

# PICTURES OF JESUS IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION - PART 1

## Jesus, the Christ Child

Dr. Derek Morris

Preaching passage:	Revelation 12:1-5
Subject:	What happened when the Dragon tried to destroy the Christ-child that the woman had delivered
Complement:	the Dragon failed and the Christ-child was caught up to heaven.
Exegetical idea:	When the Dragon tried to destroy the Christ-child that the woman delivered, the Dragon failed and the Christ-child was caught up to heaven.
Homiletical idea:	<b>Jesus lives! Jesus reigns!</b>
Purpose:	To remind my hearers that the mission of Jesus to save us from our sins was accomplished in spite of Satan's attempts to stop Him.

### Introduction

Most sermons about the birth of Jesus are based upon the narratives in the Gospel of Matthew or the Gospel of Luke. Matthew was one of the 12 disciples, and Luke was a physician who traveled with the Apostle Paul. They tell us of shepherds in the fields outside Bethlehem, angels singing "Glory to God in the highest!" and wise men coming from afar.

Most people are unaware of the fact that there is another narrative about the birth of Jesus other than the ones recorded by Matthew and Luke. This other narrative doesn't mention shepherds or wise men. Rather, this other narrative about the birth of Jesus tells about an enormous red dragon! That's right! An enormous red dragon. When was the last time you saw an enormous red dragon in a Christmas play? This dramatic account of the birth of Jesus, the Christ child, is found in the book of Revelation.

The complete title of the book of Revelation is the Revelation of Jesus Christ. It is the revelation by Jesus Christ to His servant John about things which will come to pass. And it is also the Revelation about Jesus Christ. In this sermon series, we are highlighting five pictures of Jesus in the book of Revelation: the Lamb of God, the Risen Lord, the Faithful Witness, the

Glorious King. And today we are going to consider the picture of Jesus, the Christ child. As we study this picture of Jesus, our artist Gloria Kuhlman, is going to capture the message in a beautiful picture!

The passage in the book of Revelation which deals with the birth of Jesus, the Christ child is found in Revelation 12. I invite you to take your Bible and open it to the last book of the New Testament, the book of Revelation. We will begin reading with Rev 12:1-2. “A great and wondrous sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and a crown of twelve stars on her head. She was pregnant and cried out in pain as she was about to give birth.”

Who is this woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet and a crown of twelve stars on her head? Some Bible commentators suggest that this woman is Mary, the mother of Jesus. What do you think about that suggestion? Clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and a crown of twelve stars under her head.

Does this woman represent Mary? I have concluded from my study that the answer is Yes and No! I am convinced that this woman in Revelation 12:1-2 includes Mary, the mother of Jesus, but it is not limited to Mary. This woman clothed with the sun and with the moon under her feet, and with a crown of twelve stars on her head represents all of the people of God. In both the Old Testament and the New Testament, the people of God are represented by a pure woman. In Isaiah 54:5, the prophet declares to the people of God, “For your Maker is your husband—the Lord Almighty is his name—the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer; he is called the God of all the earth.” And in 2 Cor. 11:2, the apostle Paul writes these words to the people of God in Corinth: “I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy. I promised you to one husband, to

Christ, so that I might present you as a pure virgin to him.”

The people of God down through the ages are represented as a pure woman. In contrast, those who have turned away from the Lord our God are represented as an impure woman, a harlot. It is from the seed of the pure woman, the people of God, that the Messiah would come. The prophet Isaiah had foretold, Isaiah 7:14, “ Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.” And Immanuel means? God with us!

So this same pure woman, clothed with the sun, and with the moon under her feet, and with a crown of twelve stars on her head represents the people of God. If the sun represents the glory of Jesus, the Sun of Righteousness, most clearly revealed in New Testament times, then the moon which reflects the glory of the sun might represent the Jewish ceremonial system which was pointing forward to the Messiah who was to come.

What about the crown on the pure woman’s head? That is literally a victory garland. A victory wreath. And the people of God will gain the victory! Amen! By the grace of God, the people of God will gain the victory through Jesus Christ our Lord. What about the twelve stars in the crown? Twelve is a symbol of the completeness, the complete people of God, whether the 12 tribes or the 12 apostles.

Let’s continue reading in Rev. 12:3-4. “Then another sign appeared in heaven: an enormous red dragon with seven heads and ten horns and seven crowns on his heads. His tail swept a third of the stars out of the sky and flung them to the earth. The dragon stood in front of the woman who was about to give birth, so that he might devour her child the moment it was born.”

What a terrifying sight! This enormous red dragon intends to destroy the Christ child the moment He is born! Who does this enormous red dragon represent? Satan. How do we know that? The apostle John exposes the identity of this dragon in Rev. 12:9. “The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray. He was hurled to the earth, and his angels with him.”

So, according to this picture of the birth of the Christ child in the book of Revelation, Satan intended to destroy Jesus as soon as He was born. Why? Because Satan wanted to prevent Jesus from accomplishing His mission. Satan wanted to obstruct God’s purpose. The mission of Jesus was imbedded in His name: He came to save His people from their sins. And God’s purpose, born in His heart of love was that whoever believed in Jesus would not perish but have everlasting life.

But Satan, the enormous red dragon, wanted to obstruct God’s purpose. He wanted to prevent Jesus from accomplishing His mission. And so, reading again from Rev 12:4, “The dragon stood in front of the woman who was about to give birth, so that he might devour her child the moment it was born.”

Do the Gospel records of Matthew or Luke confirm the words of this prophecy? Is there any information in the Gospel records which show that Satan intended to destroy Jesus the moment He was born? Absolutely. Look with me at the testimony of Matthew, in Matthew 2:1-8. “After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the time of King Herod, Magi from the east came to Jerusalem and asked, ‘Where is the one who has been born king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him.’ When King Herod heard this he was disturbed, and all Jerusalem with him. When he had called together all the people's chief priests

and teachers of the law, he asked them where the Christ was to be born. ‘In Bethlehem in Judea,’ they replied, ‘for this is what the prophet has written:

But you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,  
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;  
for out of you will come a ruler  
who will be the shepherd of my people Israel.

Then Herod called the Magi secretly and found out from them the exact time the star had appeared. He sent them to Bethlehem and said, ‘Go and make a careful search for the child. As soon as you find him, report to me, so that I too may go and worship him.’”

Did King Herod have any intention of going to worship the Christ child? No! Herod didn’t want to worship Jesus, the newborn King. Herod wanted to kill Him! So when the wise men failed to return to Herod, having been warned by an angel of the Lord to go home by another route, King Herod reacted with rage! We can read the account in Matthew 2:16. “When Herod realized that he had been outwitted by the Magi, he was furious, and he gave orders to kill all the boys in Bethlehem and its vicinity who were two years old and under, in accordance with the time he had learned from the Magi.” This was not simply a random act of violence by an irrational monarch. Herod, as an agent of Satan, was trying to destroy Jesus. The dragon was trying to devour the child at the moment that it was born.

