

REVELATION 19:1-21

Recap: Chapters 17 to 19 is one unit recording the ultimate victory of our Lord Jesus Christ. Chapter 17 focuses on the religious system that God identified with Babylon in Scripture. Chapter 18 is on the commercial system. When both systems collapse, that sets the stage for Revelation 19.

MARRIAGE SUPPER OF THE LAMB (REVELATION 19:1-5)

¹ And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God:

² For true and righteous *are* his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.

³ And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever.

⁴ And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia.

⁵ And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great. (Revelation 19:1–5)

General observations.

- Chapter 19 is a continuation of the preceding two chapters (17 and 18), describing the great harlot and the fall of Babylon. The first ten verses of chapter 19 are joyful, containing the hallelujah choruses of the saints, the twenty-four elders, and the four living creatures.
- In the first part of chapter 19 John portrays a scene in heaven where the host of angels sings hymns of jubilation.
- The last hymn focuses on the marriage supper of the Lamb and His bride, namely the saints, dressed in fine linen.
- The scene then shifts from heaven to earth, where an angel instructs John to record the beatitude of the wedding invitation (19:9)

A. And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God: (Revelation 19:1)

The phrase “after these things” occurs nine times in Revelation (Revelation 1:19; 4:1 [twice]; 7:9; 9:12; 15:5; 18:1; 19:1; 20:3), and it usually denotes a shift in focus from one scene to another.

After seeing the destruction of Babylon on earth, John now hears a loud voice coming from a vast multitude of angels and saints in heaven. The “voice of much people” – representing both the redeemed and angels – sing “Alleluia!” This is a transliteration from the Hebrew compound word which consists of made up of “hallelu” (praise) and “yah” (an abbreviated form of Yahweh).

The word “hallelujah” appears only in two books of the Bible – Psalms (24 times) and Revelation (four times). “Hallelujah” is a shout of spiritual jubilation that occurs at the beginning and end of individual psalms (e.g. Psalms 104, 106, 113, 117).

Psalms 113-118 are known as the Hallel. psalms Also the last five Psalms in the Psalter begin and end with the word “hallelujah” (Psalm 146-150). What is also interesting is that the Hebrew Psalter ends with God’s people singing “hallelujah” (Psalm 150: 6). The New Testament closes with God’s redeemed in heaven singing “hallelujah” (19:6)

The heavenly host continues its praise with the words, “Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God” (19:1). John lists three attributes of God – salvation, glory and honour, and power.

B. For true and righteous *are* his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand. (Revelation 19:2)

In verse 2, John gives us several reasons for ascribing salvation, glory and honour, and power to God.

- God’s judgments are true and righteous (see 16:7; 15:3).
- God’s judgment over the harlot, also known as Babylon the Great.
- God’s judgment upon those who killed His servants who perished at the hand of the harlot (see 2Kings 9:7)

C. And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia. (Revelation 19:3-4)

Besides the multitude of a great voices, the twenty-four elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God, who was seated on the throne. And they said, “Amen. Hallelujah!” This is the last time in Revelation that the term “twenty-four elders appears.

- They are the representatives of God’s redeemed people translated to glory.
- They are elders seated on thrones who are given the privilege of ruling.
- They surround God’s throne and are closer to it than angels.

The four beasts were first introduced in 4:6. They support the elders in uttering praises and the “Amen” (5:9-10, 14). The four beasts and the elders, representing both creation and the redeemed, fall down before God seated on his throne. They worship God by honouring Him for the work of creation and redemption, for his glory and power.

D. And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great. (Revelation 19:5)

Amidst the praises of the multitude of hosts, the twenty-four elders and the four beasts, there came a voice out of the throne. The voice is probably not that of Jesus,

because of the words “our God.” The voice here probably comes from one of the beasts or one of the elders or an angel. In other words, we do not know.

