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Revelation

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Chapter 19:11-16

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- Let's rejoin the final battle of our age, the War of Armageddon, or as the Bible calls it, the war of the great day of God
 - Like most wars, the war of Armageddon isn't one battle that takes place in a single moment
 - Rather, it's a series of events that take place over days and weeks
 - The war concludes the seven-year Tribulation, and in the midst of the war, Jesus returns to bring an end to the Antichrist's rule
 - But even the Lord's return isn't a single moment as it first appears to be in Revelation 19
 - Revelation 19 summarizes His return, but it leaves out many details, because those details are already given in earlier books
 - So as we did last week, we will spend significant time outside the book of Revelation to fill in those details
 - Last week we read through Revelation 19:10 which described the events in Heaven prior to the Lord's coming
 - During that time the early stages of the war are playing out as a result of the seventh bowl judgment
 - As I said two lessons ago, the final bowl judgments set off a chain of events like falling dominos
 - That chain of events starts the war and moves it along its five stages until the end comes
- So far, we've studied Stages I, II and III of the war, so let's summarize what we learned
 - The sixth bowl judgment dried up the river Euphrates so that God could lure the Antichrist and his forces to leave Babylon
 - They travel west toward Israel and camp in the Jezreel valley preparing to move southward to invade Jerusalem
 - This movement is also the first stage of the war of Armageddon
 - The Antichrist hopes to crush the remaining Jews in Jerusalem and Petra who continue to resist his reign
 - While they are gathered in the Jezreel Valley, Stage II of the war commences in Babylon
 - Two of the seven kings under the Antichrist's rule rebel against him and invade his capital city Babylon
 - And after they invade, the Lord brings the final bowl judgment against the city, reducing it to ashes and destroying the invaders
 - With the Antichrist's beloved city in ruins, he now has no choice except to move forward in attacking Jerusalem as God intends
- This leads to Stage III of the war as the Antichrist moves his forces southward through the central valleys and into the Shephelah foothills
 - Eventually they reach a point between the Great Sea and the Holy Mountain, as Zechariah told us

- Then from that point, they advance east up to Jerusalem eventually surrounding the city and sieging it
 - Because the Tribulation has reduced society to a rudimentary level of technology, warfare returns to a medieval style
 - Zechariah and other Old Testament prophets told us the Antichrist uses siege ramps, horses, swords, and the like
 - And for the same reason the Jews in Jerusalem are protected for the most part by the walls of the city
- And during the siege, the Lord supernaturally defends the city, including defending those who are encamped outside the walls
 - The city inhabitants recognize that the Lord is working in that time to defend them from the Antichrist and they rejoice
 - Ultimately it will cause them to turn to the Lord in repentance which we will study soon
- Meanwhile, the Antichrist opens a second front in this war by sending what's left of his forces at Babylon to Petra to siege the Jews there
 - Petra or Botzrah is the place the Lord has prepared to keep the remnant of Israel safe during the final 3.5 years of Tribulation
 - Satan initially tried to destroy the remnant during their flight to Petra, but the Lord protected them as He did in the Exodus
 - And now Satan tries again by directing the Antichrist to use his army to attack
- Tonight we move forward along both fronts, beginning with the Lord moving from Heaven to Earth to become personally involved in these events
 - And to start that examination, we first need to remember the purpose of the Tribulation itself
 - Daniel gave us six reasons why the nation of Israel must endure the Age of the Gentiles, including the seven-year Tribulation

Dan. 9:24 “Seventy weeks have been decreed for your people and your holy city, to finish the transgression, to make an end of sin, to make atonement for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up vision and prophecy and to anoint the most holy place.

