

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

DECEMBER 8TH, 2024 // REVELATION

THE CELEBRATION (REVELATION 19:1-5) BABYLON THE GREAT HAS FALLEN

Chapter 18 tells us about the evil city/culture destroyed because of its excess and brutality. Chapter 19 gives us the finality of the "notorious prostitute" and shows the victory the people of God have over evil.

- This chapter shifts from an evil prostitute to the pure Bride of Christ.

THIS IS A LOUD CHAPTER

The volume is turned up in this chapter as John hears the "loud voice of a vast multitude." This crowd is shouting, "Hallelujah! Salvation, glory, and power belong to our God."

- **Hallelujah** is often heard in church, but few understand what it means. It simply means **praise the Lord** and is usually accompanied by why.

THE REASON WE PRAISE THE LORD

The redeemed of God praise Him because He has saved them. His judgments are also "true and righteous." God loves His people and protects them from, and brings justice to, evil in the world.

- V. 2 is specifically talking about Babylon and a culture that persecutes followers of Jesus.

"A SECOND TIME, THEY SAID, HALLELUJAH!"

The volume of the crowd escalates as they celebrate not only the fall of evil but its finality. The 24 elders and the four living creatures from Chapter 4 fall down and join the celebration, saying, "Amen! Hallelujah!"

- **Amen** means **truly it may be**. So, the beings in heaven affirm the praise of God's people.

THE DIRGE IS MIRRORED

Chapter 18's funeral song is directly contrasted by Chapter 19's celebration of life eternal. "A voice came from the throne, saying, Praise our God, all His servants, and the ones who fear Him, both small and great!"

- **This reminds us that sin leads to death and decay, but the ways of Christ lead to abundant life.**

"PRAISE OUR GOD" IS THE GREEK HALLELUJAH

John's use of Greek and Hebrew "Hallelujahs" in this chapter reinforces that **all people are welcomed into God's family**.

- The mention of His "servants" who "fear Him" is not derogatory or condescending but shows that **we are owned by God because we properly acknowledge Who He is**.

THE FEAST (REVELATION 19:6-10) REMEMBER REVELATION 11:16-18?

We talked about the chronology of Chapter 11 and how vs. 16-18 come later in the narrative of Revelation. Revelation 19:6-8 is the same scene as 11:16-18.

- This gives substantial evidence that the end comes at the 7th trumpet and that Chapters 12-18 are the same 7 years of the Great Tribulation.

A MARRIAGE FEAST

The volume rises to the level of "the rumbling of loud thunder" as the people praise God and declare "the Almighty reigns! Let us be glad, rejoice, and give Him glory."

- The celebration revolves around the **marriage of the Church and Jesus Christ**. The **complete reconciliation of God and man has taken place!**

WE WILL SEE JESUS IN THREE ROLES

Chapter 19 shows Christ in three roles. The 1st is Jesus as the husband of the church. Above all things, Jesus is the One who loves us more than anyone else and is jealous for our time (Exodus 20:5).

- **Our eternal reward is getting to participate in life with God forever! The beauty of heaven is Jesus. "... AND HIS BRIDE HAS PREPARED HERSELF."**

More important than when and where things will happen during the time of Revelation is the major theme of this book: **be prepared!** John was given this book so those who "have ears to hear" will heed these words.

- **We can disagree on eschatology, but Believers cannot disagree on preparation for His inevitable return!**
- 1 Thessalonians 5:2-6 (CSB)

WE MUST BALANCE FAITH AND WORKS

The people's clothing at the feast (bright and pure) is the opposite of the prostitutes' (purple and scarlet). This symbolizes "righteous acts of the saints" and reminds us that **actions follow true belief**.

- **If we say we believe, but there are no works that follow, we are not what we claim to be** (James 2).

BE CAREFUL WHOM YOU WORSHIP

John fell at the angel's feet and worshiped him after he witnessed the marriage feast. This isn't because John is bad; it's because he's overwhelmed. The angel mildly scolds John and reminds him only to worship God.

- Jesus is the only One who holds the "**spirit of prophecy**," which simply means the future and the truth.

