

The Powerful Return of God's Son

Revelation 19:1-10

Pastor Michael Lynn / West Hampden Baptist Church

August 4, 2024 a.m.

Introduction: George Frideric Handel was born in Germany on February 24, 1685. Greatly talented, he would become one of Europe's finest composers. His "Messiah" was first performed in 1742, which concluded with the now famous "Hallelujah Chorus." It is interesting to note that the last musical performance Handel heard was his own "Messiah." Here in our text, we have the original "Hallelujah Chorus" recorded for us by the Apostle John. J. Vernon McGee writes that chapter 19 "...marks a dramatic change in the tone of Revelation. The destruction of Babylon, the capital of the Beast's kingdom, marks the end of the Great Tribulation. The somber gives way to song. The transfer is from darkness to light, from black to white, from dreary days of judgment to bright days of blessing. This chapter makes a definite bifurcation (division) in Revelation, & ushers in the greatest event for this earth - the Second Coming of Christ. It is the bridge between the Great Tribulation & the Millennium." Note here with me 3 divisions in the chapter: the **rejoicing** of the saints in heaven (:1-10), the **revealing** of the Savior on earth (:11-16), & the **restricting** of the sinners to hell (:17-21). This morning we will consider the first 6 verses of the chapter, which could be entitled "The Four Hallelujahs" (Dr. Harold Sightler), & verses 7-10 where we see the saints being prepared for the Lamb.

I. The **rejoicing** of the saints in heaven (:1-10)

A. The saints offer praise to the Lord (:1-6)

[Note the 4 "*Alleluias*" - 4 reasons to praise God]

1. The "*alleluia*" for the **salvation** of God

["*Alleluia*" - transliteration from Greek to English - "*Alleluia*" - the Greek equivalent of the Hebrew "*Hallelujah*" found 24 times in the Psalms, meaning "Praise the Lord" -- The last 5 Psalms (146-150) open & close with this word: "The last 5 Psalms correspondingly provide a beautiful epilogue to the entire Book of Psalms, exhorting men & angels & all creation to praise the great Lord & Savior" (H. Morris).]

a. "*Salvation*" - what mankind is saved to, salvation in its fullness

[Previously the heavens have rung out praise for His creation (4:11, "*glory, honour, & blessing*") & praise for His redemption (5:12-13, "*power, riches, wisdom, strength, honour, glory, & blessing*) - Now, praise for His salvation (complete deliverance)]

"There will be no quiet religion two steps inside the Eastern Gate. Had you been quiet & formal in your worship all your days upon this earth, all that you will lose when for the first time you see the salvation of the Lord. You will join with the others in lifting the Hallelujahs" (Sightler).

b. "*Glory*" - the glory or the glories of God - "The object of much of our preaching is to tell the Glory of God. We make an honest effort to tell it. However, no human word can describe the glories of our God... It is unspeakable" (Sightler).

c. "*Honour*" - cf. the honor given to earthly monarchs, politicians, sports & movie stars (there are reportedly 600 fan clubs worldwide for Elvis Presley) - all of these attract great attention, but, "I submit, no person has ever had the honour of this Jesus whom we shall see as we enter the gates of Heaven" (Sightler).

d. "*Power*" - He Who is the all-powerful one ("*omnipotent*") - His power to save (Heb. 7:25) to sustain (Phil. 1:6 & 4:13), & His power to secure (Jude :24).

Application: Should we wait until we get to heaven to offer praise to the Lord? Note the following:

(1) The example of the apostolic church > See Acts 2:41-47; 3:6-10; 5:40-42; 8:4-8; 10:44-46; 16:22-25