- The angel told Daniel that this period of history would accomplish six things for Israel
- Among other things, it brings an end to sin in Israel and ushers in everlasting righteousness
- Simply put, it brings saving faith to all Israel and causes them to return to the Lord
 - And the Lord accomplishes this by placing the nation in an incredibly difficult situation after seven years of intense trial
 - And at their low point the Lord begins to show Himself to them and they begin to rejoice in Him as Zechariah told us
- Speaking of the Antichrist's siege against Jerusalem, the prophet wrote

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.’”**

- Earlier in this study we learned the Tribulation period was made necessary for Israel because of the agreement God made with them in the Mosaic Covenant
 - In the Old Covenant, the Lord told Israel that unless the entire nation kept His law perfect for all generations, they would suffer consequences
 - The consequences for failing to keep the law perfectly would be severe and the Lord warned them in advance
 - Moses said this to the generation of Israel that agreed with this covenant

Deut. 29:14 “Now not with you alone am I making this covenant and this oath,
Deut. 29:15 but both with those who stand here with us today in the presence of the LORD our God and with those who are not with us here today
Deut. 29:16 (for you know how we lived in the land of Egypt, and how we came through the midst of the nations through which you passed;
Deut. 29:17 moreover, you have seen their abominations and their idols of wood, stone, silver, and gold, which they had with them);
Deut. 29:18 so that there will not be among you a man or woman, or family or tribe, whose heart turns away today from the LORD our God, to go and serve the gods of those nations; that there will not be among you a root bearing poisonous fruit and wormwood.

- When Israel entered into the covenant shortly before entering the Promised Land, Moses put Israel on notice
 - Moses said this covenant was a national arrangement that bound not only the Jews in the desert but also their descendants
 - So the requirements of the covenant and the consequences of failure apply to everyone equally
- This Mosaic covenant set a standard for God’s relationship with His people that stand to this day
 - As the individual goes, so goes the nation and as the nation goes, so goes the individual
 - Until the covenant is fulfilled, the nation will continue to be held to its terms

- An individual Jew is released from the Law when they place their faith in Jesus Christ, because He fulfilled it in its entirety on their behalf

Rom. 7:4 Therefore, my brethren, you also were made to die to the Law through the body of Christ, so that you might be joined to another, to Him who was raised from the dead, in order that we might bear fruit for God.

Rom. 7:5 For while we were in the flesh, the sinful passions, which were aroused by the Law, were at work in the members of our body to bear fruit for death.

Rom. 7:6 But now we have been released from the Law, having died to that by which we were bound, so that we serve in newness of the Spirit and not in oldness of the letter.

- But apart from the remnant who come to faith in Jesus, the rest of the nation of Israel remains bound to the Law's commands and penalties
 - In Deuteronomy 29 the Lord goes on to say that when Israel fails to keep the covenant, which was inevitable, then the curses would come
 - And those curses would lead future generations of Israel to recognize the problem

Deut. 29:22 “Now the generation to come, your sons who rise up after you and the foreigner who comes from a distant land, when they see the plagues of the land and the diseases with which the LORD has afflicted it, will say, **Deut. 29:23** ‘All its land is brimstone and salt, a burning waste, unsown and unproductive, and no grass grows in it, like the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, Admah and Zeboiim, which the LORD overthrew in His anger and in His wrath.’

Deut. 29:24 “All the nations will say, ‘Why has the LORD done thus to this land? Why this great outburst of anger?’

Deut. 29:25 “Then men will say, ‘Because they forsook the covenant of the LORD, the God of their fathers, which He made with them when He brought them out of the land of Egypt.’

- Notice the judgments that are described here have never been experienced in Israel, not even till today
- They are a description of the devastation that comes during the day of the Lord, the seven year Tribulation
- While the curses for failing to keep the Old Covenant will be severe, they are evidence of God's grace because of the way they lead to good
 - First, as we learned earlier in this study, Israel's period of judgment under the Old Covenant gives opportunity for Gentiles
 - The period of the Church Age is made possible because the Lord sets His people aside for a time to make salvation available to us
 - As Paul said

Rom. 11:7 What then? What Israel is seeking, it has not obtained, but those who were chosen obtained it, and the rest were hardened;

Rom. 11:11 I say then, they did not stumble so as to fall, did they? May it never be! But by their transgression salvation has come to the Gentiles, to make them jealous.