Let’s go back to Revelation chapter 12. Rev. 12:5 “She gave birth to a son, a male child, who will rule all the nations with an iron scepter. And her child was snatched up to God and to his throne.”

The entire life and ministry of Jesus is summed up in one sentence! She, that is the pure

woman, gave birth to a son, a male child. Who is this male child? The text tells us. He is the One who will rule the nations with an iron scepter. Does those words remind you of another text in Scripture? “Rule the nations with an iron scepter.”

Those same words are found in Revelation 19:15. In the picture of Jesus returning as King of kings and Lord of lords, we read, “Out of his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. He will rule them with an iron scepter.”

This male child in Revelation 12 is Jesus. He comes to earth at His first coming as a helpless baby in Bethlehem, Immanuel, God with us. But He will not remain as a helpless baby. He will come a second time as a glorious King, King of kings and Lord of lords.

Look back in Rev 12:5. “She gave birth to a son, a male child, who will rule all the nations with an iron scepter. And her child was snatched up to God and to his throne.” That “snatching up to God” is a reference to the ascension of Jesus, after His death and glorious resurrection! We read in Acts 1:9, “After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. ‘Men of Galilee,’ they said, ‘why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.’”

Just as we read in Revelation 12:5, Jesus was snatched up to God. But notice. Jesus wasn’t just snatched up to God. Go back to Revelation 12:5. What do we read there? He was snatched up to God and to his throne. Jesus was snatched up to God and to his throne. Is that a reference to God’s throne or to the throne that Jesus would sit on? The answer is found in Revelation 3:21. “To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just

as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne.”

These are the words of Jesus, the Faithful Witness. He was snatched up to God and to His throne and He sat down with His Father on his throne! We see this same Jesus, the Lamb of God, in Revelation 5:6. “Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the center of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders.”

And in Rev 7:9, we read, “After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice: ‘Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.’” Look down to Rev 7:17. “For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”

What a wonderful hope is ours! What do you say? And the whole story is captured right there in Revelation 12:5. “She gave birth to a son, a male child, who will rule all the nations with an iron scepter. And her child was snatched up to God and to his throne.”

The great red dragon tried to destroy Jesus the moment that He was born. Satan tried to obstruct the mission of Jesus. The Devil sought to prevent Jesus from saving us from sin and death. But Satan failed. The mission of Jesus was accomplished! Praise the name of the LORD! No wonder the angel sang, “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.”

Satan tried to destroy Jesus, but he failed. Jesus came to earth as a helpless baby, Emmanuel, God with us. And He grew in wisdom and stature and in favor with God and man.

Jesus lived a perfect life, reflecting the unfailing love of our Heavenly Father. And then He laid down His life to save us. But when they laid Jesus in the tomb, the tomb could not contain Him. Jesus rose again on the third day, just as He had foretold. Up from the grave He arose! And He ascended to heaven, snatched up to God, not to occupy some obscure place, but to sit with His Father on His throne! A place of honor. A place of exaltation.

And He will come back to earth a second time, but not as a helpless baby. No! Jesus will return a second time as King of kings and Lord of lords. And then Satan and those angels who joined with him in his rebellion against God will be cast into a lake of fire. And sin and death will be no more. Sickness will be no more. Crying will be no more. Because the book of Revelation tells us that God is going to create a new heavens and a new earth.

I'm not making this up, brothers and sisters. I'm speaking the truth to you today. We read in Rev 21:1-4, "Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and there was no longer any sea. I saw the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, 'Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. 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 mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away.'"

And all of that is possible because Jesus, the Christ child came. God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, the whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. That's what the Christmas season is all about. It's a time to celebrate the birth of Jesus, the Christ child. But more than that. It's a time to celebrate that Jesus accomplished

His mission—to save His people from their sins. Satan tried to stop Jesus. Satan tried to devour the child the moment that He was born. But Satan failed. Jesus lives! Jesus reigns! Jesus accomplished His mission to save us from our sins. Oh come, let us adore Him, Jesus the Christ child. Oh come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.

Come, let us follow the example of the wise men of old, and bring our gifts. Let us thank Him for coming to our sin-sick, death-marred world to save us! Let us worship Him now. Come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.

## PICTURES OF JESUS IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION - PART 2

### The Lamb of God

Dr. Derek Morris

Preaching passage:	Revelation 5
Subject:	Who is worthy to open the scroll and is worthy of worship and praise
Complement:	The Lamb that was slain.
Exegetical idea:	The Lamb that was slain is worthy of open the scroll and is worthy of worship and praise.
Homiletical idea:	<b>Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, wants to take away your sin!</b>
Purpose:	To present a clear picture of Jesus as the Lamb of God and to encourage my hearers to trust Jesus as their personal Savior.

#### Introduction

The last book of the Bible is called the Revelation of Jesus Christ. It is the Revelation by Jesus Christ to His servant John concerning the things which are to come. But this book is also the Revelation about Jesus Christ. In this series of messages, we are going to examine five pictures of Jesus in the book of Revelation.

At the beginning of this book of Revelation a blessing is promised for all who study it. Listen to the words of the apostle John, recorded in Revelation 1:3. “The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, who testifies to everything he saw--that is, the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near.” So there is a blessing promised as we study this Revelation of Jesus Christ. And we will also be blessed as we watch an artist capturing this message in a picture.

The picture of Jesus in the book of Revelation that we are going to examine today is Jesus as the Lamb of God. There are 30 references to the Lamb in the book of Revelation. 30! The first reference is found in Revelation chapter 5. I invite you to take a Bible and open it to

the last book of the Bible, the Revelation of Jesus Christ, chapter 5. This chapter is one of the most glorious passages in all of Scripture.

“Then I saw in the right hand of him who sat on the throne a scroll with writing on both sides and sealed with seven seals. And I saw a mighty angel proclaiming in a loud voice, ‘Who is worthy to break the seals and open the scroll?’ But no one in heaven or on earth or under the earth could open the scroll or even look inside it. I wept and wept because no one was found who was worthy to open the scroll or look inside. Then one of the elders said to me, ‘Do not weep! See, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed. He is able to open the scroll and its seven seals.’ Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing in the center of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders. He had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. He came and took the scroll from the right hand of him who sat on the throne. And when he had taken it, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each one had a harp and they were holding golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sang a new song:

You are worthy to take the scroll

and to open its seals,

because you were slain,

and with your blood you purchased men for God

from every tribe and language and people and nation.

You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God,

and they will reign on the earth.

Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. In a loud voice they sang:

Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain,  
to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength  
and honor and glory and praise!

Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, singing:

To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb  
be praise and honor and glory and power,  
for ever and ever!

The four living creatures said, ‘Amen,’ and the elders fell down and worshiped.’”

What an amazing revelation given to the apostle John and also to us. Who is this Lamb described in Revelation chapter 5? We have a clue in Revelation 5:12. He is described as “the Lamb who was slain.” Having opened all of the seven seals, the Lamb appears again in Revelation 7:9-17. “After this I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice:

Salvation belongs to our God,  
who sits on the throne,  
and to the Lamb.

All the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures. They fell down on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying:

Amen!

Praise and glory  
and wisdom and thanks and honor  
and power and strength  
be to our God for ever and ever.

Amen!

Then one of the elders asked me, ‘These in white robes--who are they, and where did they come from?’ I answered, ‘Sir, you know.’ And he said, ‘These are they who have come out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore, they are before the throne of God and serve him day and night in his temple; and he who sits on the throne will spread his tent over them. Never again will they hunger; never again will they thirst. The sun will not beat upon them, nor any scorching heat. For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.’”

In Revelation 12:11, the saints overcome Satan “by the blood of the Lamb.” In Revelation 14:1, we read, “Then I looked, and there before me was the Lamb, standing on Mount Zion, and with him 144,000 who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads.”

In Revelation chapter 15, the redeemed sing the song of Moses and the Lamb. And Revelation 21:27 we are told that only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life will enter the New Jerusalem.

Who is this Lamb? Revelation 17:14 tells us, "They (that is the enemies of God) will make war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will overcome them because he is Lord of lords and King of kings--and with him will be his called, chosen and faithful followers." And Revelation 21:14 we discover that "the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb."

Who is the Lamb of the book of Revelation? Jesus Christ! There are 30 references to Jesus Christ as the Lamb of the book of Revelation! Did you know that the apostle John was not the first to present Jesus Christ as the Lamb of God? Many years earlier, at the very beginning of Jesus' ministry, John the Baptist had referred to Jesus as the Lamb of God. Jesus came to be baptized by John at the river Jordan, and John the Baptist cried out, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" John 1:34 "I have seen and I testify that this is the Son of God. John the Baptist also identified Jesus as the Lamb of God.

But John the Baptist was not the first to refer to Jesus as the Lamb of God. Seven hundred years earlier, the Holy Spirit had given this revelation to the prophet Isaiah. Listen to this inspired description of Messiah, recorded in Isaiah 53:4-7. "Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the

iniquity of us all. He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth.” That prophesy was fulfilled in the life of Jesus. Jesus Christ is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

Fifteen hundred years before the time of the prophet Isaiah, more than 2000 years before the time of Jesus, the LORD God had promised that He would provide the lamb that was needed. The story is recorded in Genesis 22:1-14. We read in Genesis 22, beginning with verse 1, “Some time later God tested Abraham. He said to him, ‘Abraham!’ ‘Here I am,’ he replied. Then God said, ‘Take your son, your only son, Isaac, whom you love, and go to the region of Moriah. Sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on one of the mountains I will tell you about.’ Early the next morning Abraham got up and saddled his donkey. He took with him two of his servants and his son Isaac. When he had cut enough wood for the burnt offering, he set out for the place God had told him about. On the third day Abraham looked up and saw the place in the distance. He said to his servants, ‘Stay here with the donkey while I and the boy go over there. We will worship and then we will come back to you.’”

Notice the faith of Abraham. He didn’t understand how God would provide. But he had faith to believe that God would provide. Even if it meant raising Isaac from the dead. “We will come back to you,” Abraham said to the servants!

“Abraham took the wood for the burnt offering and placed it on his son Isaac, and he himself carried the fire and the knife. As the two of them went on together, Isaac spoke up and said to his father Abraham, ‘Father?’ ‘Yes, my son?’ Abraham replied. ‘The fire and wood are here,’ Isaac said, ‘but where is the lamb for the burnt offering?’ Abraham answered, ‘God

himself will provide the lamb for the burnt offering, my son.’ And the two of them went on together. When they reached the place God had told him about, Abraham built an altar there and arranged the wood on it. He bound his son Isaac and laid him on the altar, on top of the wood. Then he reached out his hand and took the knife to slay his son. But the angel of the Lord called out to him from heaven, ‘Abraham! Abraham!’ ‘Here I am,’ he replied. ‘Do not lay a hand on the boy,’ he said. ‘Do not do anything to him. Now I know that you fear God, because you have not withheld from me your son, your only son.’ Abraham looked up and there in a thicket he saw a ram caught by its horns. He went over and took the ram and sacrificed it as a burnt offering instead of his son. So Abraham called that place The Lord Will Provide. (Yahweh Jireh. Jehovah Jirah.) The Lord will provide. And to this day it is said, ‘On the mountain of the Lord it will be provided.’

And the LORD did provide. Not just that day, but more than 2000 years later, on that very mountain, the LORD did provide. Mount Moriah is also Mount Calvary. Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, laid down His life for the sins of the world. The LORD did provide. Hallelujah!

We see the Lamb of God promised and the Lamb of God revealed from Genesis to Revelation! How should we respond to this picture of Jesus as the Lamb of God? I want to suggest that we should respond the same way that angels responded in Revelation chapter 5. With praise. With worship. Listen again to their testimony in Revelation 5:12-13. “In a loud voice they sang: ‘Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!’ Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, singing: ‘To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!’”

But I believe that we need to do more than praise and worship Jesus as the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. We need to ask Jesus, the Lamb of God, to take away our sin. We need to let God provide for us personally. And I have good news for you today: **Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, wants to take away your sin!** He wants to forgive you. He wants to cleanse you. He wants to provide salvation for you. **Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, wants to take away your sin!**

And so, I'm going to invite you to pray a simple prayer today. Some of you may have never prayed this prayer before. Others may have prayed this prayer, but I'm going to invite you to pray it again. Here it is: Jesus, Lamb of God, please take away my sin. That's a simple prayer, isn't it? But it is a prayer that can alter your eternal destiny. The angel told Joseph to call Mary's baby Jesus because He would save His people from their sins. Jesus came as the Lamb of God to take away the sins of the world. But each one has to make a personal decision to accept that gift. "Lord Jesus, Lamb of God, please take away my sin."

Is there anyone here today, or watching via television or on our web church, or listening on the radio, and you want to say, "Lord Jesus, Lamb of God, please take away my sin"? Just raise your hand, wherever you are. Whether here on campus, or around the world? Just raise your hand. Praise the LORD! With your hand raised, will you praise with me, "Lord Jesus, Lamb of God, please take away my sin."

