

KINGDOM BIBLE STUDIES

"Teaching the things concerning the kingdom of God..."

FROM THE CANDLESTICK TO THE THRONE

Part 210

SPIRITUAL WARFARE

In the book of Revelation, in the nineteenth chapter, there is a great picture. The Holy Spirit has painted it. It is the vision of the coming of the Christ. It is the story of the Lord's coming told in colors. It is the great truth and some of its related principles portrayed in graphic action.

“And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns; and He had a name written, that no man knew, but He Himself. And He was clothed in a vesture dipped in blood: and His name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed Him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of His mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it He should smite the nations: and He shall rule them with a rod of iron: and He treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS” (Rev. 19:11-16). What a description is this!

Day after day wonderful visions passed before the rapt gaze of the seer on Patmos' lonely isle. And none could have been more thrilling than the vision described in the passage above! In the far upper spaces, midst the maze and whirl of mist and cloud, and vast throngs of beings, the reverberations of great rolling noises, appears a snow-white horse, which at once attracts the attention of the apostle. Its arching neck clothed with thunder, its tossing mane, its dilated nostrils, its deep chest, its flashing eyes, its muscle-rippled legs, its superb grace as it pranced before him, made it the noblest horse and the most magnificent which he had ever beheld.

But his glance passed swiftly from horse to rider; and though the snow-white horse eclipsed any animal John had ever seen, yet it was mounted by a person who, in form and feature and bearing, surpassed any man he had beheld, and his gaze was riveted by the unrivalled dignity and charm of his person. He was robed in crimson apparel, wore many crowns upon his brow, and from between his lips there flashed a gleaming sword; while as he guided his spirited charger his eyes blazed with the intense fire of a warrior. As John watched him, he saw him move irresistibly along a pathway of conquest. And, as he gazed, he recognized the rider as being his own well-loved friend and master, Jesus Christ, whom he had so devotedly followed when, on earth, he walked slowly and wearisomely from place to place. Now, instead of being a pedestrian he was an equestrian, and instead of merely

submitting to his enemies he was overcoming them by the tremendous might of his powerful advance. It was a vision very real to the apostle; but it was recorded to teach, in symbolic form, the warrior spirit of Christ, and the great campaign upon which he had entered to conquer the hearts of all men everywhere. The sphere of his movements, as perceived by the apostle, was the totality of this earth; and the time of his advance was through all the centuries.

As we have been discovering, the imagery of the book of Revelation is both graphic and beautiful. But some of it is also violent — so violent that not even movies or cable TV can match its intensity. The vision in chapter nineteen describes Christ as a divine warrior who meets his enemies in a great cosmic battle. This imagery is rooted in the redemptive work of Jesus, whose death and resurrection destroys sin, sorrow, and death. No high-tech spy thrillers or science fiction blockbusters or even true-to-life war epics, with all their dramatic special effects, can top a message like that. Jesus destroys sin! Jesus banishes sorrow, pain, sickness, and limitation! Jesus conquers death, hell, and the grave! The point of the image is not to glorify violence. Precisely the opposite! The point is to clarify that God's opposition to evil, and the sin and death it spawns, is so strong that He will take any measures necessary to defeat it and achieve a complete and total victory. His warfare is *spiritual warfare* but it is strong, powerful, forceful, tempestuous, unrestrained, relentless, severe, and catastrophic!

The Bible is a book of war. “The Lord is a man of war” (Ex. 15:3). Heaven is a realm of war, as well as the earth. “And there was war in heaven” (Rev. 12:7). Jesus is a man of war. “Think not that I am come to send peace on the earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword” (Mat. 10:34). “These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them” (Rev. 17:14). David was a man of war. “Thou (Absalom) knowest thy father (David) and his men that they are mighty men, and thy father is a man of war” (I Sam. 17:8). David faced Goliath and took his sword. He was a man of war before he met Goliath. David is a type of Christ. Christ is called “the *son* of David.” David's followers were men of war. “And there was long war between the house of Saul and the house of David: but David waxed stronger and stronger, and the house of Saul waxed weaker and weaker” (II Sam.3:1). The sons of God follow a man of war! Thank God! as the battle rages the Christ within is waxing stronger and stronger, and the kingdom of the flesh is waxing weaker and weaker. So shall it be fulfilled — the natural man shall be subjected to the spiritual, the flesh shall be ruled over by the spirit, and then shall we see “all things in subjection under His feet” (Heb. 2:8).

The position and action of Christ in John's vision is very significant. He is mounted on a snow-white war horse. This signified victory! The old Roman conquerors, when celebrating a brilliant conquest, rode down the avenues of the imperial city upon a snow-white steed, and received the plaudits of the people. The Lord is described as the Word of God emblematically riding on a white horse; it is the image of aggressive action, of successful conquest over His foes. The horse in scripture represents strength, and fearlessness to accomplish its task. “He paweth the valley, and rejoiceth in his strength: he goeth on to meet the armed men. He mocketh at fear, and is not affrightened; neither turneth he back from the sword. He swalloweth the ground with fierceness and rage; neither believeth he that it is the sound of the trumpet. He saith among the trumpets, Ha, ha; and he smelleth the battle afar off, the thunder of the captains, and the shouting” (Job 39:21-25).

