

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

FEBRUARY 17TH, 2019 // BOOK OF REVELATION

Revelation 19 is the climax of the book of Revelation and shows the return of Christ as Jesus is pictured as a Warrior King, a Bridegroom, and Righteous Judge.

REJOICING IN HEAVEN (19:1-5)

John's 3rd vision of the two cities (Babylon & Jerusalem) began with chapter 17.

- So far what has been focused on is Babylon, the prostitute city.
- Chapter 18 was John's final report about Babylon's fall, and now in chapter 19 the focus shifts towards heaven rejoicing at God's victory.
- The focus will also shift from the "prostitute" to the "bride" of Christ.

Christ will be seen 3 ways moving forward: as a bridegroom and warrior king in chapter 19, and as a righteous judge in chapter 20.

- John opens this vision by reporting "what seemed like a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven" celebrating.
- The first word heard is "Hallelujah", which simply means "praise the Lord" in Hebrew.

Often we see hallelujah accompanied by reasons why one should praise God.

The reasons provided by this crowd are:

- **Salvation belongs to Him exclusively (vs. 1)**
- **His judgments are true and just (vs. 2)**
- **He has judged the "great prostitute" (vs. 2)**
- **He brings justice to those who have killed the innocent and corrupted the earth (vs. 2)**

This multitude celebrates not only the judgment, but its finality (v3 shows evil's end is permanent).

- The 24 elders show up again to add more praise by saying, "Amen, Hallelujah", which means, "truly it may be, praise the Lord!"
- The 3-part funeral song (or dirge) for Babylon in chap. 18 is now reversed as a celebration of God's victory.

An unknown voice completes the praise with the Greek phrase for hallelujah: "praise our God".

- It's interesting to note that both Hebrew & Greek are used in this heavenly celebration.
- This signifies that all kinds of people from "every tribe, tongue, and nation" (Rev. 7:9) are invited to this celebration.
- The term "servants" (or "slaves") shows ownership- the saints are owned by God!

THE LAMB & HIS MARRIAGE (19:6-10)

With the words, "then I heard", John's vision enters into a 2nd phase.

- Babylon, the great prostitute, will never appear in Revelation again.
- She's been defeated and now the focus shifts to another woman- **the Bride**.
- The vision of the great multitude in vs. 6-8 looks remarkably similar to the multitude John saw in Rev. 11:16-18.

Most likely, both passages are picturing the same event, so the 7th trumpet is the end, and chapters 12-18 are a flashback.

- The crowd is so huge John describes their sound being like, "the roar of many waters" and "thunder" (vs. 6).
- The crowd is celebrating and worshipping God because, "the marriage of the Lamb has come" (vs. 7).

Why a marriage? In the OT the people of Israel were called the wife of the Lord, and in the NT the church is referred to as the wife of Christ (Eph. 5:25-32).

- The best way to understand 7-9 is through the two phases of a Jewish marriage.
- The first phase was betrothal, where the bride and groom were "married", but lived apart and hadn't consummated their marriage.

During betrothal, they would remain faithful to one another, but there was no consummation of the relationship.

- The 2nd phase was the wedding ceremony: the groom went in procession to the bride's house and then escorted her back to his home for an elaborate feast of several days.
- So this text announces that at last the Church and Christ have been united for eternity.

The ultimate story of redemption has reached its pinnacle: all that was tarnished by sin is gone and God's people are ready to be united to Him.

- The "bride has made herself ready" and is clothed with "fine linen, bright and pure".
- Vs. 8 tells us that this fine linen is the "righteous deeds of the saints"- nothing is more beautiful than when the Church performs righteous deeds.

Chapter 19 gives us a picture of Christ as our husband- it's important to remember that God loves us and wants us to be with us more than we can imagine!

- We also must remember that the Bride has "prepared herself"- we're to make ourselves ready for that day.

• At any time, our bridegroom could appear ready for His bride, so we must be ready now! John is overwhelmed by the magnitude of this announcement (and maybe confused by the identity of His tour guide), so he falls down at the angel's feet and begins to worship him.