Hallelujah! Some names were written in the Lamb's book of life today! Don't ever forget this important truth: **Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, wants to take away your sin!** Jesus can save you from the penalty of your sin, which is death. And He can also save you from the power of sin so that you can walk in newness of life! Hallelujah! Behold, the Lamb of God

who takes away the sin of the world. **Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, wants to take away your sin!**

So let's worship Him today. Let's praise Him today. Let's give Him glory today.  
Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Behold, the Lamb of God who has taken away your sin. Behold, the Lamb of God, who has taken away my sin.

Worthy, worthy is the Lamb.

Worthy, worthy is the Lamb.

Worthy, worthy is the Lamb that was slain.

Glory, Hallelujah.

Praise Him, Hallelujah.

Glory, Hallelujah, to the Lamb!

## PICTURES OF JESUS IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION - PART 3

### Jesus, the Risen Lord

Dr. Derek Morris

Preaching passage:	Revelation 1:9-18
Subject:	Who is the heavenly being that comes to the Apostle John at the beginning of the book of Revelation to reveal the things which must shortly come to pass
Complement:	Jesus, the Risen Lord..
Exegetical idea:	The heavenly being who comes to the Apostle John at the beginning of the book of Revelation to reveal the things which must shortly come to pass is Jesus, the Risen Lord.
Homiletical idea:	<b>Jesus, the Risen Lord, gives us hope!</b>
Purpose:	To help my hearers to understand that the resurrection of Jesus from the dead brings us hope in two ways: that Jesus is truly the Son of God, Savior and Lord, and that His resurrection assures us that in Him we too have conquered death!

#### Introduction

Today, I am praying that you will see a beautiful picture of Jesus. We are in the midst of a series of messages from the book of Revelation. The last book of the Bible is called the Revelation of Jesus Christ. It is the Revelation by Jesus Christ to His servant John concerning things that must soon take place. But it is also a Revelation about Jesus Christ. Today, we are going to examine one more picture of Jesus in the book of Revelation: Jesus, the Risen Lord. As we study, our artist, Ginny Miller, is going to capture this message in a beautiful picture!

I invite you to open your Bible to the last book of the Bible, the Revelation of Jesus Christ, and we are going to begin reading in chapter 1, verse 9. “.....” The island of Patmos was not a vacation resort in the Mediterranean! Patmos was a prison island. An Alcatraz of the ancient world. Patmos is located in the eastern part of the Aegean Sea, between Greece and Asia Minor, or modern Turkey. The island of Patmos is about 150 miles due east of Athens; about 60 southeast of Ephesus. It is a rocky, treeless island that was used as a rock quarry, and a

prison. As an old man, the apostle John had been banished to the island of Patmos because of his testimony about Jesus. I pray to God that we will also have such a powerful testimony about Jesus Christ that someone will want to shut us down, or ship us out, or silence our speaking. I'm not looking for persecution. I'm not looking for trouble. But I am praying that the truth about Jesus will be proclaimed with such Holy Spirit power that our own lives, our families, our communities will be shaken! That's the kind of testimony about Jesus that the apostle John gave and he ended up on the isle of Patmos!

Let's continue reading in Revelation 1:10. "....." Some Christians see this expression "the Lord's Day" as a reference to Sunday, the first day of the week. They use this text to support the idea that Christians should worship on Sunday rather than on the Sabbath, in harmony with the 4<sup>th</sup> commandment. First, let me point out that this verse is not speaking out which day we should keep holy as a day of worship. It's identifying the day of John's vision. Second, this is the only place in the New Testament where this specific expression "The Lord's day" is used. And nowhere in Scripture that the Lord's Day is identified as Sunday, the first day of the week. Not one text. Not one. It is true that some church fathers in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century and following use the term "the Lord's day" in reference to the first day of the week. But it seems dangerous to interpret Scripture by later history. For Scripture had also warned of a coming apostasy away from the truth of God's Word. So just because some church fathers in later years used the expression "the Lord's day" in reference to Sunday, doesn't prove that the apostle John had that intention. Let me repeat what I said earlier: there is not one text in Scripture where the Lord's day is identified as Sunday, the first day of the week. And this particular text says nothing about changing the day of worship from Sabbath to Sunday, the first day of the week.

The day that *is* clearly identified in Scripture as the Lord's Day is the Sabbath day, the seventh day of the week. Right in the 4<sup>th</sup> commandment, the LORD our God declared, "the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God....Therefore the LORD blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy." And Jesus claimed, in Mark 2:28, to be LORD of the Sabbath day.

I recognize that some Bible scholars believe that this reference to the day of the LORD is a reference not to a specific day of the week but rather to a time in earth's history. The Apostle Peter speaks of the day of the Lord in 2 Peter 3:10. The Apostle Paul speaks of the day of the LORD in 2 Thessalonians 2:2. So John could be saying, "I was caught up in vision by the Holy Spirit and shown the time when all things will be finally brought to a glorious conclusion...the day of the Lord. That is certainly a possible interpretation.

Personally, I am convinced that the most simple explanation of this expression, "the Lord's day," is that the Apostle John was caught up in the Spirit and received this heavenly vision on the day that the Lord blessed and made holy, the day that He claimed to be Lord of, the Sabbath day.

Let's continue to read from Revelation chapter 1, now in verse 11-17 "....." Right there we have a clue regarding the identity of this glorious being. Later in the book of Revelation, John falls at the feet of an angel, and the angel says, recorded in Revelation 19:10. And notice the angel's response. "....."

Now go back to Revelation 1:17, where the apostle John has just fallen at the feet of this glorious being. How does this glorious being respond? Revelation 1:17-18. "....." Who is this glorious being revealed in Revelation chapter 1? It's not an angel. This is none other than Jesus, the Risen Lord! Notice, "I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am

alive forever!” Here, in the first chapter of the book of Revelation, we find a picture of Jesus, the Risen Lord!

Does the apostle John recognize Jesus? After all, John knew Him well. John was the disciple whom Jesus loved. John doesn't tell us if he recognized Jesus or not. One thing is certain. John had never seen Jesus in all of His glory. Even the glory revealed on the mount of Transfiguration didn't compare to the glory of the Risen Lord!

Notice that Jesus stretched out His right hand and touched John. Why is that important? Why does John record that it was Jesus' right hand? Because that was the hand of favor. That was the hand of blessing. “Fear not, the Lord, had declared, for I am with you. Be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand!

Why is this picture of Jesus, the Risen Lord, so important? Because Jesus, the Risen Lord, gives us hope! Simply dying on a cross didn't prove anything. Many people have been put to death on a cross. Simple saying that He was the Messiah didn't prove anything. Many people have claimed to be the Messiah. But Jesus, after He had laid down His life for our sins, wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, and after Jesus had rested in the tomb on the Sabbath day, just as God had rested on the Sabbath day after the work of creation was completed, on the first day of the week, very early in the morning, Jesus rose up from that grave. Jesus conquered death! Oh death, where is now your sting? Oh grave, where is now your victory!

