone walls are once again an effective defense
 - So the Antichrist's attack will proceed in a manner similar to ancient warfare
 - A siege followed by an assault and a defense using basic weapons, and ultimately hand-to-hand combat
 - The OT prophets give plenty of detail about the attack of Jerusalem, but we're only going to look at a few select places
 - Beginning with Joel, who tells us this attack is centered on Jerusalem in the Valley of Jehoshaphat

Joel 3:9 Proclaim this among the nations:

Prepare a war; rouse the mighty men!

Let all the soldiers draw near, let them come up!

Joel 3:10 Beat your plowshares into swords

And your pruning hooks into spears;

Let the weak say, "I am a mighty man."

Joel 3:11 Hasten and come, all you surrounding nations,

And gather yourselves there.

Bring down, O LORD, Your mighty ones.

Joel 3:12 Let the nations be aroused

And come up to the valley of Jehoshaphat,

For there I will sit to judge

All the surrounding nations.

- Joel says that warriors will come against the city having beaten farming implements into makeshift weapons
 - They come because the Lord has brought them here, in the sense that He has orchestrated the events leading to this battle
 - They come to the valley of Jehoshaphat, which is another name for the Kidron valley along the east side of the city
 - So the armies approach from the west and eventually surround the city on all sides
- Isaiah gives us more detail on this attack

Is. 29:1 Woe, O Ariel, Ariel the city where David once camped!

Add year to year, observe your feasts on schedule.

Is. 29:2 I will bring distress to Ariel,

And she will be a city of lamenting and mourning;

And she will be like an Ariel to me.

Is. 29:3 I will camp against you encircling you,

And I will set siegeworks against you,

And I will raise up battle towers against you.

Is. 29:4 Then you will be brought low;

From the earth you will speak,

And from the dust where you are prostrate

Your words will come.

Your voice will also be like that of a spirit from the ground,

And your speech will whisper from the dust.

Is. 29:5 But the multitude of your enemies will become like fine dust,

And the multitude of the ruthless ones like the chaff which blows away;

And it will happen instantly, suddenly.

Is. 29:6 From the LORD of hosts you will be punished with thunder and earthquake and loud noise,

With whirlwind and tempest and the flame of a consuming fire.

Is. 29:7 And the multitude of all the nations who wage war against Ariel,

Even all who wage war against her and her stronghold, and who distress her,

Will be like a dream, a vision of the night.

- In this passage, Isaiah describes the place under attack as Ariel, which is another Hebrew name for the city of Jerusalem
 - We see that confirmed because Isaiah says it's the city where David once camped
 - And this city will be under siege with battle towers erected and it will be like

an “*ariel*” to the Lord

- The word Ariel literally means altar, or a place of sacrifice
- The Lord will be making a sacrifice with the people who die in the battle, an atoning sacrifice for the sins of the nation
- During the Antichrist’s siege, the city’s inhabitants will be faint of heart, expecting to die at any minute
 - Notice in v.4 it will result in the nation bowing low, speaking from the earth, meaning with their face on the ground
 - That’s a posture of humility and worship, so the nation will be moved to seek for God
 - And from the dust where they are prostrate, their voice will rise up like a spirit from the ground
 - We will study this moment more later
- Meanwhile, notice that the enemies of Israel will be struck down in an instant, suddenly as a result of Israel’s prayers for help
 - In a whirlwind of consuming fire, all the nations that stood against her will be gone as if it was just a dream
 - Clearly, this is a supernatural defeat
- Micah confirms this account

Mic. 4:9 “Now, why do you cry out loudly?

**Is there no king among you,
Or has your counselor perished,
That agony has gripped you like a woman in childbirth?**

Mic. 4:11 “And now many nations have been assembled against you

**Who say, ‘Let her be polluted,
And let our eyes gloat over Zion.’**

Mic. 4:12 “But they do not know the thoughts of the LORD,

**And they do not understand His purpose;
For He has gathered them like sheaves to the threshing floor.**

- Micah asks why the people of Israel cry out and why is there no king among them?
 - These are rhetorical and somewhat mocking questions, because God is pointing out they turned their back on their king in times past
 - And now that’s why Israel is suffering in this time
 - Many nations have assembled before Israel and are gloating over their opportunity to possess the city
 - But they don’t know that the Lord has set them up in this trap, and the trap is about to be sprung on them
 - They don’t understand the Lord’s purpose which is to destroy all of the Antichrist’s forces

- He has gathered the Antichrist’s army at Jerusalem like sheaves in a threshing floor to be crushed and separated like wheat from chaff
- Finally, Zechariah tells us this plan of allowing the attack on Jerusalem serves God’s purpose in putting pressure on Israel

Zech. 13:7 “Awake, O sword, against My Shepherd,
And against the man, My Associate,”
Declares the LORD of hosts.

