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Revelation

2020 - Lesson

19C

Chapter 19:17-21

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- Tonight we finish our study of Daniel’s seventieth seven, the Tribulation, and the War of Armageddon that ends this period of devastation
 - More importantly, we’re rejoining the events of the Second Coming of Jesus, which takes place in a series of events
 - So let’s revisit the scene from the end of our study last week
 - The last of the unbelieving Jews on earth are huddled in Jerusalem under the withering attack of the Antichrist
 - The Antichrist, who is indwelt by Satan, is determined to destroy every last Jew to prevent the return of Christ
 - But the enemy has already lost that battle since a few days earlier the Lord poured out His Spirit on Israel
 - As a result, the nation has come to faith in Jesus, and all Israel has called out to Jesus as He required as a condition for His return
 - And now Paul’s words are being fulfilled:

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.”**

- Paul was quoting Isaiah 59, which describes the Second Coming of Jesus in response to Israel coming to faith
 - Here’s the full quote:

Is. 59:19 **So they will fear the name of the LORD from the west
 And His glory from the rising of the sun,
 For He will come like a rushing stream
 Which the wind of the LORD drives.**

Is. 59:20 **“A Redeemer will come to Zion,
 And to those who turn from transgression in Jacob,” declares the LORD.**

Is. 59:21 **“As for Me, this is My covenant with them,” says the LORD: “My Spirit which is upon you, and My words which I have put in your mouth shall not depart from your mouth, nor from the mouth of your offspring, nor from the mouth of your offspring’s offspring,” says the LORD, “from now and forever.”**

Is. 60:1 **“Arise, shine; for your light has come,
 And the glory of the LORD has risen upon you.**

Is. 60:2 **“For behold, darkness will cover the earth
 And deep darkness the peoples;
 But the LORD will rise upon you
 And His glory will appear upon you.**

- That’s the moment we’ve reached...the moment of Jesus setting His feet on the earth

again to set up a Kingdom for Israel

- We left Jesus and the Church saints and an army of angels descending to the earth in response to the cries of Israel
 - Half of the city of Jerusalem has been taken and the rest are experiencing dread in knowing they killed their Messiah
 - They have yet to understand that the grace of God is still coming to rescue them
 - They are desperate and without hope even as they cry out to God for mercy
 - Which is why Zechariah told us last week that Israel's first reaction after coming to faith in Jesus is to mourn

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.

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

- The Old Testament story of Joseph and His brothers gives us a beautiful picture of Israel's turn around in the midst of trial and sorrow
 - Joseph was the preferred son of Jacob, which made his older brothers jealous
 - When Jacob placed Joseph in command over his brothers, they rebelled against his authority and conspired against him
 - And one day when Joseph came to his brothers near Dothan, they decided to sell him to Gentile traders
- That part of Joseph's story pictures Jesus' first coming when He offered the Kingdom to Israel if they allowed Him to rule over them
 - But like Joseph's brothers, Jesus' brothers rejected His rule and instead sold Jesus into the hands of the Gentile Romans
 - Later, Joseph rises to rule over a Gentile power, Egypt, just as Jesus became the Lord over the Gentile Church
 - Joseph was the second in charge of Egypt, just as the Son of God is under the Father God
- Later, the Lord is ready to bring Jacob's family under Joseph's rule, so He brings famine to the land to cause Jacob to seek for help in Egypt
 - And one day Joseph's brothers appear before Joseph desperate for help
 - But Joseph decides how and when to reveal himself to his brothers
 - And when the right moment arrives, Joseph opens his brothers' eyes

Gen. 45:3 Then Joseph said to his brothers, “I am Joseph! Is my father still alive?” But his brothers could not answer him, for they were dismayed at his

presence.

Gen. 45:4 Then Joseph said to his brothers, “Please come closer to me.” And they came closer. And he said, “I am your brother Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt.

Gen. 45:5 “Now do not be grieved or angry with yourselves, because you sold me here, for God sent me before you to preserve life.

Gen. 45:6 “For the famine has been in the land these two years, and there are still five years in which there will be neither plowing nor harvesting.