The command is to “Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great.” This command is directed to all believers because every believer is a servant of God. The admonition for every believer is to serve God and to fear him. This does not mean that there are not two categories of people: those who serve and those who fear him. To serve God and to fear God are our twin duties as God’s people.

REVELATION 19:6-9

⁶ And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

⁷ Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.

⁸ And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

⁹ And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed *are* they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God. (Revelation 19:6–9)

Verses 6-8 record the last hymn in both this chapter and the New Testament. The hymn is the wedding song to celebrate the coming together of bride and bridegroom for the nuptial ceremony and the supper to which invited guests may come.

A. **And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. (Revelation 19:6)**

The hymn in verse 6 is similar to the hymn in verse 1. Besides the voice of the great multitude, there are two other voices that John compares with sounds taken from nature: (1) the sounds of many waters, and (2) the sounds of mighty peals of thunder.

The first word of the hymn is “hallelujah,” which has now occurred four times in these hymns. This is followed by a clause that gives the reason for this note of praise – “for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.”

This phrase gives three aspects of God – He is the Creator. He is the Almighty. He is King. In Revelation, the term “the Lord God Almighty” appears seven times and characterizes God’s sovereignty (Revelation 1:8; 4:8; 11:17; 15:3; 16:7; 19:6; 21:22).

B. **Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should**

be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. (Revelation 19:7-8)

The voice then continues with the exhortation – let us be glad and rejoice. Believers are called to give glory to God, and at the same time, we are to be the bride of the Lamb. So are believers portrayed as the bride and as the wedding guests at the same time? We have to conclude: “the guests and the Bride are one and the same.”

By way of a Hebrew betrothal, John shows the sequence of events between betrothal and wedding. According to Hebrew customs, there was a waiting period between betrothal and wedding while the bride and bridegroom lived separately. During this period the two families involved arranged the terms of the dowry. When this sum was paid, the actual wedding followed.

On the day of the wedding, a wedding feast was held to celebrate the wedding. The wedding of the groom and his bride is a type of Christ and the church.

- In Christ, the bride was chosen from eternity.
- The Son of God assumed human form: the betrothal took place.
- The price – the dowry – was paid on Calvary.
- There is an interval which in the eyes of God is but a little while.
- The Bridegroom returns and the wedding takes place.

In the meantime, we are in the period of the interval between the betrothal and the wedding proper. John says: the bride “hath made herself ready” by having being clothed in fine linen, clean and white” (Revelation 19:8).

The fine linen provided for the bride is an unconditional gift of God. Yet the bride also has a duty. She is to be faithful to the bridegroom, to show him her love and devotion, and to wait expectantly for his coming.

Revelation makes a great contrast between the harlot and the bride.

- The harlot is dressed in multi-coloured clothes (17:4). The bride of the Lamb, who is given fine linen that is bright and clean (19:8).
- The harlot is brought to ruin. The bride is brought to Christ to be his wife.
- The harlot is childless. The woman clothed with the sun and the moon under her feet who, as a symbol of the church, bore the Son (12:1-2, 5) is now the bride of the Lamb redeemed by the Son.

John adds that the “fine linen is the righteousness of saints” (19:8); this refers to the good works of Christians (Eph. 2:10).

C. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed *are* they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God. (Revelation 19:9)

John is given another command. “Write...” John is to write the fourth of the seven beatitudes (19:9). Those who are invited to the wedding banquet are all those who

have responded, have received the gift of salvation, and have been clothed in white garments to be seated at the table of the Lamb.

The words “which are called” reveal that the initial invitation was issued in the past, they responded favourably, and they now have the privilege of being seated at the banquet.

REVELATION 19:10

¹⁰ And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, *See thou do it not*: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. (Revelation 19:10)

Verse 10 is repeated later in 20:8-9 verbatim. John wrote these words as conclusions to two visions – the vision of Babylon’s destruction (17:1-19:10) and the vision of the new Jerusalem (21:9-22:9).

John’s instinct is to fall on his knees and worship, but he is stopped. Angel worship did exist in Jewish circles during apostolic times (Col. 2:18).