The resurrection of Jesus from the dead gives us confidence that Jesus is indeed the One that He claimed to be-the Messiah, the Son of God, the Savior of the world. Ah, but you might

say, “Other people have been raised from the dead! Even during the ministry of Jesus, Lazarus was raised from the dead, and the widow of Nain’s son, and Jairus’ daughter. They were raised from the dead, and many more, and their resurrections didn’t prove that they were the Messiah. How does the resurrection of Jesus give us confidence that He was the Messiah? Because Jesus predicted that He would rise from the dead, and He even predicted when He would rise from the dead. Early in His earthly ministry, Jesus gave a startling prophecy. The same apostle John who recorded the Revelation of Jesus Christ also recorded these words of Jesus, found in the Gospel of John, chapter 2:19. “.....” Near the end of His earthly ministry, Jesus gave another prophesy concerning His impending death and resurrection. Mark 10:32-34.

“.....”

Did you notice the expression “Son of Man” used in that passage? There is a term that is used in reference to Messiah. And that expression is also found in the picture of Jesus in Revelation chapter 1. Jesus, the Messiah, not only died for our sins, according to the Scripture, but He rose from the dead, a victor over death and the grave, just as He had predicted!

And the resurrection of Jesus from the dead was so undeniable to His followers, and such an undeniable truth that Jesus was indeed the Messiah, that they were willing to go to every nation, kindred, tongue and people, boldly proclaiming that Jesus was risen from the dead! And more than that. These followers of Jesus, and followers of Jesus down through the centuries have been willing to give their lives because of their faith in Jesus, the Risen Lord! This picture of Jesus, the Risen Lord, gives us hope because we can be certain that He is who He claimed to be: the Messiah, the Son of God, our Savior.

But there is a second reason why this picture of Jesus in the book of Revelation is so

important. Jesus, the Risen Lord, gives us hope because He is who He claimed to be—the Messiah, the Son of God, our Savior. But secondly, Jesus, the Risen Lord, gives us hope, because by faith in Him, we too have conquered death! Someone ought to say “Hallelujah” out there! Jesus, the Risen Lord, gives us hope, because by faith in Him, we too have conquered death!

Go back with me to the picture of Jesus in Revelation chapter 1. Look in Revelation 1:18. What does Jesus, the Risen Lord, have in his hand? The keys of death and Hades. Death and the grave. Why is Jesus, the Risen Lord, holding the keys of death and the grave? Because Jesus has conquered death. Jesus has conquered the grave. Not just for Himself, but for all of us. Jesus has conquered death for you. Jesus has conquered death for you. And for you. And for me.

How do I know that Jesus, the Risen Lord, has conquered death and the grave for me? Go back with me to one of the most well-known sayings of Jesus, also recorded by the apostle John, in John 3:16. “.....” Now listen to the words of Jesus in John 6:39-40. “.....” And again in John 10:27-28. “.....” No one can snatch us out of His hand. Not even death!

Jesus, the Risen Lord, gives us hope! He gives us hope because His resurrection from the dead confirms that He is indeed the Messiah, the Son of God, our Savior. And Jesus, the Risen Lord, gives us hope because, by faith in Him, we too have conquered death and the grave. We too, as followers of Jesus, saved by His grace, can boldly declare, “O death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory?” Why? Because Jesus, the Risen Christ has the keys! That’s why Jesus, the Risen Christ gives us hope!

Carl needed that hope more than ever. He had just received a message from back home. There had been a tragic accident. His oldest daughter Mindy had been enjoying a relaxing Sabbath afternoon with some friends on a river in Washington State. Later that same afternoon, as Mindy and a friend were floating across the river, they were caught in a strong current. That strong current dragged them into some dangerous rapids. Mindy's friend was found down river, clinging to a rock. She had some bumps and bruises, and she was seriously shaken up, but she had survived the fierceness of the rapids. Mindy was not so fortunate. Her body was found floating face down in the river about a mile down stream. She had been underwater for about 15 minutes. Although CPR revived a pulse, Mindy remained unconscious, struggling to breath with first one and then two collapsed lungs. Mindy's life was in the balance.

When her father Carl heard the tragic news, he was seven thousand miles away. He felt so afraid and so helpless. Carl just wanted to be there by his daughter's side. To tell her how much he loved her. The promises of Scripture that he had shared with others didn't seem to comfort him. But Carl was led to the story of Jairus. It's recorded in Matthew 9, Mark 5, and Luke 8. You might want to read the story later today. Jairus' daughter was also at the point of death. Her life was also in the balance. Carl sensed the anguish that must have been in Jairus' heart as he tried to get to Jesus. Carl resonated with Jairus' desperate cry: "My little daughter is dying. Please come and put your hands on her so she will be healed and live." Carl also felt Jairus' anguish of trying to make it home through all of the crowds. It took Carl nearly 48 hours to get home, only to discover that his daughter Mindy had been pronounced dead a few hours earlier.

The words that Jesus spoke to Jairus sounded in Carl's ears. "Do not fear. Only

believe.” Do not fear. Jesus, the Risen Christ, has conquered death and the grave. Only believe. All who have faith in Jesus have eternal life and He will raise them up on the last days. Brothers and sisters, Jesus, the Risen Christ, has the keys of death and the grave! He has the keys!

Carl’s testimony is recorded in the November 23, 2006, issue of the Adventist Review. His testimony touched my heart, and also filled me with hope. Carl ends his testimony with these words: “There is only one aspect of Jairus’s story that I cannot yet identify with—the joy that he experienced when his daughter was restored to him. As hard and painful as my daughter’s death is, I promised her that I would continue that journey that I began with Jesus....One day, very soon, I too will know Jairus’s joy as my little daughter is restored to me on resurrection morning.” (“My Journey With Jairus” in Adventist Review, November 23, 2006, p. 12)

That’s the hope that we find in Jesus! Jesus, the Risen Lord, gives us hope. He gives us hope by His resurrection from the dead that He is indeed the Messiah, the Son of God, our Savior. And Jesus, the Risen Lord, gives us hope because by faith in Him, we too have conquered death and the grave!

And there is going to be a whole lot of joy on that great getting up morning. Can you say Amen out there? When the dead in Christ rise from their dusty graves, there’s going to be a whole lot of joy. We can trust the words of Jesus, the Risen Christ. He promised “I will raise them up at the last day.” Carl and his wife Carol, along with their other children, are going to be looking for Mindy on the resurrection day. And you have some loved ones that you are going to be looking for too, don’t you? And so do I. What a day of rejoicing that will be.