Gen. 45:7 “God sent me before you to preserve for you a remnant in the earth, and to keep you alive by a great deliverance.

Gen. 45:8 “Now, therefore, it was not you who sent me here, but God; and He has made me a father to Pharaoh and lord of all his household and ruler over all the land of Egypt.

- This moment is a picture of Christ’s Second Coming, and for both Joseph and Jesus the first response of the Jews is fear
 - Notice Joseph has to tell his brothers not to fear him, because they assume he will deal harshly with them for their sin
 - But Joseph tells them that this plan of God was intended to produce a great deliverance for them and the world
- And indeed, Israel’s rejection of Jesus at His first coming was a part of God’s plan to ensure that the entire world would be blessed in the end
 - And that’s what we’re seeing now as Jesus returns to earth
 - He is about to deliver Israel the promised Kingdom
 - But because of Israel’s earlier rejection of Jesus, that Kingdom will now include a great Gentile army of saints
 - Just as Joseph ruled not only over his family but also over the entire nation of Egypt
- So now let’s rejoin the action in the final two stages of war of Armageddon, and these two stages happen across two fronts
 - First, we have the Antichrist attacking Jerusalem, having already destroyed half the city
 - And we have the believing Jewish remnant in Botzrah under attack as well from the Antichrist’s forces sent from Babylon
 - They have not managed to find a way into the stronghold yet they persist
 - But both battles are about to come to an end, at Jesus’ return
 - You’ve probably heard others tell you that Jesus’ Second Coming will happen at Jerusalem
 - And certainly Jesus does come to Jerusalem – eventually, but His Second Coming does not begin there
 - The first place of His return isn’t to Jerusalem...it’s to those believing Jews in the fortress of Botzrah

- Let's start with Isaiah's description of Stage IV of the war...

Is. 34:1 Draw near, O nations, to hear; and listen, O peoples!

Let the earth and all it contains hear, and the world and all that springs from it.

**Is. 34:2 For the LORD'S indignation is against all the nations,
And His wrath against all their armies;
He has utterly destroyed them,
He has given them over to slaughter.**

**Is. 34:3 So their slain will be thrown out,
And their corpses will give off their stench,
And the mountains will be drenched with their blood.**

**Is. 34:4 And all the host of heaven will wear away,
And the sky will be rolled up like a scroll;
All their hosts will also wither away
As a leaf withers from the vine,
Or as one withers from the fig tree.**

**Is. 34:5 For My sword is satiated in heaven,
Behold it shall descend for judgment upon Edom
And upon the people whom I have devoted to destruction.**

**Is. 34:6 The sword of the LORD is filled with blood,
It is sated with fat, with the blood of lambs and goats,
With the fat of the kidneys of rams.
For the LORD has a sacrifice in Bozrah
And a great slaughter in the land of Edom.**

- Notice at the opening of this chapter, Isaiah describes a time in history when all the nations' armies are ready to be destroyed by the Lord
 - And that the Lord Himself will be the One to bring this slaughter against the nations
 - The Antichrist is the leader of the whole world, of all nations, so his army is the army of all the nations
 - And in v.4 we see this battle occurs in conjunction with a time when the heavens will wear away, speaking of Tribulation
 - The sky is rolled back like a scroll and the vegetation is gone
 - Clearly, this description closely matches what we've seen in the time of Tribulation
 - So this battle of the nations' armies against the Lord is set in the time of Tribulation, according to Isaiah
 - Then in vs.5-6, the Lord Himself begins to speak about the battle
 - The Lord's sword is satiated in Heaven, and the term satiated means satisfied, saturated
 - So the Lord's sword has had its fill from Heaven, implying it is now ready to fight in a new way