The horse is without equal for beauty in the animal kingdom. His body is alive with rippling muscles. His mane and tail are items of extreme beauty. The horse is among the most intelligent of animals and few creatures can equal his strength and swiftness. No animal is of greater service to mankind — especially in most of past history. For pleasure, for work, and for war the horse has exceeded them all. The Greek word in our text intimates that this horse is a *war horse* of fine mettle. In Bible days the strength of armies was often reckoned by the number and greatness of their horses and chariots. Even in our modern world the power of an engine is expressed in terms of “horse

power” — the number of horses that would be required to equal the amount of power generated. In his prophetic account of the army of the Lord, Joel declares, “The appearance of them is as the appearance of *horses; and as horsemen*, so shall they run” (Joel 2:4). “The horse is prepared against the day of battle” (Prov. 21:31). It is significant that in the scriptures you do not find horses mentioned in connection with agricultural purposes, but for riding or drawing chariots, and for use in battle. The oxen were used for plowing, etc.

The horse bespeaks royalty, judgment, and war. His white color bespeaks righteousness and justice. White is the color that most attaches to Christ in all the warfare and judgment scenes. When the first seal broke He rode a white horse, going forth conquering and to conquer. When the great harvest is reaped he sits upon a white cloud. At the end of the thousand years He is seated upon a white throne. And so here He is riding on a white steed of battle, for “in righteousness doth He make war.” White also bespeaks light — illumination. These are the qualities that characterize, not only the firstborn Son of God, but also His many brethren, the sons of God. In the messages to the churches, the out-called, challenging them to *overcome*, we read, “I counsel thee to buy of me...*white* raiment, that thou mayest be clothed” (Rev. 3:18). This is naught but the transfiguring glory of Christ, as it is written, “And He was transfigured before them: and His face did shine as the sun, and His raiment was *white as the light*” (Mat. 17:2). The light is the robe of divine majesty, the incorruptible life of God emanating from the nature in absolute righteousness and divine holiness.

In the days of His flesh He rode but once — when He came to the Jewish nation as its anointed King. But He then rode upon an ass, a colt, the foal of an ass. Then He was the meek and lowly one, coming to suffer and lay down His life for men; but here the little domestic animal is exchanged for the martial charger, for this is another and mightier coming of the King into the world! He comes in mighty spirit power, in the power of His own personal victory over sin, Satan, the world, death, hell, and the grave; and in His majesty He rides prosperously, because of the invincible power of His resurrection, ascension, and enthronement! The horse is the embodiment of speed and strength. He who is mounted can get over a greater distance, do quicker work, than on foot. Thus with Jesus Christ! By the strength of omnipotence He carries on His conquests with great rapidity and power! With great vigor and velocity He moves down upon the enemy; and wheeling His forces into line, charges upon the opposing ranks of flesh and carnality, overcoming them by the impetuous energy of His movements, before they have recovered themselves from the surprise of His sudden and swift attack.

And so our Lord Jesus Christ, astride a snow-white charger, is put in a position where He is perpetually celebrating a victory. His march is a victorious march! His movements always meet with success. His plans are fulfilled, and His campaigns unfurl to the breezes the banners of triumph. Jesus Christ is going forth as a conqueror, and He does so with great power. It is no easy campaign upon which He has entered — sin and death are formidable foes entrenched in the human mind, heart, and life. The action in which He is engaged requires the greatest power; and His movements are energized with tremendous force. The Bible represents Him at times in conditions where He sits and reclines in repose, already having accomplished His purposes. “But this man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, *sat down* on the right hand of God” (Heb. 10:12). But here in the saddle He is roused, every faculty excited, every source of strength summoned, and He is bearing forward for the purpose of accomplishing something not yet attained. Calvary achieved a *legal victory*. But now that which has been won legally must be enforced to become *experiential* in the life of *every man* who has ever lived, does now live, or ever shall live. So now the Christ rides forth into the lives of men as the mighty conqueror to subdue and banish every enemy who has built a stronghold there!

In regard to this portion of the Revelation there are interpreters who delight to understand the entire scene in a *literal* sense of the word. They refuse to see any symbolism in the whole scene.