- Secondly, the Lord will use the period of Israel’s judgment to bring the nation back to Himself as Daniel and Zechariah indicated
 - In their trial and testing, the nation will call out for the Lord and He will hear them
 - Jesus said this must happen before He would be willing to return to His people and give them the Kingdom

Luke 13:34 “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, just as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you would not have it!

Luke 13:35 “Behold, your house is left to you desolate; and I say to you, you will not see Me until the time comes when you say, ‘BLESSED IS HE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD!’”

- Jesus set the terms for His Second Coming for His people...they must call out for Him as their Messiah
 - When they call out for Him, then He will return to them as promised
 - The trial of Tribulation will create the circumstances under which the nation of Israel will experience that change of heart
- And even before the Lord came to Israel the first time, the Old Covenant itself foretold that Israel would experience judgment followed by repentance

Lev. 26:40 ‘If they confess their iniquity and the iniquity of their forefathers, in their unfaithfulness which they committed against Me, and also in their acting with hostility against Me —

Lev. 26:41 I also was acting with hostility against them, to bring them into the land of their enemies — or if their uncircumcised heart becomes humbled so that they then make amends for their iniquity,

Lev. 26:42 then I will remember My covenant with Jacob, and I will remember also My covenant with Isaac, and My covenant with Abraham as well, and I will remember the land.

- Leviticus says that after Israel has experienced the curses required by the Old Covenant during the Tribulation, it would experience a change of heart
 - And in their Law, God made provision for His grace...a loophole I called it
 - The loophole in Leviticus 26:40-42 gives Israel a way to escape the penalties of the Old Covenant on the basis of faith alone

- First, each Jew must confess his own sin and their need for a Savior, just as anyone coming to faith in Jesus
 - That is sufficient repentance for that individual to be saved, but there's still the issue of the nation's rescue
- And the Old Covenant requires that the entire nation make this confession together, no exceptions
 - Israel must make a national confession of repentance which Leviticus calls a confession of the sin of their forefathers
 - Specifically, this future generation of Israel must confess that their forefathers were wrong when they crucified Jesus
 - So a personal confession is enough for personal salvation but a national confession is necessary for the nation's salvation
- And when the nation makes that national confession of faith in Jesus, the Lord said He'll remember His promises in the Abrahamic Covenant
 - When the Lord says He remembers something, it's a way of saying this is the moment when His promise will be fulfilled
 - So the promises He gave Abraham will be brought to fulfillment in the moment that Israel makes that national confession
- The Bible says that all Israel will make this confession at the end of Tribulation when the city of Israel is under siege and the people in fear
 - Paul says this in Romans

Rom. 11:25 For I do not want you, brethren, to be uninformed of this mystery — so that you will not be wise in your own estimation — that a partial hardening has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in;

Rom. 11:26 and so all Israel will be saved; just as it is written,

**“THE DELIVERER WILL COME FROM ZION,
HE WILL REMOVE UNGODLINESS FROM JACOB.”**

Rom. 11:27 **“THIS IS MY COVENANT WITH THEM,
WHEN I TAKE AWAY THEIR SINS.”**

- Notice Paul says that all Israel – the entire nation of Jews alive on earth in that moment – will be saved in a future day
 - That moment will happen when the deliverer, Jesus, comes from Zion
 - That Zion mentioned in v.26 is Heavenly Zion, a reference to Christ's Second Coming
 - So the Second Coming of Jesus will be associated with God removing all ungodliness from His people Israel
- Just as Daniel told us in Chapter 9...the age of the Gentiles would result in the removal of Israel's sin and the ushering in of righteousness
 - And at the moment, every living Jew on earth will be saved, because every living Jew will be part of this national confession
 - Remember under the Old Covenant, as the individual goes, so goes the nation and

vice versa

- That's why Jesus made this promise to Israel:

Matt. 24:13 “But the one who endures to the end, he will be saved.

Matt. 24:14 “This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come.