- And so in v.5 the Lord says His sword will descend for judgment
 - The reference to descending is important, because it communicates that there is a transition taking place in that verse
 - That sword is moving from Heaven to the earth, at Christ’s Second Coming
- And Isaiah says that the destruction of all nations will come at the hands of God starting at Edom, specifically at Botzrah
 - Isaiah says the Lord has a sacrifice prepared in Edom, in Botzrah
 - And notice in v.3 the bodies of the slain will be found on a mountain that becomes stained with their blood
 - That’s a clear reference to the mountainous ring that surrounds the open area of Botzrah or modern-day Petra
- These descriptions confirm that the Lord will defend the encampment of His people in Petra and destroy all who attack it
 - This destruction happens during Tribulation and in conjunction with the Lord’s descending from Heaven, which is at the end of Tribulation
 - Jesus’ attack at Botzrah is Stage IV of the War of Armageddon, when the Lord destroys the armies of the Antichrist there
 - The Lord alone does the fighting, and the text makes no mention of any other person or entity fighting – just the Lord
 - So the Lord descends as described in Revelation 19 with armies behind Him, and as He arrives in Petra He destroys the forces of the Antichrist
 - Now Micah tells us what Jesus does next

**Mic. 2:12 “I will surely assemble all of you, Jacob,
I will surely gather the remnant of Israel.
I will put them together like sheep in the fold;
Like a flock in the midst of its pasture
They will be noisy with men.**

**Mic. 2:13 “The breaker goes up before them;
They break out, pass through the gate and go out by it.
So their king goes on before them,
And the LORD at their head.”**

- We read Micah 2:12 earlier when we studied Israel’s flight into the desert in Revelation 12
 - Micah is the prophet who names the place of Israel’s protection: Botzrah
 - In Hebrew the phrase “in the fold” is the word Botzrah, which refers to the nature of this place as a protective enclosure
 - It is the literal Hebrew word for a sheep’s pen and it is also the proper name of the present-day town of Petra
 - This is the place that the believing remnant of Israel will be kept safe for the second half of Tribulation

- And now that the Tribulation is ending and Jesus has returned, it's time to let the "sheep" out of that "pen"
 - And in the very next verse Micah describes that release on the day Jesus comes
 - Micah says "the breaker" goes before those who have been held in this place
 - That breaker is a reference to the One Who sets them free, breaking them out of that place
 - The Hebrew word for breaker means one who breeches or destroys or breaks down the enclosure
 - This is the Lord Himself, and notice that they follow Him out passing through the gate and go out by it
 - Passing through a gate is another reference to a sheep pen and the way a shepherd lets sheep out to enter the pasture
 - This is a calm, peaceful exodus like sheep calmly following after their shepherd when he leads them out
 - And notice Micah adds that their king goes before them and the Lord is at their head
- So this is a description of the remnant being released from their place of protection and provision at the end of the Tribulation
 - Jesus defeats those attacking the remnant and then He opens the gate and leads them out
 - We don't know what kind of gate this will be, but imagine it like Noah's ark
 - The ark had a door that God closed before the flood and opened after the ship landed safely, and so will it be here
 - So as Jesus set these believing Jews free from Petra, we can imagine a scene like that of the Exodus
 - As Moses led the people of Israel through the Sinai, Jesus now leads His people into the open desert
 - Only now Jesus, assumes the role of Charlton Heston
 - But as the Lord leads them out, where are they going?
- Isaiah gives us the answer

**Is. 63:1 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."**

**Is. 63:2 Why is Your apparel red,
And Your garments like the one who treads in the wine press?**

- To understand this text properly, we must appreciate its context
 - Isaiah is writing from a first-person point of view while standing on the walls of

Jerusalem during the Antichrist's attack on the city

- That's the context of this chapter, and so imagine the prophet on top of a crumbling wall, the city under attack, smoke pouring out
- Chaos everywhere, fighting in the streets and armies gathered around the walls
- And in the midst of that moment, the prophet is on the wall facing east toward the Mount of Olives
 - And as he gazes into the distance, he begins to ask questions
 - He asks, who is this coming from Edom? He is majestic in apparel
- Remember the way John described Jesus' appearance at His Second Coming?

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.

