



## REVELATION 19:11-21 STUDY GUIDE

### 19:11-16

These verses make a vivid portrayal of Jesus during his anticipated return. Here's a breakdown of each aspect:

- **Jesus is depicted as mounted on "a white horse" (v. 11)**, a symbol of purity and victory. This rider is unmistakably Jesus, distinct from the rider of the first seal judgment in Revelation 6:2, likely a satanic imitation of Christ.
- **He is titled "Faithful and True" (v. 11)**, emphasizing his trustworthiness and authenticity.
- **Jesus is portrayed as both a judge and a warrior (v. 11)**, implying his ongoing role in judgment and defense of his people.
- **His "eyes are like a flame of fire" (v. 12)**, symbolizing his penetrating insight and role as the divine judge who sees into the depths of humanity (Revelation 1:14; 2:18-23).
- **He wears "many crowns" (v. 12)**, contrasting with the limited crowns of the dragon and the beast, signifying his ultimate sovereignty over all earthly kings as the true cosmic ruler (Revelation 12:3; 13:1; 17:9).
- **A name is inscribed on him that only he knows (v. 12)**, suggesting his incomprehensible sovereignty over human understanding of his character (Revelation 2:17; 3:12; 22:3-4; Luke 10:22; Matthew 16:16-17; Exodus 6:3).
- **His robe is "dipped in blood" (v. 13)**, possibly symbolizing various interpretations, including his own sacrifice, the blood of martyrs, or the defeat of his enemies. (Isaiah 63:1-3)
- **He is identified as "the Word of God" (v. 13)**, signifying his embodiment of God's character and revelation.

- **He is accompanied by a heavenly army (v. 14)**, possibly angels or believers, to execute final judgment (Matthew 13:40-42; 16:27; 25:31-32; Mark 8:38; Luke 9:26; 2 Thessalonians 1:7; Jude 14-15).
- **He wields a "sharp sword" to rule the nations with authority (v. 15)**, drawing from Old Testament imagery of divine judgment (See Isaiah 49:2; 11:4; Psalm 2:9).
- **He treads the "wine press" of God's wrath (v. 15)**, symbolizing the execution of divine judgment upon the wicked (See Isaiah 63:2-6; Revelation 14:19-20).
- **His title as "King of kings and Lord of lords" is visibly displayed (v. 16)**, asserting his supreme authority over all earthly powers.

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### **19:17-18**

In this passage, the angel heralds the impending destruction of the beast, false prophet, and their followers using imagery reminiscent of Ezekiel 39:4,17-20, which describes the defeat of Gog and Magog.

The scene of scavenging birds such as vultures feasting on the flesh of unburied corpses left from battle (also seen in Revelation 19:21b) was a familiar theme in the Old Testament. This imagery was haunting to the people of that time, echoing instances such as those found in Deuteronomy 28:26, 1 Samuel 17:44-46, 1 Kings 14:11, 16:4, 21:24, 2 Kings 9:10, Jeremiah 7:33, 15:3, 16:4, 19:7, 34:20, and Ezekiel 29:5.

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### **19:19-21**

Verse 19 references the ongoing "war" previously mentioned in Rev. 16:14 and 16 (Rev. 20:8). Let's jump into that text and contemplate "Armageddon" as depicted there.

The gathering of the "kings of the earth" specifically for "the war" (Rev. 19:19; 20:8) indicates a well-known conflict, the eschatological battle often prophesied in the Old Testament between God and his adversaries (Joel 2:11; Zephaniah 1:14; Zechariah 14:2-14).

The identical Greek phrase "the war" (is employed in all three texts (Rev. 16:14; 19:19; 20:8). Moreover, in 16:14 and 20:8, the same extended phrase "to gather them unto the war" is used. This suggests that John refers to the same "war." While premillennialists disagree, viewing the "war" in 16:14 as a reference to "Armageddon" at Christ's second coming and considering the "war" in 20:8 as distinct and subsequent to the millennium, I am convinced that John denotes the same war in 16:14, 19:19, and 20:8, thus supporting the notion that John presents differing perspectives on the same events through literary recapitulation.