“Strike the Shepherd that the sheep may be scattered;
And I will turn My hand against the little ones.

Zech. 13:8 “It will come about in all the land,”

Declares the LORD,
“That two parts in it will be cut off and perish;
But the third will be left in it.

Zech. 13:9 “And I will bring the third part through the fire,
Refine them as silver is refined,
And test them as gold is tested.
They will call on My name,
And I will answer them;
I will say, ‘They are My people,’
And they will say, ‘The LORD is my God.’”

- In v.7 Zechariah refers to the Lord as the Shepherd and the Antichrist as My Associate
 - The Shepherd would be struck down in His day and Israel would be scattered
 - That’s clearly a reference to the Lord’s first coming
 - After Jesus died, the Lord scattered the Jews in AD 70 as penalty for rejecting their Messiah
 - And now the time has come for the Lord to bring judgment against the man, My Associate, speaking of the Antichrist and Satan behind the scenes
 - In v.8 Zechariah says that two parts to the land will be cut off and perish
 - These two parts cut off are the sections of Israel in the north and south
 - Those Jews living there will die when the Antichrist enters the land
 - Only the Jews left in the middle of the nation in the city of Jerusalem will be alive
 - And this group will be put through a furnace of trial to refine them
 - This will ultimately lead these Jews to respond to their fate by calling out for their Lord
 - And He will answer them, Zechariah says
- Finally, Zechariah gives a very detailed description of the attack and of the Lord’s defense of the city

Zech. 12:1 The burden of the word of the LORD concerning Israel. Thus declares the LORD who stretches out the heavens, lays the foundation of the earth,

and forms the spirit of man within him,

Zech. 12:2 “Behold, I am going to make Jerusalem a cup that causes reeling to all the peoples around; and when the siege is against Jerusalem, it will also be against Judah.

Zech. 12:3 “It will come about in that day that I will make Jerusalem a heavy stone for all the peoples; all who lift it will be severely injured. And all the nations of the earth will be gathered against it.

Zech. 12:4 “In that day,” declares the LORD, “I will strike every horse with bewilderment and his rider with madness. But I will watch over the house of Judah, while I strike every horse of the peoples with blindness.

Zech. 12:5 “Then the clans of Judah will say in their hearts, ‘A strong support for us are the inhabitants of Jerusalem through the LORD of hosts, their God.’

Zech. 12:6 “In that day I will make the clans of Judah like a firepot among pieces of wood and a flaming torch among sheaves, so they will consume on the right hand and on the left all the surrounding peoples, while the inhabitants of Jerusalem again dwell on their own sites in Jerusalem.

Zech. 12:7 “The LORD also will save the tents of Judah first, so that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem will not be magnified above Judah.

Zech. 12:8 “In that day the LORD will defend the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and the one who is feeble among them in that day will be like David, and the house of David will be like God, like the angel of the LORD before them.

Zech. 12:9 “And in that day I will set about to destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem.

- After the siege comes against Jerusalem, the Lord will make the city like a heavy stone too heavy to lift
 - And when the nations try to “lift” it, they will be injured in the attempt
 - He is describing the way the Lord supernaturally defends the city during the Antichrist’s siege so that he can’t take the city
 - The horses will be struck with bewilderment and blindness and the riders with madness
 - So the attackers and their animals will become confused and disorganized
 - At the sight of this, in v.5 we’re told the people in the city will acknowledge that the Lord is the One coming to their defense
 - In v.7 the Lord will defend not only those living in the city but also Jews who are camped outside the protection of the walls
 - Those dwelling in tents is a description of Jews who are outside the city and especially vulnerable to the attack
 - Judah is a reference to the larger region in which Jerusalem sits, so the Lord will defend not only the city but all of Judah
 - Remember, this is the “middle” third of the people that God said He would refine by ultimately saving
 - And in v.8 we see that the Lord will strengthen the hearts of the people for the