- Jesus returns in His glory and Isaiah's description of Jesus in glory with glowing colors and fierce wrath matches John's description
- He has a robe dipped in blood, and I mentioned last week the blood reflected the battle He was going to wage
- And now Isaiah tells us that the blood comes from the battle in Botzrah
 - Isaiah says His garments are red from treading the wine press, a reference to the fierce wrath
 - So Isaiah sees the Lord coming to Jerusalem from Botzrah with His robe bloodied from a battle
- But Isaiah doesn't understand why the Lord has appeared in this way, so he asks for an explanation

**Is. 63:3 "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.**

**Is. 63:4 "For the day of vengeance was in My heart,
And My year of redemption has come.**

**Is. 63:5 "I looked, and there was no one to help,
And I was astonished and there was no one to uphold;**

**So My own arm brought salvation to Me,
And My wrath upheld Me.**

**Is. 63:6 “I trod down the peoples in My anger
And made them drunk in My wrath,
And I poured out their lifeblood on the earth.”**

- The Lord’s explains He has engaged in a battle by Himself
 - He says He strode the peoples, describes the battle He encountered in Botzrah
 - He says He trod the wine press alone, a reference to the Lord’s outpouring of wrath against the armies at Botzrah
 - He trampled them in God’s wrath and their blood stained His clothing because the day of redemption and vengeance had come
 - Notice that the Lord says He fought this battle by Himself, and no one helped
 - He was astonished, which means appalled, at what He saw at Botzrah
 - And He took it upon His own authority and power to destroy the pitiful army waiting
 - The strong language here reflects the fierce anger of God against the ungodliness of the world that He finds at His return
 - Remember the Lord’s words when He came the first time:

Luke 18:7 now, will not God bring about justice for His elect who cry to Him day and night, and will He delay long over them?

Luke 18:8 “I tell you that He will bring about justice for them quickly. However, when the Son of Man comes, will He find faith on the earth?”

- The Lord foretold that at His return He would not find a world of faith waiting
- Rather His return will be met by a world of intense and unrepentant unbelief and hatred for God and His people
- So Isaiah witnesses the Lord coming to Jerusalem leading a procession of the remnant who accompany Christ
 - It’s interesting to consider how this group might cross this distance in a short time, since it’s about 75 miles as the crow flies
 - Do they move in a natural way or supernaturally?
 - Obviously Jesus Himself has the capacity to move there without limitation and His armies are capable of going wherever He goes
 - So presumably, Jesus moves the remnant in a supernatural way to transport them quickly to Jerusalem
 - So now Christ approaches the city of Jerusalem, and as He does, He’s met by the second front of the war of Armageddon
 - And much like the first front we have the rag-tag army of the Antichrist scratching and clawing their way into the city
 - The Lord has been defending the city, supernaturally strengthening the

citizens of the city against the invaders

- Though they have done some damage, there is still a resistance holding out
- But they can't hold out much longer...and then appears Jesus and His armies
- In Zechariah 14 we see how the battle unfolds as Jesus arrives at Jerusalem in a step by step process
 - We will study this final battle of our age in several steps as Zechariah explains them
 - Beginning with Jesus approaching the city

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.

Zech. 14:3 Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of battle.

Zech. 14:4 In that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north and the other half toward the south.

Zech. 14:5 You will flee by the valley of My mountains, for the valley of the mountains will reach to Azel; yes, you will flee just as you fled before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah. Then the LORD, my God, will come, and all the holy ones with Him!

- Previously, we read vs.1-2 of this chapter when we studied Stage III of the War of Armageddon, the initial assault on Jerusalem
 - You remember that the Antichrist moved from the north of Israel southward and then climbed up from the west to siege Jerusalem
 - As the battle begins, the Antichrist begins to scale the walls and enter the city
 - Zechariah says the city is invaded, half of the city will be carried off and presumably killed
 - Women are raped and likely killed as well
 - And Hosea told us that the battle would go on for 2 days, and then on the third day the nation of Israel would be brought to faith by the Spirit
 - And as they respond by calling out on Jesus, He comes to them
 - Specifically He comes to them from Botzrah, leading a band of believing Jews who were waiting for Him there
 - Zechariah picks up the narrative at that point in v.3, explaining that the Lord comes to fight for Jerusalem
 - The Lord fights against those nations that come against the city
 - And in v.4 we're told the Lord's feet stand on the Mt. of Olives