- At the end of Tribulation, the nation of Israel will be under such intense pressure in Jerusalem, that they will turn back to the Lord
 - And at a certain point in that battle, the unbelieving Jews in Jerusalem are all moved to confess Jesus
 - That's what we're waiting for in our study of the war of Armageddon
- Jesus is in Heaven with His Bride made ready to return to Her home
 - Babylon is gone, the rest of the world is in ruins, food and water is running out and the Antichrist is positioned around the city
 - The believing Jews in Petra are alive and well, protected by the Lord and waiting His return
 - And the unbelieving Jews in Jerusalem are desperately pleading with God for rescue as the Antichrist attacks
 - Meanwhile, all that's remaining is for all the unbelieving Jews in the city to obey the Lord's demands to declare Him Messiah
 - At the point they say blessed is He Who comes in the name of the Lord, Jesus will hear them and return to save them all
 - All Israel will be saved and the Tribulation will end, because it will have met its ultimate purpose in bringing Israel to faith
 - But how does Israel move to that last step...how does Israel ever reach a point where every Jew simultaneously comes to faith?

Luke 18:27 But He said, “The things that are impossible with people are possible with God.”

- This may seem impossible, but if so it's only because we view salvation as a human decision
- And if salvation was only a matter of a personal decision, it truly would be impossible, but all things are possible with God
- So now it's time we return to the events of the war beginning with the war on the Jerusalem front
 - The Antichrist has seized the city and Zechariah tells us how the siege leads to the moment required by Leviticus 26
 - When all the city confesses their faith in Jesus

Zech. 14:1 Behold, a day is coming for the LORD when the spoil taken from you

will be divided among you.

Zech. 14:2 For I will gather all the nations against Jerusalem to battle, and the city will be captured, the houses plundered, the women ravished and half of the city exiled, but the rest of the people will not be cut off from the city.

- Zechariah says a day is coming for Israel when the tables will be turned
 - Instead of Israel being the oppressed and conquered, they will be the conquerors
 - In other words, the Age of the Gentiles will end and the Age of the Messianic Kingdom will come
 - And that turn begins with all nations of the earth gathered against Jerusalem to battle the city
 - This has never happened before...so this is an unfulfilled prophecy
 - But when the leader of the entire world attacks Jerusalem, then truly we can say the entire world has come against the city
 - So Zechariah is describing the Antichrist's attack in Stage III of the war of the Armageddon
 - And he goes on to report that the battle will initially result in the city walls breached and part of the city will be captured
 - Half the city will be exiled and women in the city will be sexually assaulted as often happens in warfare
 - But God intervenes to prevent the entire city from being overrun by the Antichrist's attack
 - The Lord has allowed the Antichrist's forces to gain this partial victory to put the remaining city under added pressure
 - Earlier in Zechariah 12, the prophet explains the Lord's purpose

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.

- The Lord has set a trap for the Antichrist by bringing him to siege the city and by allowing him a degree of success in the early goings on
 - We studied this passage last week, and we learned that the end effect of the siege would be the Antichrist's defeat
 - But we also learned that the city would be terrified of defeat, and now we know why
 - The Antichrist will manage to capture half of the city resulting in many dying and worse
 - But as Zechariah 12 told us last week, the Antichrist's partial victory is merely set

up for his total defeat

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.

- In that day, the Lord will set about to destroy the nations that have come against the city
- And that turn begins with a movement of the Spirit

Zech. 12:10 “I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, so that they will look on Me whom they have pierced; and they will mourn for Him, as one mourns for an only son, and they will weep bitterly over Him like the bitter weeping over a firstborn.