battle, so even the weakest will be like David before Goliath

- The end result will be that the Lord will destroy all the nations that come against Jerusalem in that coming day
 - Later in our study we'll come back to this scene to see how Jesus accomplishes this victory upon His return
 - But here we see that even before Jesus returns, the Lord works supernaturally to defend Jerusalem
- This moment is pictured in the history of Israel in a vivid way in the story of Hezekiah
 - In Chapter 37 of Isaiah and in 2 Kings 19 we learn the story of Assyria's siege of Jerusalem
 - Assyria was sent by God to destroy the Northern Kingdom of Israel as punishment for their sins
 - But Assyria became proud and thought it had the right to conquer Judah as well
 - God did not give Judah into Assyria's hands...Assyria was told they could destroy only the Northern Kingdom
 - But the king of Assyria was greedy and decided to attack the south anyway
 - The Assyrians invaded Judah encamped around Jerusalem sieging the city and attempting to defeat it
 - They had a massive army and it appeared as if the city would be defeated
 - At one point the commander of the Assyrian army sends a letter to King Hezekiah demanding surrender or suffer annihilation
 - The people were faint with fear and expected to be crushed
 - But King Hezekiah famously took the letter from the commander of the Assyrians and spread it out before the Lord and prayed
- He ends the prayer saying:

2Kings 19:19 “Now, O LORD our God, I pray, deliver us from his hand that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that You alone, O LORD, are God.”

2Kings 19:20 Then Isaiah the son of Amoz sent to Hezekiah saying, “Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, ‘Because you have prayed to Me about Sennacherib king of Assyria, I have heard you.’”

- The Lord tells Hezekiah that because he prayed, the Lord would rescue the city from the Assyrians
 - And then the Lord says to the commander of the Assyrian army

2Kings 19:28 ‘Because of your raging against Me,
And because your arrogance has come up to My ears,
Therefore I will put My hook in your nose,
And My bridle in your lips,
And I will turn you back by the way which you came.

2Kings 19:29 ‘Then this shall be the sign for you: you will eat this year what grows of itself, in the second year what springs from the same, and in the third year sow, reap, plant vineyards, and eat their fruit.

2Kings 19:30 ‘The surviving remnant of the house of Judah will again take root downward and bear fruit upward.

2Kings 19:31 ‘For out of Jerusalem will go forth a remnant, and out of Mount Zion survivors. The zeal of the LORD will perform this.

2Kings 19:32 ‘Therefore thus says the LORD concerning the king of Assyria, “He will not come to this city or shoot an arrow there; and he will not come before it with a shield or throw up a siege ramp against it.

2Kings 19:33 “By the way that he came, by the same he will return, and he shall not come to this city,” declares the LORD.

2Kings 19:34 ‘For I will defend this city to save it for My own sake and for My servant David’s sake.’”

2Kings 19:35 Then it happened that night that the angel of the LORD went out and struck 185,000 in the camp of the Assyrians; and when men rose early in the morning, behold, all of them were dead.

- This story is a picture of what takes place in the time of Tribulation with Jerusalem and the Antichrist
 - And it also pictures the way the nation will be saved by the Lord in the end as well
 - Israel will feel the pressure of the fight, and fearing for their lives, they will finally turn to their Lord
 - And when they bow to Him and ask for rescue, then the Lord will rescue them
 - He will come and finish the fight for them, just as He destroyed the Assyrian army Himself
 - The Lord went into the Assyrian camp as the Angel of the Lord and destroyed the army Himself
 - This is what we will study next week as we see the Lord’s return and His destruction of the Antichrist’s armies
 - Beginning with the army in Botzrah and ending with the army attacking Jerusalem
 - And in that study we will also look closely at the moment that Israel calls out for Jesus as we saw tonight
 - And as we do, we will learn why it is so important to Satan that he destroy the Jews in Tribulation
 - And also why it’s so important to God that the Jewish people survive