- That phrase is sometimes misunderstood to mean that Jesus lands on the Mt. of Olives, but Zechariah doesn't say that
 - He simply says Jesus stands there, and Isaiah tells us that He arrives there by coming from Botzrah
 - So Jesus comes to the mountain range east of Jerusalem and stops, standing directly on the Mt. of Olives
 - From that point, He can look down into the city and witness the Antichrist's attack
 - And it's from here that Jesus begins to defend the city
 - This is Stage V of the War of Armageddon, the final battle of the war and the end of the Age
- But the Lord doesn't charge down the hill and into the city to start beating up soldiers kung fu-style
 - Instead, the Lord begins the fight remotely, by changing the landscape of the battle
 - Notice that Jesus is approaching the city from the east, which makes sense if He is coming to the city from Botzrah
 - And we also remember the Antichrist's forces are attacking from the west, according to Daniel 12
 - So as Jesus arrives, He is on the east, the Antichrist is on the west, and what's left of Jerusalem lies between them
 - And Zechariah says that as Jesus stands on the Mount of Olives, He commands the mountain to split in two, east to west
 - Then the two parts of the mountain will move apart, one half to the north and another half to the south
 - This will create a channel or valley that runs eastward away from the city to the east
 - Remember the world has no mountains at this point, except the mount that Jerusalem sits upon and the surrounding connecting range
 - So when the mount itself is split, it creates a channel that provides complete protection for those in it
 - Zechariah then says the Jews in Jerusalem will then flee the battle out this channel
 - Because the attack is coming from the west, the exit route will be to the east through this valley
- In v.5 Zechariah says the Jews will flee by way of the valley the Lord creates in the ground
 - Does this remind you of another time when the Lord rescued fleeing Israelites from an attacking army by creating a valley of protection?
 - We remember Israel fleeing from Pharaoh through the valley of water created in the Red Sea, another flight from West to East
- Finally, Zechariah says the Lord will enter the city with all His holy ones behind Him to finish the battle

- Only after the innocent ones are out of the way does the Lord then move ahead in His attack
- Habakkuk gives us another view of this movement from Petra to Jerusalem

Hab. 3:3 God comes from Teman,
And the Holy One from Mount Paran. Selah.
His splendor covers the heavens,
And the earth is full of His praise.

Hab. 3:4 His radiance is like the sunlight;
He has rays flashing from His hand,
And there is the hiding of His power.

Hab. 3:5 Before Him goes pestilence,
And plague comes after Him.

Hab. 3:6 He stood and surveyed the earth;
He looked and startled the nations.
Yes, the perpetual mountains were shattered,
The ancient hills collapsed.
His ways are everlasting.

Hab. 3:7 I saw the tents of Cushan under distress,
The tent curtains of the land of Midian were trembling.

Hab. 3:8 Did the LORD rage against the rivers,
Or was Your anger against the rivers,
Or was Your wrath against the sea,
That You rode on Your horses,
On Your chariots of salvation?

Hab. 3:9 Your bow was made bare,
The rods of chastisement were sworn. Selah.
You cleaved the earth with rivers.

Hab. 3:10 The mountains saw You and quaked;
The downpour of waters swept by.
The deep uttered forth its voice,
It lifted high its hands.

Hab. 3:11 Sun and moon stood in their places;
They went away at the light of Your arrows,
At the radiance of Your gleaming spear.

Hab. 3:12 In indignation You marched through the earth;
In anger You trampled the nations.

Hab. 3:13 You went forth for the salvation of Your people,
For the salvation of Your anointed.
You struck the head of the house of the evil
To lay him open from thigh to neck. Selah.