- As with every work of salvation, the Lord is the first to move when at the 11th hour the nation seems on the verge of annihilation, the Lord sends His Spirit
 - He pours His Spirit out on two related groups: the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem
 - The house of David refers to the ruling class of the nation of Israel
 - The inhabitants of the city refer to exactly that...the Jewish population still alive in the city
 - Remember, many have been taken away but a part of the city remains, and it's this remaining group that is still alive in the city
 - And this group, as a result of the pouring out of the Spirit, begin to make a national confession of faith
 - They look upon Jesus, the One that Israel pierced in previous millennia, and they mourn for Him
 - They mourn for Jesus like someone mourning for an only son who has died, which is a subtle reference to the Son of God
 - So those remaining Jews who are barricaded in the city receive the gift of faith as the Spirit comes upon them all
 - And the effect of the Spirit's arrival is an instant recognition that Jesus is the Messiah
 - Except that this doesn't feel like good news to these Jews, because the Spirit also reveals that Israel killed its Messiah
 - Zechariah says they mourn terribly for Jesus, and this mourning is a sign they have come to believe in Him
 - But their belief will not result in joy because they assume they have lost their chance to receive Him

- Their Messiah came for them once before, but they killed Him they realize
- So now in their greatest moment of need, they assume it's too late to expect Him to save them
- But remember what Leviticus 26 told the nation...

Lev. 26:42 then I will remember My covenant with Jacob, and I will remember also My covenant with Isaac, and My covenant with Abraham as well, and I will remember the land.

- The Lord's response to Israel is based on His covenant with Abraham, not based on the Old Covenant made with Moses
 - And why is it not based on the Old Covenant? Because in the moment the nation confesses Christ, they are no longer under it
 - They have come out from under the Law, and the Law of Moses is no longer in effect
- So the Lord moves on the basis of grace alone to fulfill the unconditional promises He made to Abraham's descendants
 - The Lord brings all His people to faith in the midst of this crisis, every single person, and Zechariah makes that clear

Zech. 12:11 “In that day there will be great mourning in Jerusalem, like the mourning of Hadadrimmon in the plain of Megiddo.

Zech. 12:12 “The land will mourn, every family by itself; the family of the house of David by itself and their wives by themselves; the family of the house of Nathan by itself and their wives by themselves;

Zech. 12:13 the family of the house of Levi by itself and their wives by themselves; the family of the Shimeites by itself and their wives by themselves;

Zech. 12:14 all the families that remain, every family by itself and their wives by themselves.

- Zechariah makes it clear that the Spirit's impact on Israel is universal
 - All the families that remain in the city come to faith, and moreover this mass revival happens as people are in isolation
 - Four groups of the Jews are mentioned to represent the entire spectrum of Jewish people
 - David (ruling class), Nathan (prophets), Levi (priests), and Shimeites (the common Jews)
- In other words, the great and small, the learned and uneducated, the privileged and the ordinary are all coming to the same faith in Jesus
 - And this happens while they are alone with their families, meaning this isn't a group experience
 - Nor is it the result of conventional evangelism where one person tells another

- Every Jew is individually and simultaneously convinced by the Spirit
- There is a beautiful Psalm that captures the thinking of the Jewish people in Jerusalem in this moment when they come to faith

Psa. 79:1 O God, the nations have invaded Your inheritance;

They have defiled Your holy temple;

They have laid Jerusalem in ruins.

Psa. 79:2 They have given the dead bodies of Your servants for food to the birds of the heavens,

The flesh of Your godly ones to the beasts of the earth.

Psa. 79:3 They have poured out their blood like water round about Jerusalem;

And there was no one to bury them.

Psa. 79:4 We have become a reproach to our neighbors,

A scoffing and derision to those around us.

Psa. 79:5 How long, O LORD? Will You be angry forever?

Will Your jealousy burn like fire?

Psa. 79:6 Pour out Your wrath upon the nations which do not know You,

And upon the kingdoms which do not call upon Your name.

Psa. 79:7 For they have devoured Jacob

And laid waste his habitation.

Psa. 79:8 Do not remember the iniquities of our forefathers against us;

Let Your compassion come quickly to meet us,

For we are brought very low.

Psa. 79:9 Help us, O God of our salvation, for the glory of Your name;

And deliver us and forgive our sins for Your name's sake.

Psa. 79:10 Why should the nations say, "Where is their God?"

