

Easter Message: VICTORY!      REVELATION 19:11-16

Text: Revelation 19:11-16 New International Version (NIV)

## The Heavenly Warrior Defeats the Beast

<sup>11</sup> I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and wages war. <sup>12</sup> His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. <sup>13</sup> He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. <sup>14</sup> The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. <sup>15</sup> Coming out of his mouth is a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. "He will rule them with an iron scepter."<sup>[a]</sup> He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. <sup>16</sup> On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written:

KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

Dear Friends, He did it all for us so we can have life,

The Race Track. This is the name of an artist's painting.

Subtitled: Death on a Pale Horse. The horseman s alone on the track and is wielding a large scythe. On the ground beside him a large snake. Look at the painting. The rider is riding clockwise.

The rider is going the wrong direction to pick off everyone as he finishes the race. He will get everyone. The pale rider, death is coming after me. He's got you and me, family and friends in his sight. He is going to catch you. And he always wins. Or it would seem, and so it appears to us all here in this world.

Go back up to the text in Revelation. The rider on the white horse is King of kings and Lord of lords. First look might bring us some fear as he comes with blazing fire and a sharp sword. But we notice his power. He will overcome all. He is the final image of our Lenten warrior we have been seeing in our midweek services. We celebrate the Lord's victory over Satan and death. Time to celebrate!

We left him on Good Friday. Suspended on a cross. He cried out, It is Finished! And willingly gave up his life for all. Limp was his body. We ask, how can someone who is dead be a victorious champion? Good question.

The rider in our text is not a statue. He is not formed from a mold or carved in plaster or marble. HE is alive, Powerful. Actively at war.

The rider on the white horse is-Jesus. No longer a whipping cushion. He is no longer a captive to the soldiers. A bloody, slow moving, beaten up man. His head not bowed. His body is alive! He is NOT in the grave! Paul says in 1 Corinthians 15: 20: Christ has indeed been raised from the dead.

Victory! Defeat for death not Jesus. A soldier stuck a spear in him to make sure he was dead. He was wrapped in burial cloth and placed in a grave.

One more foe needs to be picked off by the rider on the white horse. Death. Paul says, the last enemy to be destroyed is death. Jesus empty grave proves, proves he is more powerful than death.

He let death grab hold of him. He let soldiers take him away in Gethsemane. He volunteered to die. Jesus did something no one has ever done. He killed-death. He rose. He went from death to life. This is what the resurrection means. To go from death to life. The rider on the white horse in our text is victorious.

Jesus made many appearances. 1 time he appeared to a group of over 500 people. Many people were alive and could see Jesus alive at the 1<sup>st</sup> Easter. Firsthand Jesus actually rose from the dead. We have heard it directly from those who witnessed it.

How important. Death is coming for you. We try to push it away. Big bucks are spent trying to whip cancer, heart disease, diabetes, and other serious illnesses. We cannot stop death medically. Death happens when the heart stops and brain waves cease. There is no cure!

The empty tomb proves proves Jesus words about death are true: I AM THE RESURRETION AND THE LIFE. THE ONE WHO

BELIEVERS IN ME WILL LIVE, EVEN THOUGH HE DIES. John 11:25. We will see the One who has conquered death. We must close our eyes in death, just as Jesus said, and fall asleep only to rise again gloriously. We must put off our mortal perishable bodies and rise with immortal imperishable bodies.

John in the Revelation allows us to take a look at our Risen Lord riding the white horse. All powerful is he to do what he promised even long ago by Job when he said! I KNOW THAT MY REDEEMER LIVES!

Text again:

If you ever thought Jesus was a softie toward his enemies look at this picture. The last one of our Savior in Scripture. The awesome power of Jesus is displayed with a sharp sword, with iron scepter, as he carries out the fury of his Father. His robe is dipped in blood, shed on the cross. This is a very graphic picture of the battle with his enemies. Isaiah was inspired to write this in chapter 63: Why are your garments red, like those of one treading on the winepress? The one enthroned in splendor proclaimed, I trampled them in my anger; and trod them down in my wrath; their blood splattered my garments, and I stained all my clothing.

Why the anger and judgment? Jesus shed his innocent blood to wash away the sins of the world and rose again to demonstrate his power over death. Sure, judgment will come to Satan and all his rebellious hosts in hell. They have worked against the King of kings and Lord of lords. They were the first to rebel

against him. But those who mocked Jesus and do not believe will be judged. The Psalmist wrote these words:

Those who band together against the Lord and against his anointed He will break them with a rod of iron and dash them to pieces like pottery. Psalm 2:2,9.

Here is this picture we have Easter and judgment day holding hands....with only a short instant between them.

Those with the rider are safe forever. Alleluia!

We are also here, heirs of heaven, dear children of God, called by his grace. We will rise from death and join the hosts of heaven in praise to our glorious Lord and Savior. Voices-angels and humans together-will be giving eternal praise to the rider on the white horse who has used his power for us! He has cleansed us from our sins with his blood. See how much he loves us.

At the moment of our death, fear will be gone. Our sins and guilt from the past will be gone. The wondering-thoughts focused on life here will be looking to Him alone. The splendid and beautiful picture of heaven will explode into view! Perfect, eternal bodies. Risen from our graves. How amazing us that! There will be love and peace forever.

Here's the picture God gives us also here at the end of the Bible: They will be his people and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There

will be no more death or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away. Revelation 21:3

The Bible says we will be kings and queens who will serve joyfully under the King of kings and Lord of lords, The great rider on the white horse. Can you see it? Isn't Easter grand, great, and glorious? It's the final victory!

Alleluia and Amen!