- (2) The exhortation of the Apostle Paul >
 - (a) Romans 12:12, "*Rejoicing in hope...*"
 - (b) Philippians 4:4, "*Rejoice in the Lord alway: & again I say, Rejoice.*"
 - (c) I Thessalonians 5:16, "*Rejoice evermore*"
- (3) The "excuses" of the modern church? >
 - (a) We are more dignified?
 - (b) We are not charismatic?
 - (c) We are New Englanders?
 - (d) We have nothing to rejoice about? (see II Cor. 13:5 & II Pet. 1:10)
2. The "*alleluia*" for the wrath (**severity** – David Jeremiah) of God (:2-3)
 - a. In response to 18:20 (& in answer to 6:10), the destruction of both religious & commercial Babylon - "Again there is a last reminder of Babylon's spiritual harlotry, corrupting & destroying nation after nation, age after age, with her deadly apostasy & rebellion against the Creator... because of the seductions of Babylon's man-exalting, nature-worshipping, evolutionary pantheism" (Morris).
 - b. In recognition of God's true & righteous judgments - God has been ever longsuffering (see II Pet. 3:9) & plenteous in mercy (see Isa. 55:7), but now His wrath is manifested.
 - c. In realization of Babylon's everlasting destruction - "*her smoke rose up for ever & ever*" (cf. 18:8-9 & 14:11, her inhabitants in hell)
3. The "*alleluia*" for the plan (**sovereignty** – D. Jeremiah) of God (:4)
 - a. The 24 elders - representing the Church (cf. & contrast with the "*great multitude*" of verse 1, Tribulation saints??)
 - b. The 4 beasts - representing the angels??
 - c. The worship: "*Amen, Alleluia*"
 - (1) "To worship, in the Bible, means to bow down to the will of God, acknowledge that what He says is true & what He does is right" (Morris)
Application: Did you come here today to worship?
 - (2) "...true worship, bowing down in obedient faith, even when the way is dark & the reason fails. The will of God may be difficult, but the will of God is best, & one day God's will is to be fully manifest in all its perfect wisdom" (Morris).
4. The "*alleluia*" for the reign (**supremacy** – D. Jeremiah) of God (:5-6)
 - a. The subjects of His reign:
 - (1) "*All ye His servants*" - "*doulos*" - bondsman or bondservant; one who has no will but to do his master's will & no work but to do his master's work
 - (2) "*Ye that fear Him, both small & great*" - consider the "*Fear of the Lord*" (Pro. 9:10)
 - b. The substance of His reign:
 - (1) The designation of His person > "*Lord God omnipotent*" - "The Lord God the Almighty
 - (2) The description of His power > "*reigneth*" - "No longer focusing on themselves, they rejoice in the very fact of God's glorious person & His rightful place on the throne of the cosmos" (Morris).

Introduction to 19:7-10 > Weddings in Biblical days usually followed 3 stages (or phases). There was the "Betrothal" (often when the couple were children). It was a contract entered into by the parents of the couple, consisting of the payment of a dowry by the bride's parents to the groom's parent. At that point, the couple was considered "legally married" & could be referred to as "husband & wife." The second stage was the "Presentation" - at which time the groom went to his bride's home to get her & bring her back to his home. The third & final stage was the "Ceremony" (the exchanging of vows), which took place at the home of the groom & included a wedding feast celebration (cf. John 2:1-12). Here we see the parallel to this custom to Christ & His Bride, the Church. This morning we considered the original "Hallelujah Chorus." We saw the alleluias of God's salvation, wrath, plan, & reign. Morris says, "This nineteenth chapter of Revelation is surely one of the mountain-peak chapters of Scripture, as well as one

of the most magnificent in all literature. From the great Hallelujah Chorus in heaven to the long-awaited union of Christ & His Bride, then on to His glorious return to earth & finally to the cataclysmic battle of the ages, this amazing chapter proceeds from one majestic theme to another, climaxing in the termination of the long, sad day of man & bringing in the glorious kingdom of God on earth." We will consider now the Heavenly Bridegroom who is to be united with His Bride (the Church). Having noted the rejoicing of the saints as they offered praise to the Lord, see here in verses 7-10 that the rejoicing saints are prepared for the Lamb. Note 4 things with me: announcement, adornment, accompaniment, & amazement.

[Review > A. The saints offer **praise** to the Lord (:1-6)]

B. The saints are **prepared** for the Lamb (:7-10)

1. The *announcement* of the marriage supper (:7a)
 - a. A call to be glad > a time of great rejoicing (see Eph. 5:25-27 & Isa. 61:10)
 - b. A call to give honor > attention directed to the Bridegroom, not the Bride
2. The *adornment* of the Bride (:7b-8)
 - a. Her readiness (:7a) > the present (earthly) work of sanctification resulting in:
 - (1) Ultimate perfection (I John 3:2-3)
 - (2) Christlikeness (Rom. 8:29, II Cor. 3:18)
 - b. Her righteousness(es) (:8) > the present (earthly) work of sanctification resulting in:
 - (1) Good works before ordained for the believer (Eph. 2:10)
 - (2) Fruit unto God (Rom. 7:4)

Summary: No one is saved by works "...yet, once having been saved by grace through faith, he (the believer) is both enabled & constrained to walk in righteousness, & these righteous deeds in some marvelous transmutation become the clean white linen robe of righteousness provided by the Savior for His people" (Morris).