THE RIDER (REVELATION 19:11-16) "THEN I SAW HEAVEN OPENED"

First, we see Jesus as our husband. Now, we see Christ as our protector. When Jesus was on Earth, He rode peacefully on a donkey into Jerusalem shortly before His death; now, He rides on a white horse, showing His imminent victory.

- Though His name is not mentioned, the Rider's identity is very clear.

SOME TITLES OF THE RIDER

The 1st title is "Faithful and True," which flies in the face of corrupt earthly leadership. Our leader has integrity.

- The 2nd title is a mystery that only He knows. This highlights **our inability to fully understand the**

Godhead and His ways until we are with Him in heaven. **It is ok not to be able to comprehend God fully!**

"HIS EYES WERE LIKE A FIERY FLAME"

- Similar to Rev. 1:14, showing wisdom, omniscience, and possibly anger

"MANY CROWNS WERE ON HIS HEAD"

- Shows complete authority over all kingdoms

"ROBE DIPPED IN BLOOD"

- Some believe this is the blood from the cross or the martyrs; others believe it is the blood of the people He is about to destroy
- Isaiah 63:2-3 (CSB)

THE 3RD TITLE OF THE RIDER

John says, "His name is called the Word of God." This can be connected to John 1:1. This title shows the power of God's written Word (the Bible) and His spoken words.

- **God created the universe with words and will end all evil with His tongue. This should encourage us to read the Word and even speak it aloud.**

"A SHARP SWORD CAME FROM HIS MOUTH"

God doesn't need modern weaponry or armies to defeat the forces of evil. He simply needs His words.

- **In our time, His Word is still sufficient to lead and protect us! It holds all power, wisdom, and justice. We don't need brute force; we need the power of God's Word!**

JESUS HAD A LEG TATTOO?

As Jesus goes to trample the "winepress of God's wrath" (Ch. 14), John mentions He has a name written on His robe and thigh.

- This is probably not a literal mark on His leg but a distinction from the mark of the beast. More importantly, it reminds us that He is the King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

THE WORD (REVELATION 19:17-21) THE GREAT SUPPER OF GOD

The first feast we hear about is a celebration of our consummation with God, and the second is a gruesome depiction of evil's demise.

- An "angel standing in the sun" calls out for all the birds of the sky to eat the flesh of kings, military commanders, the mighty horses, and their riders, and everyone, both free and slave, small and great.

IT DOESN'T GET MUCH MORE GRAPHIC THAN THIS

Few places in the Bible are as gruesome as the account of Armageddon. Though graphic, the evil people who opposed God have brought this upon themselves, and it shows how strongly God will end evil and chaos.

- This final clash has been built up in previous chapters, but the battle is quite anticlimactic.

IN FACT, THE BATTLE NEVER REALLY HAPPENS

As the beast and "the kings of the earth, and their armies gathered to wage war against the Rider on the horse and His army," Jesus instantly captures the Antichrist and his false prophet.

- They are captured because **their punishment will be more severe because they misled so many people**.

BOTH "WERE THROWN ALIVE INTO THE LAKE OF FIRE"

This is the first time that hell is described in this way. We will get more clarity on this in the next two chapters.

NO FIGHT, JUST MASSIVE BLOODSHED

Without leadership, and because Jesus has no rival, the world's armies quickly die by the sword that comes out of Christ's mouth (His word).

THE 3RD ROLE OF CHRIST IS THE RIGHTEOUS JUDGE

If we deny the invitation to join Christ at the marriage feast, we accept a place at the gruesome "great supper of God."

- **If we opt out of a relationship with Christ and fail to let Him be our protector, by default, we become enemies of God and place ourselves in a position of judgment.**
- Luke 11:23 (CSB)

THERE ARE ONLY TWO SIDES

- **It is unpopular to draw distinctive lines, but Jesus Christ came to do just that.**
- The absolutes of Christ have been polarizing, but He loves us so much that He wants His expectations to be clear. We are either on His side or we are not. **The fence is not an acceptable seat.**

WHO ARE WE LIVING FOR?

- **The path of pursuing self leads to death.** Humanity, if left to its own devices, always destroys itself because **selfishness cannot do life with others.**
- **The path of pursuing God leads to life.** People who lay their lives down in pursuit of Him find their **true identity, purpose, and contentment, and it affects others.**