Jesus, the Risen Lord, gives us hope. He has the keys of death and the grave. And

because He lives, we too shall live. Because He lives, we can face tomorrow. Because He lives, all fear is gone. Jesus, the Risen Lord, gives us hope. If you have never trusted Jesus as your Savior, if you have never let Him forgive your sins and save you, I invite you to make that commitment today. Let the Risen Christ fill your life with peace. Let the Risen Christ fill your life with joy. Let the Risen Christ fill your life with hope!

What a beautiful picture of Jesus from the book of Revelation. Jesus, the Risen Lord, gives us hope!

# PICTURES OF JESUS IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION - PART 4

## Jesus, the Faithful Witness

Dr. Derek Morris

Preaching passage:	Revelation 2-3
Subject:	Who stands in the midst of the churches to give affirmation, rebuke and counsel
Complement:	Jesus, the Faithful Witness
Exegetical idea:	Jesus, the Faithful Witness, stands in the midst of the churches giving affirmation, rebuke and counsel.
Homiletical idea:	(Our mission is not to point out everyone's faults and tell them how they should live). <b>Our mission is to tell people about Jesus!</b>
Purpose:	To remind my hears that our mission is not to point out everyone's problems and tell them how they should be living their lives but rather to point them to Jesus.

### Introduction

We are going to see a beautiful picture of Jesus today! We are in the midst of a series of sermons entitled Pictures of Jesus in the book of Revelation. In our previous study, we noted that this last book of the Bible is called the Revelation of Jesus Christ. It is the Revelation by Jesus Christ to His servant John concerning the things which are to come. But this book is also the Revelation about Jesus Christ. In this series of messages, we are going to examine five pictures of Jesus in the book of Revelation.

We also noted at the beginning of this book of Revelation a blessing is promised for all who study it. Listen again to the words of the apostle John, recorded in Revelation 1:3. "The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John, who testifies to everything he saw-- that is, the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near." So there is a blessing promised as we study this Revelation of Jesus

Christ. And we will also be blessed as we watch an artist capturing this message in a picture.

The picture of Jesus in the book of Revelation that we are going to examine today is Jesus, the Faithful Witness. In Revelation 1:5, Jesus Christ is described as the Faithful Witness. We see this Faithful Witness standing in the midst of the seven churches in Revelation chapters 2-3. He is giving affirmation, rebuke and counsel. I want us to examine this picture of Jesus, the Faithful Witness. And then I want us to ask how we should respond to this picture of Jesus in the book of Revelation.

We could easily devote one entire study to each of the seven churches addressed in Revelation chapters 2-3, but I want us to stand back and look at the bigger picture. Who are these seven churches, and why were they chosen to be the recipients of affirmation, rebuke, and counsel from Jesus, the Faithful Witness? We find these seven churches listed in Revelation 1:11 . “.....”

(Use map and pointer) Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea. Some of us have heard of the Christian church in Ephesus. Paul wrote a letter to the Christians in Ephesus. Paul lived there for several years. Timothy was the pastor there. According to early Christian tradition, the apostle John lived there, and Mary, the mother of Jesus, may have spent her final years there in Ephesus. So Ephesus is a well known city in terms of the Christian community.

But who ever heard of Smyrna? It's not mentioned anywhere else in the Bible. And Pergamum? That's the Latin name. Pergamos in Greek. It's not mentioned anywhere else in the Bible. Thyatira is mentioned once, in the book of Acts, but only as the hometown of Lydia, a seller of purple cloth, who became part of the vibrant Christian community at Philippi. Sardis is

not mentioned anywhere else in the Bible. The same is true of Philadelphia. Laodicea is referenced in Paul's letter to the Colossians, including the mention of a woman named Nympha who had a church in her home.

That ought to leave us all wondering why at least six of these seven messages are sent to obscure Christian churches that are never mentioned anywhere else in Scripture. Any ideas? I want to suggest to you that while these local Christian communities existed, with real needs and real problems, they also represented the needs of the Christian church down through the ages, all the way from Ephesus in the early Christian church, to Laodicea, the Christian church in the last days of earth's history. And the reason seven churches are chosen is because seven is a symbol of completion. Seven seals, seven trumpets, seven plagues.

And so, Jesus, the Faithful Witness, is not only giving affirmation, rebuke, and counsel to seven churches in Asia in the first century, many of which were unheard of anywhere else in Scripture, but Jesus, the Faithful Witness is also giving affirmation, rebuke, and counsel to his church down through the ages to the end of time!

So let's listen to some of the words of Jesus, the Faithful Witness. "....."

Whether we are considering 7 localized Christian communities in 1<sup>st</sup> century Asia Minor or the church down through the ages, I think that we could agree that all of these churches have challenges. Most of them have problems. They all need Jesus.

But rather than ask questions like "Who are the Nicolaitans?" or "When were the 10 days of suffering in Smyrna?" ask yourself "What is the big picture in these chapters?" Look beyond all the details, and what do you see? You see Jesus, the Faithful Witness, standing in the midst of His churches. Each one of the churches is different. Not one is the same. Even within each

church, there are differences. And Jesus meets them all where they are.

- To Ephesus, Jesus is the One who holds the seven stars in His right hand.
- To Smyrna, Jesus is the First and the Last, the One who died and came to life again.
- To Pergamum, Jesus is the One who has the sharp double-edged sword.
- To Thyatira, Jesus is the Son of God, with eyes like blazing fire.
- To Sardis, Jesus is the One who holds the seven spirits of God and the seven stars.
- To Philadelphia, Jesus is the Holy and True One, who holds the key of David.
- To Laodicea, Jesus is the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the ruler of God's creation.

Jesus speaks truth to all of His children, in all places, throughout all ages! He is the Faithful Witness. That's a beautiful picture of Jesus, isn't it?

So how should we respond to this picture of Jesus in the book of Revelation—Jesus the Faithful Witness? We should resist the temptation to think that we are the ones who are supposed to go around and point out everyone's problems and faults. Have you ever met anyone like that? They think that it is their job to point out everyone's problems. To set people straight. That's not our job! That's not the mission that Jesus gave to us. Jesus is the Faithful Witness. That's His job.

What then is our mission? Our mission is clearly stated by Jesus Himself in Acts 1:8. "....." We are to be witnesses of Jesus. We are to tell people about Jesus. Point people to Jesus. Lead people to Jesus. He is the One who will speak words of affirmation, rebuke and counsel to them. Once they meet Jesus and their hearts are changed, then they are ready to hear what He has to say to them. Does that make sense to you?