After preventing John from worshipping him, the angel identifies himself in several ways.

- As a fellow servant
- As fellow brethren
- As one of those who hold the testimony of Jesus.

The phrase “testimony of Jesus” can be interpreted subjectively, as the testimony Jesus himself gives, or objectively, as the testimony God’s faithful servants give about Jesus. In this instance, both the subjective and objective interpretations are valid.

Note that the phrase “testimony of Jesus” occurs twice in verse 10. In the second occurrence, John adds that “the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.” This means that the Holy Spirit has inspired prophets in both Old Testament and New Testament were witnesses of Jesus Christ through the spirit of prophecy. Thus, this spirit refers to both the testimony from Jesus and the testimony about Him.

In between the phrases “testimony of Jesus,” John places the imperative “worship God.” This imperative is given as a single command that comprises worship. This is a command that has no restrictions. This is a universal command. It is for everyone to worship God anytime and everywhere regardless of circumstances.

BATTLE AGAINST THE ANTICHRIST (REVELATION 19:11-16)

In the preceding section (17:1-19:10), John gives the account of the destruction of worldly Babylon the Great. In this section, our Lord Jesus appears not as the Bridegroom and the Lamb (19:7, 9) but as the King of kings and Lord of lords (19:16). The armies of heaven accompany him to wage war against the beast and the false prophet. Both are utterly

defeated and thrown alive into the lake of fire and brimstone; the rest of their followers are killed with the sword.

¹¹ And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him *was* called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.

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.

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

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

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.

¹⁶ And he hath on *his* vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS. (Revelation 19:11–16)

A. And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. (Revelation 19:11)

“I saw the heaven opened....” This is the second time in Revelation that John writes that he saw heaven opened (4:1).

Heaven is opened, and a white horse appears with a rider on it. The name of the rider is Faithful and True. The colour white symbolizes victory. The horse is a symbol of warfare. The rider goes forth to be the victorious conqueror. He is identified by two names: Faithful and True. The rider is our Lord Jesus Christ because He introduced Himself to the Laodiceans with these names (3:14; refer also to 1:5; 3:7; 6:10).

Christ is faithful because He fulfils everything the Scriptures reveal of and about him. And He is true because He personifies truth (John 14:6).

Christ also appears as the judge and the one who makes war. These two offices go hand in hand. By waging war against His enemies, Christ administers justice that results in the total defeat of His opponents.

B. 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 19:12)

John further gives three descriptions of Christ – His eyes, His head, and His name.

- His eyes are as “a flame of fire” (see Revelation 1:14; 2:18).
- His head has “many crowns.” There are two Greek words that are translated “crown” – *diadema* and *stephanos*. Our Lord Jesus has many diadems, representing Christ’s supremacy in countless areas.
- His name which is known to no one but Himself.

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

More descriptions. Christ was “clothed with a vesture dipped in blood.” John borrows imagery from the prophecy of Isaiah that mentions garments that are blood-spattered and stained “like those of one treading out the winepress” (Isa. 63:2-3).

Our Lord Jesus is described as being clothed in a robe. Treading out the grapes in the winepress is an Old Testament portrayal of God who, in his anger against sin, tramples on the grapes of wrath. It refers to God’s day of vengeance when He poured forth His wrath on the wicked (Isa. 63:4-6).

The picture, then, is a robe spattered with the blood of his enemies. God pronounced and passed judgment, and the evidence of His judgment is visibly displayed on his garments. Here is Christ as the judge of all the earth; the blood is not of His own blood but that of his enemies.

“His name is called The Word of God.” The title – the Word of God – brings to mind John 1:1, 14; 1 John 1:1. The name speaks of Christ bring the very Word of God, the perfect revelation of God.

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

Our Lord Jesus Christ will come with the heavenly host on white horses, and they too will be clothed in fine linen.