What we have here, according to them, is the literal description of the second coming of Jesus and the literal picture of the attempt of the nations of the world under Antichrist to strike at Him and subdue Him. He shall come exactly as pictured, seated on a real white horse, or at least the real appearance of one, with a real crown on His head, and with garments splattered with blood. In a word, He shall come exactly as described in the vision. The Antichrist knows that Jesus is coming, and therefore he hurriedly musters his forces in the valley of Armageddon, in order to strike down the living and glorified King as soon as He sets His feet on the earth. For later verses in the chapter say that they are gathered together for the purpose of making war against the Christ and His armies. So according to these literalists Christ will accomplish His great victory by killing millions of men who fight against Him with the sharp sword coming out of His mouth! There are many things wrong with such an interpretation, but I will mention only a few of the most obvious. Nowhere in this chapter (or anywhere else in the Revelation, for that matter) is an “Antichrist” mentioned. Nowhere in this chapter is the valley of Armageddon named. If the vision is *literal* then why would not all the other visions of the book be literal? And if they are also literal then Jesus was in John’s day, or is in our day, walking literally, physically, in the midst of the seven churches in Asia — wearing a golden girdle, having eyes as a flame of fire, and feet of burning brass, holding seven stars in His right hand, with a sharp two-edged sword wielding out of His mouth, and His countenance shining with the brilliance of the noonday sun! If such a thing were true, the nation of Turkey today would have to build the world’s largest airport to accommodate the millions of tourists that would be flying in day and night from all points of the earth just to catch a glimpse of this exceptional and miraculous sight!

Once I heard a preacher say that he believed Jesus would literally descend from heaven riding on a white horse. “Jesus Christ created the horse,” he declared, “and if He chooses to charge through the clouds on one, He certainly can.” Certainly He can! But I do not hesitate to add that lack of spiritual discernment is the greatest curse upon the Lord’s people today. People are so afraid that someone will “spiritualize” away something in the word of God, realizing not that they themselves are “carnalizing” away the spirit of the word, for, said Jesus, “the words that I speak unto you, they ARE SPIRIT, and they ARE LIFE” (Jn. 6:63). Of this we may be certain: we cannot think of these armies of heaven and the white horses they ride as a multitude of winged horses taken out of heavenly stables and riding down the skies to meet the massed forces of Antichrist on earth. The horses are as real as the blood-spattered robe of the risen Christ, as real as the winepress He treads, as real as the sword coming out of His mouth, as real as the letters imprinted on His thigh, as real as the birds which gorge themselves on human flesh, and as real as the brimstone in the lake of fire. All of this is real — SPIRITUALLY REAL! You see, my beloved, when we say that something is not *literal* we do not mean it is not *real*. We say that it is not *natural*, *material*, or *tangible* in the same form that John sees it in his vision. God is real, but He is not earthly or material. Spirit is real, but you cannot handle it. Love is real, but it is not something you can have a wheelbarrow full of. Peace is real, but you cannot cut it up and bottle it. All these wonderful scenes in the Revelation are *symbolic* and meant to be understood *spiritually*. The revelation is of *spiritual action* — the swift and powerful movement of God’s army of sons to establish by His Word and by His Spirit HIS victory and triumph over all things in the earth realm!

Spiritual intelligence is the rarest of all spiritual things — and the least valued. In God’s sight it is the only true wealth. How rare has true spiritual understanding become! The trouble with God’s people today is with their ears and eyes. Like the Pharisees of Jesus’ day they insist that they *do* hear and they *do* see. But they do not *understand* what they hear and see! Neither do they *know*! The worlds exist all about us — the natural world and the spiritual world. The natural realm is the realm of man, but the spiritual realm is the realm of God. The carnal mind *cannot* understand the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, for they are *spiritually discerned*. The greatest need among the saints today is for God to send forth into our hearts the spirit

of wisdom and revelation to dispel the darkness of the natural mind that ever hangs as a veil about us, that He may reveal to our wondering eyes those supernal things that pertain to HIS REALM.

Words utterly fail me to describe the scene of the Rider upon the white horse! It is so heavenly, so divine, and wonderful, that it completely defies all human description. Behold! the open heaven, the white horse, the name Faithful and True, the righteousness of His judgment, the eyes of flame, the head bearing many crowns, the vesture dipped in blood. Hear the name, The Word of God. See the armies of heaven following, which are the vast multitude of the enChristed sons of God, and their fine linen, white and clean, which is the righteousness of saints, and their white horses, which signify the strength, victory, and power of the Christ by which they conquer. Consider the sharp sword with the double edge that goes forth from His mouth, the living word of God spoken — a sword to smite the nations, not with cruel force and merciless and bloody slaughter, but with the omnipotent power of *truth* and *life*. Behold, too, the name inscribed on His vesture and on His thigh: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS!

The apocalyptic description of Christ coming out of heaven on a war-horse, magnificently attired — attended by armies of celestial horsemen — to fight the battle against “the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him that sat on the horse and against His armies,” portrays no literal conflict with carnal weapons. Yet — it is a picture of divine judgment! The subject of judgment is a large one in the Bible, running through scripture from Genesis to Revelation, and it is so manifold in meaning, purpose, and application that it eludes simplification. The judgments of God run deep and are so vast and multi-faceted that they lie completely beyond the comprehension of the carnal mind and beyond the grasp of mortal man. As exclaimed by Paul, “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how UNSEARCHABLE ARE HIS JUDGMENTS, and His ways past finding out!” (Rom. 11:33). David prophesied, “...for *He cometh*, for He cometh to *judge the earth*; He shall *judge the world* with righteousness, and the people with His truth” (Ps. 96:13). Paul urged the Athenians to repent “because He hath appointed *a day* in which He will *judge the world* in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained, whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He has raised Him from the dead” (Acts 17:31). Judgment is inseparably related to the coming of Christ and His kingdom. “I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall *judge the living and the dead* at His appearing and kingdom” (II Tim. 4:1).