So if someone comes to church and they don't look quite the same as you do, or smell the same as you do, or dress the same as you do, what is your assignment? To point out all of the areas that they need to change? "Excuse me, Sir. But we don't wear flashy clothes like that at our church!" "Excuse me, Mam. Please don't wear tight clothes like that. If you can't dress

modestly, don't come back." Is that our job? No. That is not our assignment. Our assignment is to tell them about our wonderful Jesus! Point them to our marvelous Jesus! Give your testimony about Jesus. Use words if necessary. But the most powerful testimony is with your life. Show love. Show kindness. Reflect the beauty of your Savior, the One who is altogether beautiful.

I received an e-mail last month from a young man who has devoted his life to telling people about Jesus. This young man's Christian name is Daniel. I met Daniel many years ago at a meeting in California. Daniel was a discouraged young man. He was born in Iran, had come to Christ through a remarkable revelation of Jesus Christ, but was now struggling with direction in his life. God gave me the privilege that day of encouraging Daniel to go back to school. Daniel attended Weimar College in northern California, and is now serving as a full time Christian missionary! He has a special ministry to Moslems. I can't mention the country where he is working, because I don't want to put him at risk. But he has given permission for me to share this amazing story.

Last night the Lord impressed my heart to go out into the streets of the city. I felt that I would meet someone that God wanted me to talk to. I am glad that I obeyed, though it was difficult at first. You see, I was busy with other things which were not really important. In the streets, I met an Iranian man who has moved to my city from up north about a month ago. During our conversation, he invited me to walk with him. He mentioned that he was willing to try any faith, be it Jesus, Mohammad, or who ever if he could just find peace. After about five to ten minutes he led me to a dark alley which eventually led to a Kurdish restaurant. I must admit I was kind of nervous since I had no idea where I was and what this man was thinking, so I said a prayer asking Jesus to protect me and went with him. This man started to open up to me and to tell me of his anguish. You see while he lived in the north of the country, the people who he encountered were all prejudiced against him because he was from another country. They treated him with contempt. He was alone without any companion for about seven months. At the end of this time he developed some strange emotional problems. Perhaps it was a nervous breakdown. On one occasion he said that he laid flat on his carpet for three days and could not eat, drink, move, or even sleep. He told me that for a while he was unable

to even cry until one special day. One day on his walk, which he had started as a way to help his condition, he was ended up in front of a church. As he opened the front gate and walked into the church yard, he began to cry and sense relief. The Lord led me out into the streets of the city that night to tell him of God's great love, compassion, and desire for him to find peace and freedom in Jesus. I was able to tell him about the great sacrifice of the Father and the Son. I thank Jesus for enabling me to lead his broken mind to the Great Healer of mind body and soul. During our conversation he told me that since he has met me he senses calmness and peace. I told him that it is because of God. Before we parted I asked him if I can pray for him and he said yes and I did. I do hope that this man will give Jesus the permission to set him free of all his problems. Please pray for him and pray for me too. Thank you and God bless you all.

Isn't that a remarkable story? Daniel is telling people about Jesus. I'm sure that this man that Daniel met had lots of problems. But Daniel did what God wanted him to do. Daniel told this man about Jesus! We have the same privilege of telling people about Jesus. We don't have to point out all of their short-comings and give them all kinds of direction about how we think that they should live. We need to point them to Jesus! He is the Faithful Witness. He will impress upon their minds areas that they need to change, and counsel that they need to follow. Our mission is to tell them about Jesus.

I have a resource for you today to share with someone that you love, someone that you have been praying for, someone that you would be overjoyed to be a part of the kingdom of heaven with you. We just completed a life-changing series of messages here at Forest Lake church entitled "Words of Blessing." It was a fresh look at the 10 commandments. I know that my life was changed as a result of this series of messages, and I know that many of you felt the same way. Thanks to your generous commitment to the mission of this church, we have been able to prepare 14,000 copies of these messages for you to share. As you share these resources, pray that Jesus, the Faithful Witness, will speak to the hearts of those who listen and impress upon them exactly what He knows they need to hear.

## PICTURES OF JESUS IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION - PART 5

### Jesus, the Glorious King

Dr. Derek Morris

Preaching passage:	Revelation 19:11-16
Subject:	Who is the Faithful and True Witness who leads the armies of heaven
Complement:	Jesus, King of Kings and Lord of Lords
Exegetical idea:	The Faithful and True Witness who leads the armies of heaven is Jesus, King of kings and Lord of lords.
Homiletical idea:	<b>If you love Jesus now, you will welcome Him with joy when He returns to the earth as our Glorious King.</b>
Purpose:	To remind my hearers of the wonderful truth that Jesus will return to this earth as King of kings and Lord of lords and to encourage them to love Him now so they will welcome Him with joy when He returns as our Glorious King .

#### Introduction

When Jesus walked on the earth almost 2000 years ago, He made a radical promise to His followers. We find that promise recorded in John 14:2-3. “In my Father's house,” Jesus said, “are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am.” Christians down through the ages have referred to that glorious return of Jesus Christ to the earth as the second coming of Jesus.

After the death of Jesus on the cross for our sins and glorious resurrection from the dead, Scripture records that Jesus ascended to heaven, to His Father's house. The scene is recorded in Acts 1:9-11 “After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. ‘Men of Galilee,’ they said, ‘why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.’”

Here again, heavenly messengers give the followers of Jesus a promise of His second coming. “This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.” Jesus had described His second coming to this earth with these words, in Matthew 24:30-31 . “At that time the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will mourn. They will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory. And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other.”

This testimony of Jesus makes it clear that when Jesus returns to this earth a second time, He will not come as He did the first time, as a helpless baby in Bethlehem’s manger. Jesus will return “on the clouds of the sky, with power and great glory!

I have always viewed the return of Jesus, our Glorious King, as a very positive event. Something to look forward to. What about you? We sing songs like “Lift up the trumpet and loud let it ring, Jesus is coming again. Cheer up ye pilgrims, be joyful and sing, “Jesus is coming again!” We view the second coming of Jesus in power and great glory as a positive event. A time of great joy!

The apostle Paul tells us that another wonderful event is going to take place at the second coming of Jesus. In 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 we read, “For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever.”

Those who have died, trusting in Jesus Christ as their Savior and Lord, they will be raised to life and the second coming of Jesus! Did you hear that? “The dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air.” What an amazing reunion that will be! How many of you have loved ones and friends who have fallen asleep in Jesus that you will be looking for on that day? What a day of rejoicing that will be! Can you say Amen?!

So, when I think of the second coming of Jesus, it’s a very positive event. We’ll see Jesus face to face. The dead in Christ will be raised. I long for Jesus to return in power and great glory. Don’t you?

The book of Revelation also paints a picture of Jesus returning to the earth as the Glorious King. But it’s not a joyful picture. It shows another side to the story. We are going to study that picture today.