- The passage is a description of the Second Coming of the Lord to Jerusalem, and notice it begins with geographical references
 - The prophet says the Lord comes to Jerusalem from Teman or Mt. Paran

- These are ancient names for Edom, where we find Botzrah
 - And the Lord arrives with a radiance like sunlight, confirming the other accounts we've read of the Second Coming
- In v.6, Habakkuk describes the earthly destruction that preceded His return
 - Plague, pestilence, mountains shattered, etc.
 - These are references to the Tribulation events that precede Jesus' return
- His wrath was against seas, rivers, and the sun and moon stood in their place and then went away at the light of His appearing
 - All of those descriptions are literal depictions of things we've studied elsewhere already
 - So we know this prophet is talking about the same event...the Lord's Second Coming at the end of the Tribulation
- But in Habakkuk he asks rhetorically in v.8 whether God's wrath was directed at the rivers and mountains and seas themselves?
 - In other words, was the Lord mad at the Creation itself?
 - In vs.12-13 the prophet answers no... the Lord wasn't raging against the creation itself
- Instead, He was raging against the armies and nations of the world, Habakkuk says
 - So after the Jews escape, Jesus enters the city from the east, and meets the Antichrist as he and his armies advance from the west
 - He battles for the salvation of His people, Israel, and at the end of v.13, he says the Lord will strike the head of the house of evil
- The head of the house of evil is a clear reference to the Antichrist who is the head of the world and all that is evil
 - The Lord's blow lays him open from thigh to neck, which is a graphic description of the death of the Antichrist
 - He is literally flayed open, sliced open by Christ's sword
- So at the moment Jesus arrives in Jerusalem, His attack results in the death of the Antichrist along with all his armies
 - We see confirmation of this outcome in 2 Thessalonians

2Th. 2:8 Then that lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord will slay with the breath of His mouth and bring to an end by the appearance of His coming; 2Th. 2:9 that is, the one whose coming is in accord with the activity of Satan, with all power and signs and false wonders,

- The Lord's appearing will result in the Antichrist's end and his end comes by the breath of Christ's mouth
- Remember, the word (or breath) of Christ is called a sword in Scripture

Heb. 4:12 For the word of God is living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing as far as the division of soul and spirit, of both joints and marrow, and able to judge the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

- So Jesus literally fights only with His word, because the word of the Lord is a force of its own, the only true force in the Universe
 - Hebrews also says that the word of God is literally the glue holding the Universe together

Heb. 1:3 And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

- So Jesus' word is more than enough to destroy anything, because it's the only thing holding everything together
- So at the word of Christ, the Antichrist's body is split open, his armies die in a similar fashion, and the battle is over quickly
 - Remember Revelation 14 gave us a preview of that destruction

Rev. 14:18 Then another angel, the one who has power over fire, came out from the altar; and he called with a loud voice to him who had the sharp sickle, saying, "Put in your sharp sickle and gather the clusters from the vine of the earth, because her grapes are ripe."

Rev. 14:19 So the angel swung his sickle to the earth and gathered the clusters from the vine of the earth, and threw them into the great wine press of the wrath of God.

Rev. 14:20 And the wine press was trodden outside the city, and blood came out from the wine press, up to the horses' bridles, for a distance of two hundred miles.

- This is the moment of that bloodletting as Jesus ends the lives of thousands and perhaps millions of human beings in an instant
- So quick and violent is their death that all their blood is suddenly released filling the Kidron Valley and flowing 200 miles
- Now all that remains is to clean up the mess, and it's quite a mess, but the Lord has a plan

Rev. 19:17 Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he cried out with a loud voice, saying to all the birds which fly in midheaven, "Come, assemble for the great supper of God,

Rev. 19:18 so that you may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of commanders and the flesh of mighty men and the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them and the flesh of all men, both free men and slaves, and small and

great.”

Rev. 19:19 And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies assembled to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army.

Rev. 19:20 And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone.

Rev. 19:21 And the rest were killed with the sword which came from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh.