3. The *accompaniment* to the marriage supper (:9)
 - a. A distinction:
 - (1) Those called to the supper differ from the wife (the Church)
 - (2) These are the saints of ages past (O.T.) & future (Tribulation)
 - b. A declaration: "*These are the true sayings of God*"
 - (1) The first of 3 times this phrase is used (cf. 21:5 & 22:6) - "Such promises are deemed by God to be of such paramount importance as to warrant a special surety that they are from God Himself" (Morris).
 - (2) This refers possibly to all from 17:1 on - the judgment of Babylon before the marriage is to take place (another reminder of Divine Sovereignty & His Revelation)
4. The *amazement* of the apostle (:10)
 - a. The action of John > so overwhelmed at this vision that he falls down to worship this angel
 - b. The admonition of the angel >
 - (1) "*See thou do it not*" - angels are not to be worshipped (Col. 2:18-19) - they are "fellowservants" ("*syndoulos*") -- "It is most significant that not only men who are redeemed are by this token bondslaves of Jesus Christ, but the angels also have a similar obligation of implicit obedience to the Lord. Together they form the body that bears testimony to Jesus" (Walvoord) -- see Ps. 103:20 & cf. Heb. 1:14
 - (2) "*Worship God*" - only God is to be worshipped (cf. 22:8-9)
 - c. The attention on Jesus > "*for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy*"
 - (1) "The central theme of both OT prophecy & NT preaching is the gospel of the Lord..."
 - (2) "This means that prophecy at its very heart is designed to unfold the beauty & loveliness of our Lord & Savior Jesus Christ... Christ is not only the major theme of the Scripture but also the central theme of prophecy" (Walvoord).
 - (3) "Prophecy is designed to reveal the Lord Jesus" (Ryrie).

Conclusion: In light of this fourth "Hallelujah," consider again the "Hallelujah" psalms (146-150) which "...also have as their primary themes the coming reign of God over the universe & His unending union & fellowship with all His creation, especially the redeemed saints" (Morris). The last verse of the Psalms says, "*Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord*" (150:6). Are you here today able to praise the Lord? Could you offer from your heart these 4 hallelujahs to the Lord? Can you praise Him for His salvation, His wrath, His plan, & His reign? Do you have something to rejoice about? Psalm 107:2 says, "*Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom He hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy.*" Can you praise the Lord this morning for His salvation, glory, honor & power?

Dr. Sightler said in closing his message on the Four Hallelujahs, "The only heavenly word in our vocabulary is Alleluia. This word is spoken the same the world around. Saints from every land understand its meaning. This will be the 'key-word' inside the Eastern Gate. I praise the Lord that I learned this blessed word - Hallelujah." Have you learned this word?

What follows is the revealing of the Savior on earth & the restricting of the sinners in hell. Walvoord suggests that the second coming of Christ "...is not only the high point of the Book of Revelation but in many respects the high point of all history. Here is the manifestation of the Son of God in glory, the demonstration of the sovereignty of God, the beginning of the end of human rebellion."

Though the saints have been called to the wedding feast & have made themselves ready, the earth is still in bondage to the Antichrist & his forces. The battle of Armageddon is about to take place. Tonight we will consider that battle & determine just where each of us will be when it occurs.

How about you here this morning? Can you offer the 4 Hallelujahs of verses 1-6? Could you give praise to the Lord for His salvation, His wrath, His plan, & His reign? Have you become part of the Body of Christ, betrothed to Christ as part of His Bride, because you have been born again? Why not make sure of that today? May we all heed the call to "*be glad & rejoice, & give honour to Him...*" May this study of the Book of Revelation encourage us as well as exhort us to more diligent effort in discovering how Jesus Christ is both the theme of all Scripture & the central message of all prophecy. As we search the Scriptures, might we see "*no man, but Jesus only.*"