There is going to be a unique and different unfolding of this One we call Jesus the Christ! We have known Him as the Saviour of the world, and He is, in a totality that even most Christians do not comprehend — but He is about to go forth bringing His judgments to the whole earth, to the entire bestial order that the carnal mind of man has erected. In our text we see the Christ riding forth on a white horse with the armies of His many brethren, the sons of God, following in His path, “*judging and making war*,” the description of His action. In Revelation 6:16 this very same action, in the individual lives of the saints, is called “the WRATH of the LAMB.” What an amazing divine paradox! The “Lamb” of God who “*takes away* the sin of the W-O-R-L-D” on the one hand, and the “wrath” of the Lamb, on the other hand. The Lamb — precious embodiment of meekness, mildness, lowliness, gentleness, patience, and sacrifice — coming upon the men for whom He died in the hot fury of vengeance, until men are found fleeing from the wrath of the Lamb!

This dual nature — the meekness and sacrifice of the Lamb and the warfare of the sword-wielding General of the army — makes Him what He is, both the SAVIOUR and the JUDGE of the universe. In His redemptive activity His face is set against sin and death. Nothing can ever alter that. He will go to all lengths to turn men from evil, to break their waywardness and rebellion, and restore them into harmony with the mind and heart of God. The sheer simplicity and sincerity of His passion is enough to melt and win the most sophisticated or the hardest of men. The wrath of the Lamb is

beyond our understanding. This much we do know: His wrath is not against *men*, it is against the evil that reigns in the hearts of men! It is against ignorance, selfishness, sin, evil, rebellion, foolishness, religiosity, sorrow, sickness, pain, and death! The Seer of Patmos was shown the unveiling of the wrath of the Lamb. I want to declare that God is going to come forth in these days at the transition of the ages in a revelation of Jesus Christ with the judgments and wrath of God. This shaking and purging will affect the very church of the living God, but the whole world of men, the entire system of man, the whole earth will reel violently as He comes to “judge and make war.”

It is not on any literal battlefield on earthly ground that the glorified Redeemer and His heavenly legions confront the banded hosts of earth and hell. We cannot go to the pages of Josephus or Tacitus or Wells, or any other historian, for the events that correspond to these symbols. Nor shall we find them in the headlines of the Washington Post or Time magazine! The scene reveals one divine and sublime truth: CHRIST SHALL CONQUER! The kingdom of Christ is “not of this world” and does not conquer the nations in any such “pitched battle” of carnal warfare as the armies of men contend for the mastery in. The kingdom of Christ does not conquer the nations by blowing away millions of helpless souls with bullets and bombs, or beheading them with the sword and bloody savagery. Oh, no! I believe in no such way of deciding the question between Christ and the world — between “the kingdom which the God of heaven has set up,” and “all these kingdoms” which it has come to “consume and destroy.” Armed with the understanding that “the weapons of *our warfare* are *not carnal*,” but (just for that reason) are “*mighty through God* to the pulling down of strongholds,” I believe the warfare itself to *be not carnal*.

Ah — is it not within the corridors of men’s souls that they must hear the hoofbeats of the great white steed thundering! The battlefield is the mind, the will, the emotions and the desires — the heart. He must ride right into *your earth*, engaging in battle with all the *internal enemies* of the flesh and the devil, conquering all the territory of *your land*. Don’t you hear the clatter of the hoofs of the heavenly charger as he bounds through your own world, carrying its Rider to grand battlefields and glorious victories within? Don’t you see His saber of Truth flashing its dazzling light upon the eyes of your understanding, and swinging effectively in the direction of every cherished tradition and human reasoning? His victories are victories of peace over conflict, of joy over sorrow, of faith over fear, of righteousness over unrighteousness, of love over hate, of purity over filthiness, or truth over error, of holiness over sin, of health over sickness, of power over weakness, of knowledge over ignorance, of spirituality over religiousness, of the image of God over the subterfuge of self, of life and immortality over corruption and death. What a battlefield that is! And what a victory!

