

Revelation
A Wednesday Night Bible Study

Lesson #62

12/19/2007

The King Is Coming — Part 4

19:11-16

When John saw **“heaven opened,”** as he describes in verse eleven, he began to tell us about what he saw by identifying the Lord Jesus, whom he saw on a **“white horse”** by the presentation of six names for his Lord. Though Jesus, in His Word, has been identified with many names, these six have a special relationship to the events unfolding before John. As we have seen, these names are: **1) Faithful; 2) True; 3) An unknown name; 4) The Word of God; 5) KING OF KINGS; 6) LORD OF LORDS.**

In significance they ascend like steps moving upward toward the throne of God. While each of them is important, and fulfills a defining role of Who Jesus is and what He does in the events before John and us, the last two have a special place in this ascendative description of our Lord.

“King of Kings” reminds us of God’s presentation of Himself to man over the centuries. In various ways and at various moments of importance, He has presented Himself as not only King, but as the **“King of Kings.”**

Our minds turn back to shortly after He had called Abraham to leave his pagan culture and set out in faith to follow Jehovah as his God. Not long after leaving Mesopotamia and journeying to the land of promise, his problematic nephew Lot found himself the captive of some kings from the east who had come to the plains of Jordan and plundered the riches of Sodom. Abraham responded by summoning his men and defeating the ten kings from the east, freeing Lot.

Following the conflict, as he was celebrating his victory, Abraham suddenly beheld a strange figure. It was **“Melchizedek king of Salem”** who was Jesus Christ in a theophonic appearance (Genesis 14:18-20) Whom we know Abraham recognized as his God Jehovah because Abraham called Him **“the most high God.”** It is the first recorded appearance in the Bible of Jesus as a king. After he gave tithes to his divine King, Abraham further verifies that he so recognized Melchizedek as his God by saying to the king of Sodom, **“I have lifted up mine hand unto the Lord, the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth”** (Gen. 14:22). In a sense, Abraham’s descriptive statement identifying his King as **“the most high God, the possessor of heaven and earth”** became a foundation stone of the identification of Jesus Christ. By Abraham’s **“giving tithes of all”** that came into his hands for his use, Abraham set forth a practical pattern by which the subjects of **“the King of Kings”** recognize His ownership and provision of all material things. Hundreds of years after Abraham, at Mt. Sinai, God confirmed the correctness of this practice by codifying it and amplifying it in His law for His people (Leviticus 27:30; Deu. 12:6; 14:28; 26:12). In fact, the **“giving of tithes”** became such a practical way for the subjects of the King to show their respect and submission to Him that withholding the tithe resulted in curses from the King, while obedience resulted in blessings (Malachi 3:8-12).

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Revelation 19:12 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.

Revelation 19:13 And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.

Revelation 19:14 And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.

Revelation 19:15 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.

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This foundational truth introduced by Abraham, and elaborated upon by our Lord down through the years, is still true today. The loyal and faithful subjects of **“the King of Kings”** still recognize His ownership and provision in the same manner. Abraham’s recognition of Melchizedek as his King, and submitting himself to Him, is harmonious with what we see in the scene presented in Revelation nineteen. Between that first presentation of Himself as King and the presentation before us, there have been numerous times when the subject of Jesus as King has been set before us in various ways.

In looking back to see a few of these times we are reminded of the rebellion of the people in 1 Samuel eight when the people grew weary of God’s ways of leading them through judges. They demanded that God give them a king to govern them in a way the pagans around them were governed. It was typical of man’s rebellion against God and produced expected results, just like God told them it would (1 Samuel 8:7-22). Over the next 2,000 years God allowed the descendants of Abraham to be governed by many earthly kings, but only ten of them would be **“good kings”** and be decent representatives of the **“King of Kings.”** Only one of those, David, would deserve God’s highest praise. As we know, even David, at times, failed to faithfully represent God. God picked David to be His earthly representative in such a special way that he would serve as a prophetic picture of Jesus’ rule over all as **“King of Kings”** (1 Samuel 7:13-16; Psalm 89:35-37). Our Lord prophetically pictured His future Millennial Kingdom by using David’s throne as a prophetic symbol of His eternal reign.