- We’ve now returned to John’s heavenly perspective on the events
 - Remember, we are studying Christ’s return from an earthly perspective and a heavenly perspective
 - The Old Testament prophets gives us the view from earth, whether at Botzrah or Jerusalem
 - While John sees the events from his vantage point in Heaven, which is also where *we* will witness these things thankfully
 - We started from John’s perspective at the start of this chapter, and then we studied the earthly perspective
 - Now Jesus and His entourage have reached the earth, so at this point the two perspectives merge
 - Habakkuk described a violent end in Jerusalem with many dead, and now John sees the same thing
 - It’s as if John never saw the battle but later comes upon the aftermath and he’s viewing the carnage
 - After the battle ends, Jesus’ angelic realm starts work on calling the clean up crew
 - An angel in Heaven calls to birds in midheaven to come and assemble for a great meal
 - The term mid-Heaven is usually a Biblical term for outer space
 - But these are birds that eat flesh, like vultures, so in this context the term mid-Heaven is understood a different way
 - In Greek it can also be translated zenith, as in the highest point in the sky, which is the sense intended here
 - Ezekiel give us confirmation that God uses birds and beasts to devour the carcasses of the dead at times in Chapter 29
- And thus Stage V of the War of Armageddon, the Age of the Gentiles, and the Tribulation come to an end...the earth is at rest from war
 - All opposing armies are destroyed and all Jews on earth have been saved
 - There are always believing Gentiles on earth at Jesus’ coming
 - And there are unbelieving Gentiles who aren’t in the army and so they aren’t killed in the final battle

- We will look at what happens to all these groups after Jesus returns in next week's study
- But before that, we need to see what happens to the instigators of the world's rebellion: the three players in the False Trinity
 - In v.20 we read of the final disposition of the beast or Antichrist and the false prophet
 - They receive a special and dubious distinction of being thrown alive into the Lake of Fire
 - But just as we've seen elsewhere, there's more going here than John records in this quick summary in Revelation
 - First, both the Antichrist and the false prophet are human beings, of course
 - But during the second half of Tribulation, they are both instruments of Satan
 - The Antichrist is indwelt by Satan, we know, and the false prophet is likely indwelt by a powerful demon
 - And when the body dies, any spirits in the body are released from the body, just as the person's own spirit is released from the body at death
 - Since we know the Antichrist was killed when Jesus returned, because Habakkuk and Paul told us that
 - And presumably, the false prophet also dies in the battle as well
 - Then we can assume that Satan and his demons were released, and the men's own spirits were also released from their bodies
- So what happens to each of these characters? First, the Antichrist's soul descends for a short time into hell
 - Isaiah gives a lengthy description of what happens to the Antichrist's soul as it arrives in Hell

Is. 14:1 When the LORD will have compassion on Jacob and again choose Israel, and settle them in their own land, then strangers will join them and attach themselves to the house of Jacob.

Is. 14:2 The peoples will take them along and bring them to their place, and the house of Israel will possess them as an inheritance in the land of the LORD as male servants and female servants; and they will take their captors captive and will rule over their oppressors.

Is. 14:3 And it will be in the day when the LORD gives you rest from your pain and turmoil and harsh service in which you have been enslaved,

Is. 14:4 that you will take up this taunt against the king of Babylon, and say, "How the oppressor has ceased, And how fury has ceased!

Is. 14:5 "The LORD has broken the staff of the wicked, The scepter of rulers

Is. 14:6 Which used to strike the peoples in fury with unceasing strokes, Which subdued the nations in anger with unrestrained persecution.

Is. 14:7 "The whole earth is at rest and is quiet;

They break forth into shouts of joy.

Is. 14:8 “Even the cypress trees rejoice over you, and the cedars of Lebanon, saying,

‘Since you were laid low, no tree cutter comes up against us.’

Is. 14:9 “Sheol from beneath is excited over you to meet you when you come; It arouses for you the spirits of the dead, all the leaders of the earth;

It raises all the kings of the nations from their thrones.

Is. 14:10 “They will all respond and say to you,

‘Even you have been made weak as we,

You have become like us.

Is. 14:11 ‘Your pomp and the music of your harps

Have been brought down to Sheol;

Maggots are spread out as your bed beneath you

And worms are your covering.’

Is. 14:12 “How you have fallen from heaven,

O star of the morning, son of the dawn!

You have been cut down to the earth,

You who have weakened the nations!

