

Heaven's Hallelujah

Revelation 19:1-10 – August 7, 2021

This chapter is one of the most exciting chapters in the Bible for it records the glorious appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ. His second coming is the culmination of redemptive history. The great conflict of the ages [good vs. evil] is about to come to an end. Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, the Redeemer of mankind is about to burst through the clouds with His heavenly host to take back what is rightfully His. He is coming in power and majesty. He will show Himself as the righteous Judge, Warrior and King. To those who know Him what a great day of rejoicing that will be but for those who have rejected Him, fear, terror and judgment await then now and for all eternity.

As chapter 19 opens, Babylon [both religious and political Babylon] are gone forever. Satan, the beast and the false prophet are headed toward Armageddon while the three evil spirits [Revelation 16:13-14] gather the kings and the armies of the earth to make war with the Lamb. Hordes of evil spirits and unredeemed men are assembling together for the great battle between heaven and hell.

As preparations of war are underway on earth, rejoicing is heard in heaven. The occupants of heaven are waiting with great anticipation as Christ their King prepares to descend to earth to face His enemies, to rescue His people and to establish His righteous rule upon the earth. As they excitedly wait to accompany their Leader, they raise their voices in praise and worship for God Almighty reigns and His judgments are just.

HEAVENLY HALLELUJAHS [Revelation 19:1-10]

The scene now shifts from the earth to heaven. John hears a hallelujah choir from heaven praising God for His righteous destruction of the great whore Babylon. The praise in heaven began in chapter four and continues throughout Revelation, reaching its climax as heaven rejoices that rebellion has ended and that the true King is about to establish His rule on the earth. There are four “alleluias” found in this chapter [vs. 1, 3, 4, 6].

A. *Alleluia*: Full Salvation Has Come [v. 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:”*

As the loud cries of Babylon’s destruction fades, a new vision of rejoicing in heaven rings out. A great multitude is heard praising God for His salvation, glory and power. Salvation has come for God’s people, and the glory and power of God is revealed by His execution of judgment on Babylon [1 Chronicles 29:11-13].

Justice is Meted Out [v. 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.”

1. Heaven rejoices because God’s judgments are true and righteous [Rev. 16:7]. Babylon’s destruction was deserved because of her unbridled wickedness.

2. God's people have waited for centuries for God's righteous judgment to fall on this ungodly, immoral world system. As judgment and destruction was meted out on Babylon, it set the stage for Christ to establish His righteous kingdom on earth.
3. God has finally avenged His people [Rev. 6:10] by utterly destroying Babylon. It is fitting and just for God's vengeance to fall upon her because of her corruptive influences and for the persecution of God's saints.

B. *Alleluia* #2: Rebellion is Ended [v. 3]

*“And again they said, **Alleluia**. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever.”*

1. Heaven's first “alleluia” was sung because of Babylon's judgment;
2. Now the second one is given because of the aftermath of Babylon's destruction. Although the kings of the earth along with others watched helplessly as Babylon burned with fire [17:16; 18:8], the flames will end. Her judgment is final, and Babylon will never rise again.
3. The smoke that rises forever is speaking of the eternal judgment of the souls of sinners; their torment will last forever [14:10-11]. Under Christ, all rebellion will come to a swift end. Christ will rule with a rod of iron [2:27; 12:5; 19:15] and will instantly deal with any form of rebellion when He rules on earth except for a short time at the end of the millennium [20:9-10].

C. **Alleluia** #3: God is in Control [v. 4-6]

1. Heaven rejoices that Christ, their righteous King, will reign forevermore. As the praises resound throughout heaven, others join in the heavenly choir.

2. The twenty-four elders and the four beasts [v. 4]

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

3. They were first introduced in chapter four and they now join in with the heavenly choir. These two groups have worshiped God throughout Revelation [4:8-11; 5:8-12, 14; 7:11; 11:16-18]. Prostrated before God’s throne, they indicate their agreement with the heavenly choir concerning the righteous judgment of Babylon.

