

14. Second Coming

First-century Israelis longed for a redeemer who would destroy the Roman Empire. They turned against Jesus when his salvation provided spiritual deliverance from sin, and not military deliverance from Rome. At the Second Coming, Jesus will destroy the world empires and deliver Israel. As enemy soldiers overrun Jerusalem, Christ returns to earth – riding a horse – to defend Israel. As Christ returns the battle shifts from a war against Israel to a war against God. *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.* (Revelation 19:19)

Accompanied by the armies of heaven, Jesus will rescue Israel. From the Valley of Jezreel (Armageddon) the nations will attempt to destroy Jesus as he returns. *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. 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. He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean.* (Revelation 19:11-14)

Zechariah foretold that Israel will be on the brink of defeat when Jesus returns. *I will gather all the nations to Jerusalem to fight against it; the city will be captured, the houses ransacked, and the women raped. Half of the city will go into exile, but the rest of the people will not be taken from the city. Then the Lord will go out and fight against those nations, as he fights in the day of battle. On that day his feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, east of Jerusalem, and the Mount of Olives will be split in two from east to west, forming a great valley, with half of the mountain moving north and half moving south.* (Zechariah 14:2-4)

Jesus simply speaks and his enemies die. *Out of his mouth comes a sharp sword*, with which to strike down the nations. (Revelation 19:15) *The rest of them were killed with the sword that came out of the mouth of the rider on the horse.* (Revelation 19:21) *And then the lawless one will be revealed whom the Lord Jesus will overthrow with the breath of his mouth and destroy by the splendor of his coming.* (2 Thessalonians 2:8)

In heaven there is a celebration of incorruptible flesh called the wedding supper of the Lamb (Revelation 19:7-9). Jesus spoke of this feast at the Last Supper; it is the greatest Passover celebration ever. *When the hour came, Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table. And he said to them, 'I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God.'* (Luke 22:14-16) Jesus was saying concerning this future Passover meal, "I will eat it again; it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of God."