Another time, in a somewhat different setting, our Lord reminded men of His Kingship. When Daniel was a captive of Nebuchadnezzar, Jesus caused this pagan ruler, the most powerful of all earthly kings in that day, to **“praise and extol and honor the King of heaven”** (Daniel 4:36). The One Whom Nebuchadnezzar was praising is the same as the One Whom John sees. Some years after Nebuchadnezzar had died, Jesus showed Himself to Daniel in a glorious vision of His Kingly role: **“I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed”** (Daniel 7:13-14). Daniel’s vision was given to him as an encouragement just after God gave him a vision showing the pain and destruction which wicked human kings would produce on the peoples of the world. It was an awesome contrast — the righteous, eternal **“King of Kings”** contrasted with the wicked human rulers.

Another time that our Lord injected a reminder of His Kingly role was at His birth when when the **“wise men from the east”** traveled to Jerusalem.

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They asked where they might find *“He that is King of the Jews.”* We are told that, among the gifts they brought, was *“... gold, and frankincense, and myrrh”* (Mat. 2:11). The *“myrrh”* was for His death. The *“frankincense”* was for the fragrance of His perfect and righteous life. The *“gold”* was in recognition of His role as King. Interestingly, when He reigns in His millennial kingdom, once again He will receive visitors from the east who will be bringing gifts. However, among their gifts then, they will not bring one which they brought to Him at His birth. In His millennial kingdom they will bring *“gold and incense,”* but no *“myrrh”* for there will be no reason any longer to anticipate death (Isaiah 60:6).

Having at His birth reminded us that He is King, He emphasized it and focused on it more intensely through Paul. When Paul wrote to his young friend, Timothy, he encouraged him with some powerful words, dictated to him by our Lord, which spoke of the time of which we are reading: *“That thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ: Which in his times he shall show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the KING OF KINGS, and LORD OF LORDS; Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honor and power everlasting. Amen”* (1 Timothy 6:14-16). Yes, the *“King of Kings”* is coming to assert His rightful royal rule over all that is and that ever shall be. The name used here, *“KING OF KINGS,”* is clearly appropriately selected to portray the actions of our Lord Jesus Christ.

“LORD OF LORDS” is the last of the six names found in the passage. Rather than being redundant, it expresses what it mean when Jesus is truly recognized as *“the KING OF KINGS”* by His subjects. It is the practical acknowledgment of His Kingship and the application of His rule in the heart of an individual. It means to accept His authority over and ownership of all of one’s life — to have submitted to Him as one’s King — to have yielded to Him absolute and total control of all that one is, and, as a result, to have been converted from being a slave and servant to Satan to having become a child of God resulting in all of the benefits and responsibilities of being one of His sons.

This is clearly seen in the conversion experience of Saul of Tarsus, a fanatical enemy of Jesus, when he was changed into one of His most loyal and submitted servants. When Saul, confronted by the Lord Jesus Christ on the road to Damascus, responded to Jesus, he said, *“LORD, what will thou have me to do?”* (Acts 9:6), and spent the rest of his life faithfully following the instructions of his *“LORD OF LORDS.”*

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Whenever asked by another what one needed to do to be saved, he replied, ***“Believe on the LORD JESUS CHRIST and thou shalt be saved”*** (Acts 16:31). In explaining how a person could receive Jesus as his savior, he wrote to the church in Rome and said:

“That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the LORD JESUS, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the Scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same LORD over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the LORD shall be saved” (Romans 10:9-13).

Paul, whom Jesus had converted into being a new man from the old man Saul, rightly proclaimed that **it is impossible to separate Jesus as savior from Jesus as LORD**. The word LORD is the word one uses to publicly profess that Jesus is being received as one’s savior as well as the word that describes one’s submission to all that Jesus proclaims Himself to be. In a sense, it also distinguishes those who **“follow Him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean”** from those against whom He comes, who have rejected Him as their LORD. In this way it is exceptionally appropriately used to describe Him in this scene.

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