Is. 14:13 “But you said in your heart,

‘I will ascend to heaven;

I will raise my throne above the stars of God,

And I will sit on the mount of assembly

In the recesses of the north.

Is. 14:14 ‘I will ascend above the heights of the clouds;

I will make myself like the Most High.’

Is. 14:15 “Nevertheless you will be thrust down to Sheol,

To the recesses of the pit.

Is. 14:16 “Those who see you will gaze at you,

They will ponder over you, saying,

‘Is this the man who made the earth tremble,

Who shook kingdoms,

Is. 14:17 Who made the world like a wilderness

And overthrew its cities,

Who did not allow his prisoners to go home?’

Is. 14:18 “All the kings of the nations lie in glory,

Each in his own tomb.

Is. 14:19 “But you have been cast out of your tomb

Like a rejected branch,

Clothed with the slain who are pierced with a sword,

Who go down to the stones of the pit

Like a trampled corpse.

Is. 14:20 “You will not be united with them in burial,

Because you have ruined your country,

You have slain your people.

May the offspring of evildoers not be mentioned forever.

Is. 14:21 “Prepare for his sons a place of slaughter

**Because of the iniquity of their fathers.
They must not arise and take possession of the earth
And fill the face of the world with cities.”**

- This scene in Isaiah will occur at a time when the nation of Israel has been restored, the prophet says
 - The Lord will take His people, having shown compassion on them, and settle them in their land
 - They will bring other people (Gentiles) along with them into the Kingdom
 - And the Lord will give Israel rest from their pain and turmoil
 - Clearly that's a reference to Israel coming into the Kingdom
 - So that's our context, and in that moment, we hear Israel taunting the King of Babylon
 - Remember, Babylon is the Bible's term for Satan's Kingdom and all that it represents
 - And this king of Babylon once ruled the people with unceasing strokes and subdued the nations
 - So in this context, it's a reference to the Antichrist
 - But now the world is at rest and this king finds himself in Sheol or Hell (v.11, v.15), resting on a bed of maggots
 - Notice in v.19, he had been clothed with the slain, a reference to his resurrection at mid Tribulation
 - Then in v.20 we're told that he will not be united with his people in burial
 - His people are the nations that followed him and went to their death into Hell at the Second Coming of Jesus
 - But the Antichrist will not join them, because He will be brought out of Sheol almost immediately
 - And as John tells us, he will be sent directly into the Lake of Fire along with the False Prophet
- So the Antichrist and the false prophet die in the final battle, and as they die they enter into Hell like all souls but only for a short time
 - Just long enough for them to be welcomed by the kings of the earth that preceded them into that terrible place
 - Notice in Isaiah 14 they mock the Antichrist for having been brought so low
 - This is the reception that all the great and mighty unbelievers receive when their lives end and they enter Hell
 - They are surrounded by their own kind who, like them, suffer
 - And yet they have memories of each other and the life they left behind
 - So the Antichrist is almost immediately resurrected into a new, eternal body and then cast into the permanent home for the unbelieving
 - He and the false prophet enter the Lake of Fire alive, which is how all

- unbelievers will enter that place
- All human beings are resurrected into new bodies, both believers and unbelievers
- The difference is where the two groups spend eternity living
- The Antichrist's distinction of being first to be resurrected and cast into the Lake of Fire is an ironic twist on our story
 - When Satan, the Antichrist and false prophet came together, they tried to form a counterfeit, false trinity
 - They were copying the true Trinity of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit
- And unintentionally, they reflect that counterfeit even in their death
 - Christ is the first fruits of the resurrection to eternal life
 - Meaning He was the first human being to be resurrected into an eternal body that never dies
 - Similarly, the Antichrist will be the first fruits of the resurrection among those who go into eternal death
- Next week we move into Chapter 20 which describes the Kingdom period, but we don't move very far into that Chapter right away
 - Because first we enter a little-known period of God's timeline called the 75-day interval
 - We'll introduce the concept next week and explain its purposes
 - Once we cover that period, we will move into an introduction to the Millennial Kingdom period and an extended study of that period