Let there be known among the nations in our sight,

Vengeance for the blood of Your servants which has been shed.

Psa. 79:11 Let the groaning of the prisoner come before You;

According to the greatness of Your power preserve those who are doomed to die.

Psa. 79:12 And return to our neighbors sevenfold into their bosom

The reproach with which they have reproached You, O Lord.

Psa. 79:13 So we Your people and the sheep of Your pasture

Will give thanks to You forever;

To all generations we will tell of Your praise.

- Psalm 79 captures the repentant voice of the nation in that moment as the Antichrist presses his attack against the city
 - And the very next Psalm, Ps. 80, continues that confession moment
 - The climax of that confession comes at the end

Psa. 80:14 O God of hosts, turn again now, we beseech You;

Look down from heaven and see, and take care of this vine,

Psa. 80:15 Even the shoot which Your right hand has planted,
And on the son whom You have strengthened for Yourself.

Psa. 80:16 It is burned with fire, it is cut down;
They perish at the rebuke of Your countenance.

Psa. 80:17 Let Your hand be upon the man of Your right hand,
Upon the son of man whom You made strong for Yourself.

Psa. 80:18 Then we shall not turn back from You;
Revive us, and we will call upon Your name.

Psa. 80:19 O LORD God of hosts, restore us;
Cause Your face to shine upon us, and we will be saved.

- The nation is calling for the Son Who God has strengthened for Himself
 - But that shoot (the shoot of Jesse) is burned with fire and cut down, they say
 - They're recognizing they have rejected their only hope, the Son of God
- But nevertheless, they ask that the Lord's hand would be upon the Son of God, meaning that He would be sent back to them again
 - And this time they promise not to turn back from Him
 - Instead, if the Lord should revive Israel they will call upon His name as Jesus required they do
 - And when that happens they know they will be saved
- So the climactic moment of Jesus' Second coming isn't His return but rather it's Israel's repentance and call for Jesus to rescue them from certain death
 - And Hosea tells us the precise moment when this turn happens

Hos. 6:1 "Come, let us return to the LORD.
For He has torn us, but He will heal us;
He has wounded us, but He will bandage us.

Hos. 6:2 "He will revive us after two days;
He will raise us up on the third day,
That we may live before Him.

Hos. 6:3 "So let us know, let us press on to know the LORD.
His going forth is as certain as the dawn;
And He will come to us like the rain,
Like the spring rain watering the earth."

- Hosea says the Lord's reviving of Israel happens after two days, and He raises them up on the third day
 - In this context, to be raised up doesn't mean to be resurrected but to be raised spiritually
 - They are saved on the third day of the Antichrist's siege of the city
- In those first two days, the city is captured, half of the Jews are killed and the women are sexually assaulted as Zechariah says

- But that final half of the city is able to survive until the third day
- And as Jesus said in Matthew, the one who endures to the end shall be saved
- And the Lord will come to them as rain watering the earth, which is a consistent picture of God’s grace in the Bible
- So the Jews have called out for Jesus, and in Heaven the Lord hears their call and as promised He comes to earth a second time to save His people

Rev. 19:11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war.

Rev. 19:12 His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems; and He has a name written on Him which no one knows except Himself.

Rev. 19:13 He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God.

Rev. 19:14 And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses.

Rev. 19:15 From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down 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.

Rev. 19:16 And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, “KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.”

- As we said earlier, the description of Christ’s return in this chapter is a summary of the events, including of the actual moment itself
 - John describes the scene as it unfolds from his perspective in Heaven
 - But the experience from the perspective of the earth is completely different
 - So we need to move between John’s account in Revelation and other passages that give us the earthly viewpoint
 - First, John says that Heaven itself is opened up so that all Heaven is opened and visible from Earth
 - And Jesus appears at the head of a great procession
 - Jesus is depicted in the glorified form that John first described in Chapter 1 of Revelation
 - He has flaming eyes, diadems reflecting His natural right to rule all nations
 - And He has a name unknown to anyone else, a name above all names
 - This suggests to us that the name we know today, the name Yeshua, is not the name the Lord will bear in the Kingdom
 - So for all the controversy that circulates in the church on what to call Jesus, in the end we will all feel a bit foolish about it
 - Because Jesus will have a new name that no one has yet heard, though Jesus will still be known as the Word of God
- Next John says Jesus is riding a white horse as He appears, which is interesting