This is the conquest that is going on right now in the inner world of the hearts of God’s elect, in our minds and in our bodies. May the Holy Spirit deeply impress upon you this important truth: YOU WILL NEVER CONQUER UNTIL YOU ARE CONQUERED! You see, in the army of Christ, all the vanquished have enlisted, and all of those that were once enemies, such as Saul of Tarsus who once opposed Christ and who now is one of the leaders of that army beyond the veil. As we look at the triumph of Christ we see that Saul of Tarsus went forth to war against Jesus, but he was struck to the ground outside Damascus, the sword was smitten from his hand, and he was conquered by the Son of God. But in that conquest Paul was to realize His greatest victory and he, too, was to become a part of the ongoing triumph of Christ — a triumph which is even now proceeding into the wider battlefields of the world. The victories that He has been achieving in His called and chosen elect He shall yet accomplish in the lives of all the inhabitants of the earth, past, present, and future. There shall be such a glorious and total triumph until the great red dragon, the beast out of the sea, the false prophet, the great city Babylon, and all the vaunted kingdoms of men shall perish from the midst of men and be found no more at all! It is a *spiritual battlefield*, a *spiritual warfare*, and a *spiritual conquest*. That is the mystery!

By the army of God, the manifest sons of God, the claims of the kingdom of God are to be *enforced*; for all that is within man, and within the world, must bow to the supremacy of God's Christ and the will of the Father in heaven. The weapons of the Spirit are infinitely more potent than all the guns that ever were fired, than all the battles that ever were fought, than all the bloody fields that ever were won; for the Holy Spirit's conquests are made without any of the weapons of men. They are made by a power greater than these! The kingdom of God is gotten by *violence* (Mat. 21:12) — by taking sin, sickness, sorrow, pain, and death by the throat, and saying, "You shall not rule this earth! Nor shall you rule this earth that *I am!* I am the Lord's! The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein!" That is the only way the kingdom of heaven will ever be won — by violence, by those who know how to thrust men through with the sword of the Spirit, a two-edged sword that is sharper than steel. The manifest sons of God ride out of the heavens of the Spirit of the Lord and before them rides Jesus with the sword going out of His mouth: and with it He and they *smite the nations*. Oh, the wonder of it!

Another picture of this army is given us in Hebrews 10:12-13. "But this man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God, from henceforth **expecting TILL HIS ENEMIES BE MADE HIS FOOTSTOOL**." So, if the devil is getting ready to take over the earth, as the churches teach, Jesus *can't come!* It's just as simple as that. Jesus has been on the throne in the spiritual heavens of God's Spirit for two thousand years **expecting...expecting** His body on earth to put all enemies under His feet.. For you see, the Head is in heaven, and the *feet* are on earth. "Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my *footstool*" (Isa. 66:1). His enemies are to be put under His *feet!* The feet of God's Christ are the elect of God upon earth when the fullness of the body of Christ comes forth on the earth. When a child is born, the head is the first member to come forth and the feet are the last members to be born. The head gives direction to the body, but the body must mature and then do the work, and the feet carry the body to the appointed place, and they are the members that actively "**tread** on serpents and on scorpions," and are given "power over all the power of the enemy." This is all talking about the many-membered body of Christ.

These members who are the feet company are the ones appointed of God to PUT ALL THINGS UNDER GOD'S CHRIST! They are also the "armies which were in heaven" which follow Christ Jesus the Lord as He comes forth by His Spirit within His people to judge and make war and smite all the nations with His Truth and His Righteousness. The members of the feet company are the only members of the Christ body on earth today, at the end of the age. For this reason, the feet company is uniquely chosen to usher in the new age and the next stage of the kingdom of God on earth! Not only shall the feet company arise in power and great glory to do warfare, but the rest of the body also shall be arrayed in spiritual attire to fulfill their roles as the body of Christ goes out to do battle in the name of the Lord. Oh, how wonderful are these things!

What a glorious day this is! Christ shall lead His army by the power of His indwelling Spirit, which is the completed and glorified body of Christ, into total and complete victory everywhere. This work has already begun in us! It is *within us* first that every enemy must be put under foot. We know this work is going on, for we are being thoroughly processed, purged, prepared, and strengthened by the Spirit. The Christ has arisen within us and is leading us and shall continue to lead us victoriously in battle until every enemy is defeated, within and without, and put under His feet. Then Christ shall be Lord and King indeed in all places and to all people! "And the Lord shall be King over all the earth: in that day (in all the earth) shall there be (but) one Lord: and His name one" (Zech. 14:9). Our glorious Head is *still* seated at the right hand of God in the heavens of the Spirit, He is *still expecting* the job to be done, He is still expecting every enemy to be put under His feet company, and they shall be, praise His name!

The glory of the Lord will shine from within us when His work within us is finished, and the feet of the Lord's army shall march radiantly and triumphantly throughout the whole earth in the power of **His might**. After speaking of how the body of Christ shall arise and shine in the fullness of the glory of the Lord, the prophet Isaiah declares, "The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee; and all they that despised thee (Humanists, Communists, Islamists, Buddhists, Hindus, Church Systems, sinners of all sorts, etc., etc.) shall bow themselves down **at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee, the city of the Lord, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel**" (Isa. 60:14). Why should it be that the enemies of Christ will bow down at the **soles of His feet**? Because the feet company of the body of Christ shall have done their work well! They are putting Satan under them and are overcoming him, thus destroying his power and bringing deliverance to every captive. What a hope! What a vision! And what a responsibility is ours!