This message is part of a 5-part series entitled “Pictures of Jesus in the book of Revelation.” We have noted that the book of Revelation is the Revelation of Jesus Christ. It is a revelation by Jesus Christ to His servant John about this which must come to pass. But it is also a revelation about Jesus Christ.

In this series, we are examining five pictures of Jesus in the book of Revelation: Jesus the Christ-child, Jesus the Lamb of God, Jesus the Risen Lord, Jesus the Faithful Witness and Jesus the Glorious King. Today, we are going to examine the picture in the book of Revelation of Jesus the Glorious King. And as we study, an artist, Victoria Mandraken, is going to capture the message in a picture!

The passage that we are going to study together today is found toward the end of the

book of Revelation, in Revelation 19:11-16. It's a picture of Jesus, the Glorious King. Please open your Bible to the last book of the New Testament, the Revelation of Jesus Christ, as we will begin reading with Rev. 19:11 "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." Who is this Rider on the white horse? It is none other than the Jesus, Faithful Witness, who stands in the midst of the seven churches in Revelation chapters 2 and 3.

John continues to paint the picture in Rev. 19: 12. "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." Those words remind us of the picture of Jesus, the Risen Lord, in Revelation chapter 1. There in Revelation 1, Jesus, the Risen Lord is described as having eyes like blazing fire.

What is the significance of the many crowns on His head? Isn't one crown enough? And what is the name written on him that no one knows but He Himself? Perhaps the answer is found in Revelation 19:16. "On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: King of kings and Lord of lords."

That is the significance of the many crowns. Jesus is not just a king. He is King of kings and Lord of lords! The apostle John continues to paint the picture in Rev. 19:13. "He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God." That reminds us of the picture of Jesus, the Lamb of God, in Revelation chapter 5. It is this same Jesus who now appears on the scene of history as the Glorious King!

Let's continue to read, in Rev. 19:14. "The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean." Just like their commander, Jesus, the Glorious King, the armies of heaven are also riding on white horses. Are they taking a casual

ride? No. This is a picture of an impending battle.

What is the significance of the fine linen clothing, white and clean that the armies of heaven are wearing? It's a symbol of righteousness. Earlier in the same chapter 19 of Revelation, we are told that the redeemed are also wearing fine linen, bright and clean. In Rev. 19:7-8, we read, "Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. (The bride is a symbol for the redeemed). Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear. (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the saints.)" Now, before you come to a false conclusion that we somehow produce that fine linen by our righteous acts, please notice that "fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear. This righteousness is both provided for them by Jesus and also revealed in their lives through righteous acts.

Let's continue to read in Rev. 19:15 "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."

Jesus and the armies of heaven are returning to the earth, and out of his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. That's not a very appealing picture, is it? Is this a literal sword coming out of His mouth? I don't think so. And I'm not sure that Jesus and the armies of heaven are actually riding horses. This is symbolic. This is a picture of the culmination of a spiritual battle. A battle between good and evil. Jesus and the armies of heaven are about to bring the great controversy to an end.

So what is this sharp sword that is coming out of the mouth of Jesus? It is the Word of God. The sword of the Spirit. It is the truth of God. The nations of the earth have mocked His

name. They have scorned His mercy and rejected His grace. And now it is the time of judgment. Chapter 6 of the book of Revelation records the response of those who have rejected Christ at the time of His return to earth as the Glorious King of kings and Lord of lords. Rev. 6:14-17: “The sky receded like a scroll, rolling up, and every mountain and island was removed from its place. Then the kings of the earth, the princes, the generals, the rich, the mighty, and every slave and every free man hid in caves and among the rocks of the mountains. They called to the mountains and the rocks, ‘Fall on us and hide us from the face of him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! For the great day of their wrath has come, and who can stand?’”

This is such a different picture from the one that I have always imagined at the second coming of Jesus, where we look up with joy when we see Jesus, our Glorious King returning with power and great glory. I have always imagined myself looking up with joy and crying out, “Lo, this is our God. We have waited for Him and He will save us. This is the Lord, let us rejoice and be glad in His salvation.”

So what makes the difference? Why do some look up with joy and others run in fear? Why is the glory of our King a cause for joy to some and a consuming fire to others? What makes the difference? It’s our relationship with Jesus. If we have accepted Jesus as our personal Savior, if we believe in Him as the Lamb of God, if we trust Him as our Risen Lord, if we listen to Him as our Faithful Witness, then we will welcome Him as our Glorious King.

If, on the other hand, we have scorned His grace, and rejected His authority, if we have turned away from His truth, then we will not welcome Him with joy when He returns to this earth with power and great glory. We will run in fear and cry for the rocks to fall on us.

I believe that it won't be long before Jesus, our Glorious King, returns to this earth with power and great glory. And that means that we have a work to do. There are so many people who still have not heard the truth about Jesus. We want them to be able to welcome Jesus with joy. Isn't that right?

God has given us the privilege of sharing the good news about Jesus and His love with our world. Some of us may share right here in Orlando, Florida. Others may be called to go to a remote part of the earth. But each of us has the privilege of telling others about Jesus—that He is the Messiah, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world, and that He is the Risen Lord, risen from the dead, soon to return to this earth with power and great glory as our Glorious King.

A little over a year ago, one of our church family left on a daring mission to share the love of Jesus in a remote part of our world. She left family, friends, and comforts that many of us enjoy. Her name is Emmanuela. God with us. And that is her mission. Many of you have been praying for her. But what many of you don't know is that Emmanuela is here today to share part of her story with us.

Emmanuela, why did you leave the comforts of home to share the love of Jesus in a distant land?

How has your experience in the past year affected your thoughts and feelings about the return of Jesus as our Glorious King?

God called you to share the love of Jesus in a distant land. What would you say to those of us who have stayed behind?

Jesus, our Glorious King, will soon return again to this earth. Some will welcome Him

with joy, and others will run in fear. We need to tell people about the return of Jesus and we need to tell them how they can meet Him with joy. It's simple: **If you love Jesus now, you will welcome Him with joy when He returns to the earth as our Glorious King.** Let me say that again: **If you love Jesus now, you will welcome Him with joy when He returns to the earth as our Glorious King.**

He is the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. His name is Jesus, because He will save His people from their sin. But we have to choose whether we will accept His salvation. We have to choose to say, Jesus, Lamb of God, take away my sin. We have to choose to love Him who loved us and gave Himself for us. And **if you love Jesus now, you will welcome Him with joy when He returns to the earth as our Glorious King.**

Then you will be able to sing again, "Joy to the world, the Lord has come. Let earth receive her King. Let every heart prepare Him room. Let heaven and nature sing!"