because it matches an earlier description from this book

- The Antichrist, the false ruler, also appeared riding a white horse, which reminds us that the Bible uses a white horse as a symbol of ruling
 - But now the true King has appeared to replace the false ruler
 - Which is why Jesus is wearing a robe dipped in blood
- In v.15 John says Jesus comes to strike down the nations and rule with a rod of iron
 - He is bringing a sword and will tread the winepress of God’s wrath
 - So our King comes to earth prepared for a fight, which is very different than when He first appeared to mankind
- Jesus’ first coming was to preach salvation and to show mercy and forgiveness, but His Second Coming will be for judgment and to rule
 - For the same reason He bears the title King of Kings and Lord of Lords
 - No one on earth or in Heaven will ever challenge Jesus’ rule again, as all authority will bow down to Him
- Also, Jesus is followed by “armies” and they are clothed in fine clean white linen
 - Earlier we saw the Church saints clothed in this way, so we are the army that follows Jesus in that moment
 - So our vantage point for the Second Coming of Christ will be the vantage point John is describing here
 - We are accompanying our Savior and King in His triumphant return to rule, and though we are called an army, we will do none of the fighting
 - Still, it should excite every Christian to consider that day to come
 - We are reading about a future event in which we are assured to participate
 - We can’t say with certainty what we will do tomorrow, but we can be assured by our faith that we will be there on a future day
 - Finally, Jesus tells us in Matthew 16 that when He returns, He will also be accompanied by an army of angels

Matt. 16:27 “For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and WILL THEN REPAY EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS.

- So now let’s move from heaven to earth to understand the Lord’s return from an earthly perspective, and as we expect, the event looks a little different
 - Jesus says it starts with great disturbances in the Heavens, even greater than those that took place in the Tribulation judgments

Matt. 24:29 “But immediately after the tribulation of those days THE SUN WILL BE DARKENED, AND THE MOON WILL NOT GIVE ITS LIGHT, AND THE STARS WILL FALL from the sky, and the powers of the heavens will be shaken.

Matt. 24:30 “And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then

all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory.

- Immediately after the Tribulation ends, every source of light in the heavens will cease to give its light
- Zechariah confirms this in his description of the return of Jesus

Zech. 14:6 In that day there will be no light; the luminaries will dwindle.

Zech. 14:7 For it will be a unique day which is known to the LORD, neither day nor night, but it will come about that at evening time there will be light.

- Literally, a complete blackout of the Universe takes place, leaving the earth in complete and utter darkness
 - Then out of the midst of that complete blackout, the window into Heaven opens up and the Lord comes on the clouds
 - And in that moment, the Lord Himself is the only source of light in the entire Universe
- Earlier in Matthew Jesus warned the church not to follow after anyone who came to them claiming to be the Messiah
 - And now we know why Jesus gave that warning...because when He does return, we won't be able to miss it
 - In fact, we will be with Jesus and the rest of the world won't be able to take their eyes off Him
 - There will be nothing else to see except Him, and Jesus says that the effect of His return will be to bring the nations to mourning
 - They will mourn because they are watching their Judge return to bring them to an end
- So we leave tonight with Jesus in mid-air returning to save Israel
 - Next week we complete the war of Armageddon by studying Stages IV and V, both of which are battles carried out by Jesus Himself
 - The result of these battles is the complete end of the Antichrist and his forces and the conclusion of the seven year Tribulation
 - So after next week our study of Tribulation comes to an end, and we transition to the events that follow the Lord's return
 - And that includes some of the most fascinating prophecy in the entire Bible