There are many who profess to believe that the world is gradually growing worse and worse, that the cup of her iniquity is rapidly filling, preparatory to her catastrophic judgment and destruction. I do not belong to that class of thinkers, or rather croakers. First of all, that idea is under Old Testament economy. Such dealings of God were true in the Old Testament times! But today the Lord's people have forgotten the great **change** that came in God's plan and dealings with men since the day when Jesus came into the world and "God was in Christ, **reconciling the world unto Himself, NOT IMPUTING THEIR TRESPASSES UNTO THEM; and hath committed unto us the word of (that) reconciliation**" (II Cor. 5:19). That is the NEW COVENANT! I was born with my face to the sunrise, and live in constant expectation of great things! God has manifested His great and eternal love for all mankind in Jesus Christ! And we are His ambassadors, yea, His heavenly army, sent into the world to redeem the whole world and all men by the all-conquering power of His love! "God sent not His Son into the world to *condemn the world*, but that *the world* through Him might be *saved*." And may I hastily add, neither has God sent His *sons* into the world to *condemn the world*!

My observation has been, and is, that those who are saying so much about how terrible things are in the world, and how the world is growing worse, are doing very little to make it better. Those who invest in the cause of HIS KINGDOM are those who believe in its final triumph! Do not sit with idle hands and complain that the world is going to hell in a hand basket! Rather, invest in prayer, invest in love toward all men, invest in righteousness, invest in faith, invest in spiritual understanding and maturity, invest in spiritual warfare, invest in the mighty work of the Spirit of God in His elect today until you can fulfill the word, "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but *the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee. And the nations shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising...then thou shalt see, and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea (the vast realm of sin and wickedness) shall be converted unto thee, and the forces of the nations shall come unto thee*" (Isa. 60:1-3,5). What a word!

HIS EYES AS A FLAME OF FIRE

"And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war. *His eyes were as a flame of fire...*" (Rev. 19:11-12).

As John gazed upon this One, his attention was attracted to His eyes, which blaze like flames of fire. The spirit within was so aroused that it shone through His eyes! This description of God's Christ is most illuminating. George Hawtin commented on this passage: "The eyes of the Son of God are completely different from all other eyes. The eyes of mankind and of every living creature are capable only of receiving light. Our eyes receive reflections and images of things that are without, but the eyes of the Lord not only receive reflections of things without, but are LAMPS OF FIRE,

shedding abroad the light of God whithersoever they are turned. Every creature and everything upon which His eyes shall fall will receive the LIGHT OF GOD. ‘They looked upon Him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed’ (Ps. 34:5). Even in the hour of Christ’s greatest humiliation when Peter had denied his Lord, the Lord turned and *looked* upon him, and at that look the light of truth dawned upon this trembling and heartbroken man as he sat in his dismal despair and, being thus enlightened to the truth and to the knowledge of his guilt, he went out and *wept bitterly* in repentance and contrition.

“But this manifestation of the light of truth that shines as a burning flame from His eyes is merely a fleeting shadow of greater things to come. The day is coming and is near at hand when Christ shall be the Light of the World in the fullness of its meaning. His eyes run to and fro through the whole world and wherever He looks the light of heaven will shine. Upon whomsoever His eyes shall fall darkness will be dispelled from him and the light of Christ will shine upon him. Through long millenniums has the world sat in outer darkness and in the cold and gloomy shadows of death, but He who soon shall come riding triumphantly through the open heavens has eyes burning as lamps of fire, before whose shining darkness and shadow will flee away forevermore” — end quote.

The One who has the eyes as a flame of fire is He who comes to judge and make war. Ah, He stands in the midst of the seven churches with His eyes of fire! He rides upon His steed of conquest with His eyes of fire! He stands within the spirit of each one of us with eyes of flaming fire! To judge rightly He must see through and through, search all depths, look beneath all masks, penetrate all darkness, and try everything to its ultimate residuum. There is often something wonderfully luminous, penetrating, overawing, in the human eye. Men have been blinded by the look of kings. It is like the living intellect made visible, which seems to read all secrets at a glance. It is this infinite intensification, flashing like a sword of fire, that the apostle beheld in this heavenly Warrior. It is an eye-flame of omniscient perception, a searchlight that penetrates to the inmost thought and intent of the heart, laying bare in its awful revelation every fiber of self, even in purposes supposed to be pure, scorching, burning, shriveling every hypocrisy, and withering away every breath of the flesh.