- This angel corrects John's mistakes and orders him to not worship him.
- Angels are simply messengers of God ("fellow servants" vs. 10) and are not to be worshipped.

THE RIDER ON THE WHITE HORSE (19:11-16)

John has already seen Jesus portrayed in two other visions in Revelation.

- The 1st image of Jesus was in chap. 1, walking amongst the 7 lamp stands (churches).
- The 2nd image of Jesus was in chap. 5, as the slaughtered Lamb before the throne of God.
- The 3rd image of Christ is that of a conquering King riding on a white horse.

The only other time in scripture that Jesus had ever ridden was on a donkey to enter Jerusalem shortly before His death (John 12:12-15).

- But in this vision, Jesus is seen riding the traditional white horse that victorious Roman generals would ride through the streets of Rome in triumphal procession.
- White symbolizes the spotless, unblemished, absolutely holy character of the rider.

Though Jesus is not specifically named, it is crystal clear who the "Rider" is through the descriptions and titles given.

- 4 titles are given as the Rider descends from heaven to war against evil.
- 1st title: "Faithful and True" (vs. 11), showing that God is committed to His promises.
- 2nd title: "a name written that no-one knows but Himself..." (vs. 12)

This unknown, mysterious title speaks of the unknowable aspects of His character as God.

- "Eyes like flames" shows wisdom, eternity, and omniscience.
- "Many crowns" shows complete authority and that He has conquered His enemies.
- "Robe dipped in blood" is most likely the blood of His enemies (Isaiah 63:2-4)

The 3rd title is "the Word of God" (vs. 13) and identifies Him unmistakably as Jesus Christ.

- He is called the "Word of God" because He Himself is the revelation of the fullness of God
- The heavens opened not only to reveal the rider on the white horse, but also the "armies of heaven".
- Most likely, this army is compromised of the church, the martyred tribulation saints, resurrected OT saints (Dan. 12:1-2), and an army of angels (Matt. 25:31).

The weapon of choice the Rider uses is His Word ("the sharp sword", vs. 15)- God spoke the universe into existence, and now with His Word He vanquishes His enemies.

- The mark on Christ's thigh shows a distinction between the marks in Revelation, and more important than its placement is the title, "King of Kings & Lord of Lords"
- This show absolute power, sovereignty, and that Jesus is not "one among many"- He ALONE is God.

KING OF KINGS (19:17-21)

Revelation 19 pictures two great suppers: the "wedding supper of the lamb" (vs. 9), and now this "great supper of God" (vs. 17).

- This 2nd supper is completely different, and is really an invitation for carrion birds to feast on the flesh of the slaughtered enemies of God! (vs. 18).
- This graphic scene shows the absolute humiliation of the proud enemies of God that will bring an end to all wickedness.

This is a picture of the last, final battle between good and evil that was mentioned in chapters 16 & 17 and that will take place in the plain of Megiddo ("Armageddon").

- This battle is over before it really even begins- the Antichrist, false prophet, and kings of the earth gather to make war against Jesus...
- The beast and false prophet are quickly captured and thrown into the "lake of fire" (vs. 20).

This is the first time in the Bible that Hell is mentioned in these terms, though it will be mentioned more in the next 2 chapters.

- Everyone else is "slain by the sword that came from the mouth" of Jesus, and the birds feast on their flesh (vs. 21).
- It's a no-contest- the armies of the kings of the earth are obliterated instantly by the Words of Jesus.

In this chapter, Jesus is pictured as a bridegroom (vs. 6-10), as a Warrior King (vs. 11-16), and now we see Him as a righteous judge (vs. 17-21).

- If we don't want to receive Him in our lives as our husband and our king, we must face Him as our judge.
- This scene is a fulfillment of the main theme of Revelation- that He is returning as King!

Who is Jesus to you?

How do we prepare ourselves as a bride and live a lifestyle of righteous deeds? (Eph. 5:25-26)