

**The Horse and His Rider –  
To the tune of The King is Coming**

Dr. Glenn Robertson

As I have often taught, Revelation is a message presented in a vision/dream language. It is a picture language, similar to apocalyptic literature common to the ancient Jews. Some modern Christian writers have picked up the picture language to tell Christian stories such as C. S. Lewis in his *Chronicles of Narnia*, and Calvin Miller in *The Singer, The Song, and The Finale*. Miller used the idea of music to convey the gospel image. He presented Jesus as a troubadour who came singer the Creator's song. His trilogy is set in Medieval times with the ecclesiastical church as the persecutor of Christ.

I've decided to make the title of my message on Christ's return to be framed in music terminology. According to our expert on hymnology, Larry Cheesman, in the 1800's hymn books had a list on hymn lyrics on one page and the tunes on another page. Whoever directed the song would select a hymn and then chose which tune to sing it to. Back then, hymns were not set to a particular tune. As long as the meter worked, you could sing a hymn to a variety of tunes. So our message, *The Horse and His Rider* (a throwback to C. S. Lewis) will be sung to the tune, *The King is Coming*.

**Revelation 19:11-21 NIVO**

**<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 makes 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> Out of his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. "He will rule them with an iron scepter." 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.**

**<sup>17</sup> And I saw an angel standing in the sun, who cried in a loud voice to all the birds flying in midair, "Come, gather together for the great supper of God,**

**<sup>18</sup> so that you may eat the flesh of kings, generals, and mighty men, of horses and their riders, and the flesh of all people, free and slave, small and great." <sup>19</sup> Then I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to make war against the rider on the horse and his army.**

**<sup>20</sup> But the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who had performed the miraculous signs on his behalf. With these signs he had deluded those who had received the mark of the beast and worshiped his image. The two of them were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur.**

**<sup>21</sup> The rest of them were killed with the sword that came out of the mouth of the rider on the horse, and all the birds gorged themselves on their flesh.**

There will always be many differing interpretations on the events of the last days. The reason for this is because God alone knows what will happen, when and how. However, every interpreter agrees on one thing: Jesus is coming back again. He is going to return in the sky. He is going to rule over his enemies. He is going to bring his people into his eternal kingdom.

John gives us this picture in this passage. The context to Revelation is the Roman persecution of believers. In the first century, the beast was the emperor who demanded worship at his shrine, and the false prophet was the local leaders who enforced it. In the last days, this will be repeated on a larger scale, a worldwide scale. Christians will be persecuted. Yet, when all seems to be lost, then the sun will quit shining. The moon will turn red. The stars will go black, Then suddenly the sky will split in half and Jesus will return in glory. With him will be all the saints who have died and God's glorious angels. They will ride in like an army. They will come in to destroy the enemy. And Jesus, will reign as King of Kings and Lord of Lords. The King is coming. The King is coming. Praise God the King is coming.

**1. The horse and his rider means Jesus is coming to conquer his enemies.**

**<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 makes war.**

The first time Jesus came, he came to Jerusalem on a colt of a donkey. The symbolism of his actions are clear to all. Jesus came to be the Son of David. He came to be the King of Judah and Israel. Yet, his actions were those of submission and peace, not of a conquest of battle. He came in as a shepherd to his people, Israel. The symbolism of Jesus' actions are important.

Yet, now John shows us a different view of Jesus. Jesus will not be riding on a colt of a donkey. No. Instead, he is shown riding on a white horse. By the first century, the use of chariots was giving way to the preference of the use of the war horse. A strong horse in battle was fearsome. The horse is strong and powerful, able to kill and trample the enemy. Being a white horse means his rider is a victorious champion riding into battle. So, we don't dismiss the image of the horse. It is part of the imagery of conquest for Jesus' second coming.

Jesus is coming on the clouds. He is identified as Faithful and True. He is also identified as the Word of God. Jesus is Faithful and True because He has been faithful to work God's salvation on the cross. He is true, because he is the truth.

He comes to bring justice against those who have oppressed Christians on the earth. The armies of heaven are following him. They are dressed in white linen. They are clean because Jesus has washed them in his blood by the cross. They are all riding white horses.

**The King is coming. Praise God the King is coming.**

**2. The Rider of the horse is the coming King.**

**<sup>16</sup> On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.**

The rider, Jesus, is also identified by the name on His robe and thigh: **King of Kings and Lord of Lords**. His robe is dipped in blood. This is not likely the idea of Jesus' blood, the blood of the cross. The picture is of blood at the base of the robe that hangs from his body. It is like you dip something at the base and then stop. The blood symbolizes the blood of his enemies he kills in battle. Again, the image is of a warrior who is powerful and overwhelms his enemies. Here again we have the image of the lion and the lamb. Jesus came the first time as a lamb to be slaughtered on the altar. He is coming a second time as a lion to devour his enemies.

Jesus has a secret name on him. In ancient oriental thought, you never give your most personal name to strangers. Knowing someone's name granted you power over him or her. So, many Easterners will never give you their personal name until you become a personal friend. No one knows this secret name of Jesus. No one can have power over him.

Every symbol of the rider is strong and powerful. Jesus may seem like a weak idea to many people in our world. Communist think we are weak minded. That is because that idea is based upon atheism. Modern man thinks he is something. Yet, he is nothing in this universe. He is nothing but a passing flower on a blade of grass, all too soon to wither in the heat of the sun. But the Lord and His Word will remain forever.

Jesus is coming. He is coming to conquer His enemies as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

**The King is coming. Praise God the King is coming.**

### **3. The Rider will destroy the enemies of God with the Word of his mouth.**

**<sup>15</sup> Out of his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. "He will rule them with an iron scepter." He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty.**

The Ride on the horse is Jesus. He is the Word of God. Jesus uses that phrase to identify Jesus in John 1:1. As the Word of God He has power in His Word to destroy his enemies.

Everyone anticipates a final battle someday, an gathering of nations as a place called Armageddon. All of God's enemies gather together to oppose God's people, when suddenly Jesus appears and comes to destroy them. I want you to notice how Jesus wins the victory over them. He does so by the sword that comes out of his mouth. Jesus wins the victory by His very Word. His Word formed all things in creation. He made suns and galaxies with His Word. He flung galaxies across the universe by a single word.

People think of strength in battle in terms of their weapons. Yet, the weapons of mankind will not be worth anything when they face the coming King of Kings. By one word from his mouth he will destroy them and send them all to hell. Then he will usher us into his kingdom to reign with him forever.

Fear the Lord. **The King is coming. Praise God the King is coming.**