Oh, the eyes of the Lord! The eyes of holiness, the eyes of infinite discernment, the eyes of depthless love and burning desire for those whom He died to redeem and transform into His likeness! They descend into the depths of the spirit, the candle of the Lord, to search out and make known what is of soul and what is of spirit, of what is beneath the surface, any wicked way within a man, and flash and burn and refine and purify with their flame of sincerity, truth, and shadowless righteousness. The word of God is quick and powerful — living and active — sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and the marrow — the deepest part of man’s nature. And when the glorious Warrior Christ comes galloping into our land He comes with eyes that are shining lamps of heavenly fire, penetrating, illuminating mind and heart, revealing all that is there, bringing the divine judgment of truth, and His warfare destroying every selfish motive and every secret sin, consuming every vestige of the carnal mind, purifying the deepest intents of the heart, transforming and flooding the whole being with righteousness and purity and power!

Christ’s eyes of fire, and the eyes of fire of every son of God who shares His glory, are eyes of the same fire that is revealed throughout the book of Revelation. The divine fire is the truth, the righteousness, the love of God; in a word, it is the *nature* of God! Any careful reader of the Old Testament will be aware that fire is often used therein as a symbol of the presence and action of God. “The Lord our God is a consuming fire.” “God is love.” Those are not contradictory terms — they are complimentary terms! It is no straining of metaphor to say that the love of God and the wrath of God are the same thing described from opposite points of view. How we shall experience it depends on the way we come up against it. The illustration of it is seen in the life of a family. The same love in the heart of a father for his child will on one occasion cuddle the child and embrace him tightly,

whereas under different conditions it will take off the belt and apply it sternly in the act of discipline and correction. God does not change; it is man's moral state that changes! The wrath of God is a figure of speech to denote God's unchanging opposition to sin! It is His righteous love, His holy burning passion operating to destroy evil. Nothing can live in that devouring flame that is of the nature of a lie or that wars against the spirit of holiness!

Yes, this wonderful work of the eyes of fire is not a vengeful, vindictive, implacable, humiliating, destructive work, but that of *redeeming, transforming love!* It cannot be stated better than it was by Rex Andrews when he wrote, "Your enjoyment of the book of Revelation will depend, to a considerable degree, on what you believe about that fire-flame of His eyes. Unless you can perceive that that FIRE is pure-unadulterated-love, the LOVE which GOD IS, you will likely miss some of the most vital things intended to be conveyed by the Revelation. If you consider the flaming fire, and the two-edged sword of His mouth, and the face which is as the sun shining in its strength, as being destructive, bent on killing, you will have missed about all there is of value. That FIRE of the eyes, and face shining as the sun, describe a Being-like-unto-man, whose spirit and soul and body are utterly invested, and completely possessed by, THE ETERNAL SPIRIT. And that ETERNAL SPIRIT is declared to BE LOVE!"

HIS MANY CROWNS

"His eyes were as a flame of fire, and *on His head were many crowns...*" (Rev. 19:12).

From the dawn of human history the crown has been a symbol of rule, whether by secular monarch or by sacred priest. The early form of the crown was a simple band that was first used to hold back the long hair of the wearer, not unlike our modern headband. Eventually it was adopted as a royal headdress even among peoples wearing short hair. Such fillets are represented in sculptures of ancient Egypt, Nineveh, and Persepolis. Some of these bands were about two inches wide and were made of linen, silk, and even silver and gold. These ancient headbands gradually developed into the more elaborate turbans encircled by a band of silk or other expensive material and decorated with diadems and other precious stones and metals to assume the dignity represented. In the process of time, when bands of precious metal replaced the bands of cloth as crowns, "horns" were added to the royal circlets. In the Middle East, as in the Bible, a horn is a symbol of power and authority. It was natural, therefore, for the designers of crowns to use points on the bands to indicate the might of a king or ruler. These fillets were an artistic rendition of horns and indicated the number of countries under the rule of the wearer. If his crown had three horns it meant that he ruled over three countries, five horns meant that he ruled over five countries, and so forth. But whether simple headband, turban, or the elaborate metal crowns of recent ages their message has always been the same — to declare that the wearer is SOVEREIGN!

There is a strange but wonderful statement found in Revelation 4:11. It is the cry of the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders, a heart-cry from the very throne room of God and the Lamb. "*Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power...*" The Lord is here declared to be worthy to RECEIVE POWER — as well as glory and honor. The question follows — How can the Lord, the Creator of all things, who inherently possesses *all power*, who is *the almighty*, the absolute *sovereign of the universe*, the *omnipotent One* — how, I ask, is it possible for such an One to *RECEIVE POWER*? What power could He be given that He does not already possess? The truth is, of course, that although our Lord is the supreme authority and power of the universe He has ceded to His creatures and to His servants and to His sons *delegated authority*, particular areas of His own authority and dominion turned over to them. "*Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion...*" (Gen. 1:26). "*What is man, that Thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that Thou visitest him? Thou has crowned him with glory and honor. Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of Thy hands...*" (Ps. 8:4-6).

So we see that God has given man during these past six millenniums the right to rule his own life and destiny as well as the whole earth and indeed *all* the works of His hands! Collectively, this rule of man constitutes the “kingdoms of men” or “the kingdoms of *this world*” (Rev. 11:15). During the past two thousand years the world has been influenced, controlled, and ruled first by Rome, and later by the ten kingdoms that have emerged from the Roman Empire as one after another has achieved almost universal military, economic, and political supremacy in the earth. This age is now ending and the whole world is today experiencing the birth pangs of a new age when the sons of God shall be manifested before all creation and the new age and the new order of the kingdom of God shall arise and consume and destroy “all these kingdoms.”