Rev. 16:15 offers a parenthetical admonition to believers to remain vigilant lest they be caught unprepared on that momentous day. The imagery depicts one who remains spiritually awake and attentive, clothed in the righteous garments of Christ. The concept of physical nakedness symbolizing spiritual shame, often resulting from idolatry, is evident (Rev. 3:18; 17:16; Ezekiel 16:36; 23:29; Nahum 3:5; Isaiah 20:4).

The location of this eschatological conflict, referenced in both Rev. 16:16 and 19:19, is called Har-Magedon (Rev. 16:16). This poses a challenge for those interpreting a literal battle at a literal site, as there is no actual place called the Mountain of Megiddo (which would be the most literal rendering of the term). Megiddo itself was an ancient city and Canaanite fortress situated on a plain in the southwest region of the Valley of Jezreel or Esdraelon. Although located on a tell (an artificial mound about 70 ft. high), it can hardly be considered a mountain! The valley of Megiddo was historically significant, hosting numerous battles (around 200, according to some commentators), as seen in: Judges 4:6-16; 5:19; Judges 7; 1 Samuel 29:1; 31:1-7; 2 Kings 23:29-30; 2 Chronicles 35:22-24.

In simpler terms, Armageddon symbolizes the ultimate defeat and judgment of the entire world by Christ at his second coming. The imagery of war, with kings and nations battling on the familiar battlefield of Megiddo, represents the complete and decisive triumph of Christ over all his enemies—Satan, the beast, the false prophet, and those who follow them—on the final day.

Notice, also, that the judgment unfolds in two stages, although the actual battle is not described, only its aftermath.

**First, the beast and the false prophet are captured and cast alive into the lake of fire, where they will suffer eternal torment (Revelation 20:10).** I argue that the beast and false prophet primarily symbolize collective entities rather than specific individuals, though individuals may embody these roles at various times. And just as death and Hades are cast into the lake of fire (Revelation 20:14), so, too, are these symbolic figures.

**Second, the remaining followers of the beast and false prophet are slain.** Their eventual fate in the lake of fire is implied in Revelation 20:15.

In simple terms, Revelation 19 portrays the glorious return of Christ at the end of human history. At this time, he will finalize God's plan by defeating his enemies and establishing a new era of righteousness with the arrival of the new heavens and earth.

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## **APPLICATION**

**Firstly, be sober-minded.** Sin is serious. Don't be an enemy of God. Rebelling against the One who created you is sheer folly. While we may not know all the challenges you've faced or the reasons for your actions, everyone will be held accountable for their deeds. This book, Revelation, aims to awaken us to the severity of sin and to urge us to turn from compromise, responding with faith and repentance. By God's grace and Spirit, let it shine light on our wrongdoing and lead us to seek forgiveness and change (Ezekiel 18:30; Romans 6:23; 2 Corinthians 7:10).

**Secondly, be open to God's Word.** His Word will judge us. Jesus, the Word of God, wields the sword of God's Word upon his return. Every page of the Bible points to him. Today is the time to humbly receive and respond to God's Word, allowing it to penetrate our hearts and reveal our true selves before Him (Hebrews 4:12-13; John 1:1; Revelation 1:16).

**Thirdly, be encouraged.** If you're with Jesus, you will conquer with Jesus. Revelation's main message is to see Jesus as so magnificent that we persevere in our journey toward seeing him face-to-face. Remember his faithfulness and let it strengthen your faith. He has always been faithful, never betraying us or failing to keep his promises. Hold onto the hope that every prayer will be answered and every promise fulfilled. As we await his return, let's continue to run the race, knowing that our victory is assured through him (Hebrews 10:23; 1 Corinthians 15:57; Revelation 22:20).

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## **QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER**

1. What does the image of Jesus riding a white horse symbolize to you?
2. How does this passage make you feel about the idea of Jesus as a victorious warrior?
3. Do you think this passage portrays Jesus differently than other parts of the Bible? How so?
4. What do you think the significance is of Jesus wearing a robe dipped in blood?
5. How does this passage shape your understanding of Jesus' role in overcoming evil?
6. Do you think this passage suggests that violence can sometimes be justified? Why or why not?
7. How does the return of Jesus described here give you hope?
8. What does this passage teach us about the ultimate triumph of good over evil?
9. How does the imagery in this passage inspire you to stand firm in your faith?
10. What practical lessons can we learn from this passage for our lives today?