In 7:14, the saints had washed their robes in the blood of the Lamb and made them white. They wear linen garments that are fine, white, and clean as symbols of their righteous deeds (19:8). However, the seven angels who come out of the temple are also dressed in linen that is shining and clean (15:6).

Thus, it is best to include in the armies of heaven both angels and saints, for both accompany Jesus on his return and both will be present at the judgment (Matt. 24:31; Mark 13:27; Luke 9:26; 1 Thess. 4:13-18; 2 Thess. 1:7-10).

E. 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. (Revelation 19:15)

It is not the heavenly forces that are engaged in battle but our Lord Jesus Christ. “Out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations” (Revelation 19:15). The Word is described as a sharp sword. That means it is alive. It is powerful.

The image of a sharp sword coming out of Jesus’ mouth is familiar because of John’s description of Jesus on the island of Patmos (1:16). This word coming forth from the

mouth of Jesus carries out divine judgment to strike down the wicked (Revelation 19:21; see also 2:12, 16; Isa. 11:4; 49:2).

Christ will smite the nations. Then He will rule them with a rod of iron. Here John makes an allusion to Psalm 2:9.

There is, however, a problem in verse 15. The word “rule” [Gk: *poimaino*] means “to shepherd,” or “feed.” The picture of shepherding with an iron rod seems incongruent. But we have to bear in mind that Christ is the Shepherd-King who, with this rod, protects his own people and destroys his enemies.

John also notes that Christ Himself will tread the winepress. Our Lord tramples the grapes, that is, the nations, underfoot. John once more relies on Isaiah 63:2-3, where the word winepress refers to God’s trampling the grapes of wrath.

F. And he hath on *his* vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS. (Revelation 19:16)

The two titles convey the equivalent of superlative nouns as if they were written as “the greatest King” and “the greatest Lord.” Jesus Christ is the highest exalted Sovereign, who reigns with majesty, power, and authority.

THE FINAL BATTLE AGAINST THE ANTICHRIST (REVELATION 19:17-21)

This last section (19:17-21) describes a battle in which evil is conquered and the beast and the false prophet are consigned to the lake of fire and sulfur.

¹⁷ And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God;

¹⁸ That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all *men, both* free and bond, both small and great.

¹⁹ And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army.

²⁰ And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.

²¹ And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which *sword* proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh. (Revelation 19:17–21)

A. And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them,

and the flesh of all *men*, both free and bond, both small and great. (Revelation 19:17-18)

John saw an angel, who cried out to the birds with an invitation. John borrows a vision from Ezekiel, where the birds and beasts of prey are summoned by God to consume the flesh and blood of mighty men, princes, horses and riders, and soldiers (Ezek. 39:4, 17-20).

John describes a second banquet. The first banquet is that of the Lamb's wedding supper to which all the saints have been invited (19:7-9). The second – called the supper of the great God – is that of the vanquished.

B. And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army. (Revelation 19:19)

In verses 17-18, John gives a broad picture of the battle and its anticipated outcome. In verse 19, he gives a close-up frame that clearly draws the battle lines between the Antichrist with his kings and armies (plural) and the Christ with his army (singular). The kings of the earth are those ten kings who are allied with the Antichrist (17:12).

C. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. (Revelation 19:20)

The beast and the false prophet are captured. Although John provides no details of this capture, the verb "taken" implies that they were taken with some force. They are arrested because of their craftiness to deceive the multitudes on the face of the earth.

John writes that these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with brimstone.

Nothing is said about the identity of the Antichrist and the false prophet. They are thrown alive into the lake of fire, with the implication that they are spiritual beings whose immortality makes them suffer forever and ever. There is no indication anywhere in Revelation that the wicked are annihilated upon completing a time of punishment.

D. And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh. (Revelation 19:21)

There are differences between the beast and the false prophet, and their followers. First, these two leaders are thrown alive into the lake of fire. But their followers are killed with the sword,

The remnant is slain with the word of God. Their eternal destiny too is the lake of fire.