The expression of the Psalmist wherein he says concerning God’s ordination of man, “*Thou crownest him with glory and honor,*” denotes clearly that God gave man **kingly rule** in the natural creation. It is a wonderful day for a believer when he becomes conscious of the fact that God’s purpose from the beginning has been that man should exercise that ruling authority as a *vice-regent* — one exercising the powers of another by *delegation* — **in union with HIM!** And this is what man departed from in the fall. Man set about to “do his own thing” apart from God! He rejected God’s authority over Him. He could no longer speak as a *son*, saying, “I come not to do my own will, but the will of Him that sent me; it is not I that doeth the works, but my Father who dwelleth in me: He doeth the works.” The luciferian spirit has ever been, “*I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds: I will be like the most High!*” (Isa. 14:13-14). **I WILL...I WILL...I WILL!** So man rules his own life, his own destiny, his own little kingdom apart from the mind, purpose, and will of God, yea, in opposition to God! And the inevitable result of this “independence” is chaos, sin, sorrow, tragedy, and death. For how certain it is that “*there is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death*” (Prov. 14:12). And God has allowed this to be for an appointed time.

This brings us back to our question: If the Lord **HAS ALL POWER**, how is it that He **RECEIVES POWER?** The answer is not far to be found, for we have all prayed it hundreds or perhaps even thousands of times! “*Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.*” What does it mean for God’s kingdom to come, and what does it mean for God’s will to be done *in earth*, even in *this earth* which I am? **I** am the king of my life; **I** am seated upon the throne; **I** make the decisions; **I** do according to my own pleasure, purpose, and will. But when Jesus THE LORD comes I must **abdicate my throne** and let Him ascend the throne of my heart! The testimony of all who have received the call to sonship is just this: “Till I met THE LORD I was the commander of my life and my destiny. Since He has entered into my temple HE COMMANDS! “Thy will be done in earth” is something for now — not just tomorrow and the ages to come. You see, when I abdicate the throne and resign from the dominion I have independently exercised in my life, then that realm of dominion which I had reserved unto myself, and which He permitted me to reserve unto myself, is given to the Lord. The power which I once held in my own hands, by His concession, is yielded up to Him and He now exercises the **power** and the **authority** that I formerly held. Thus, **HE RECEIVES POWER!** He receives the right to rule over my life and *through* my life. He now reigns *in me* and *through me*. He never took that right by force — but He receives the right when I yield it up to Him! Isn’t it wonderful!

Yet there is a mystery deeper even than this. For when God’s sons and God’s royal priesthood (the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders) declare, “Thou art worthy to receive power,” the record states that they “fall down before Him that sat on the throne, and worship Him...and **cast their crowns before the throne**, saying, *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive power!*” Oh yes, the power which He receives is associated with the crowns they cast before HIS THRONE! Even in this new and glorious realm of the kingdom of God, where we reign with Christ over all things, we realize that all of our “crowns” are truly **His work** and not our own! We were created, they go on to say, for *His pleasure* and *for Him*. To HIM belongs the glory! To HIM belongs the honor! To HIM belongs the

power! To HIM belongs the crowns! The worthy One is the Lamb that was slain! It is HE who has earned the crowns, for HE and He alone is our salvation, our redemption, our life, our righteousness, our wisdom, our sanctification, our power, *our all!* He Himself is our FULL AND TRUE REWARD! The Lord Himself is OUR CROWN!

I think that this is the scene that John beholds in chapter nineteen of the Revelation! *“I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war. And His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on His head were MANY CROWNS...and He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.”* You see, my beloved, this is our Lord, even Jesus the Christ, and He comes wearing MANY CROWNS! When seen in chapter six as the Rider on the white horse, He wore only one crown. Now, followed by a train of warriors also riding on white horses, He appears with many crowns. He is not Warrior only, but also King of kings. Here the Victor who is King of kings and Lord of lords makes His glorious appearing crowned by all those making up His heavenly army. They are one and all no less kings than Himself, but it is now HIS KINGSHIP flowing through them! That is the mystery. Now, in this present time, it is the overcomers, those who are called and chosen to reign with Him, who cast their crowns down before Him and yield up all their own will, way, and authority unto Him! Many, even now, are crowning HIM Lord and King. He has my crown, He has yours, and He is receiving more and more glory, honor, power, and crowns as many sons are brought to glory! Great is the mystery!

To be continued ...

J. PRESTON EBY

<https://www.godfire.net/eby/rev210.html>

<https://www.godfire.net/eby/>

If you would like to receive these studies write to:

J. Preston Eby
P.O. Box
El Paso, TX 79937-1240

All writings are distributed on a free-will offering basis.