4. Their voices join those in verse one in worship and praise to God. The words “Amen, Hallelujah” mean “So be it – praise to Lord.” God’s will is perfect and He is worthy to be praise as He brings all things under His control.

D. **Alleluia** #4: The LORD Reigns [v. 5-6]

*“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. 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.”*

Although the voice is not identified, it is probably an angel who is speaking for he refers to God as our God.

He invites the servants of God to join in this heavenly praise. All the redeemed throughout the ages [both small and great] are called to praise God. Their voices [along with others in the heavenly choir] rise to a deafening crescendo, sounding forth throughout heaven the reason for this praise – the Lord God Almighty reigns.

The evil world system has been destroyed and God will sovereignly rule the earth in truth and righteousness.

THE MARRIAGE OF THE LAMB [v. 7-8]

“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.”

1. The Marriage Ceremony

The heavenly multitude is called to rejoice, be glad and give glory to God for the marriage of the Lamb. Marriage was the greatest social event of the biblical world.

Ancient marriages consisted of three or four stages.

The imagery of the wedding ceremony has been used in Scripture to picture the Lord’s relationship with the Church.

To fully understand what is involved at the Marriage of the Lamb, one must first understand the background of

the Jewish marriage system which was present in that day, and which involved four distinct steps.

First, the father of the groom made the arrangements for the marriage and paid the bride price.

1. The timing of the arrangement varied. Sometimes it occurred when both children were small, and at other times it was a year before the marriage itself. Often the bride and groom did not even meet until their wedding day.

The second stage occurs a year or more after the arrangement of marriage. **This stage is the fetching of the bride.**

1. The bridegroom would go to the home of the bride to bring her to his home. In connection with this step, two other things should be noted.
2. **First, it was the father of the groom who determined the timing.**
3. **Second, before the groom's leaving to fetch the bride, he must already have a place prepared for her as their abode.**

Third Stage:

Stages one and two is followed by **the wedding ceremony**, to which a few would be invited.

Before the wedding ceremony, **the bride underwent a ritual immersion** for ritual cleansing.

The fourth and final stage is the marriage feast. This often lasted for as many as seven days. Many more people would be invited to the feast than were to the marriage ceremony.

In the Marriage of the Lamb all four of these steps of the Jewish wedding ceremony are evident.

First, God the Father made the arrangements for **His Son and paid the bride price**, which in this case was the blood of the Messiah This is the background for the statement in Ephesians 5:25-27:

“Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, **and gave himself for it;** ²⁶ **That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,** ²⁷ **That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.”**

The Second Step: After a long waiting period:

A long period of time transpires between the arrangement and Bridegroom coming for the bride. (In the Jewish arrangement it was ways at least one year).

Almost two thousand years have now passed since the first step occurred.

But in I Thessalonians 4:13-18, the second step will occur.

“But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren,

concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. ¹⁴ For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. ¹⁵ For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. ¹⁶ For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: ¹⁷ Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. ¹⁸ Wherefore comfort one another with these words.

The Rapture is the fetching of the Bride. Jesus will come in the air to fetch His Bride to His home, which is in Heaven. Only God the Father knows the timing of this event (Mat. 24:36).

“But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. ³⁷ But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.”

The Third Step: The marriage ceremony

This will only happen once the place of residence has been prepared (John 14:1-3).

The third stage for the church will take place in Heaven. **This is the marriage ceremony** given in Revelation 19:6-8:

“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.”

The marriage ceremony takes place in Heaven and involves the Church.

That it will take place **after the Judgment Seat of Christ.** **This** is evident from verse eight, for the Bride is viewed as being dressed in white linen, which is *the righteous acts of the saints*. This means that all the wood, hay, and stubble has been burned away and all the gold, silver, and precious stones have been purified.

Therefore, following the Rapture of the Church in which the Bridegroom brings the Bride with Him to His home, the Judgment Seat of Christ will occur. This will result in the Bride having the white linen garments which represents the wedding ceremony taking place.

The Wedding ceremony takes place in heaven before the actual Second Coming of Christ.

In the context of Revelation 19, verses 1-10 describe events in Heaven prior to the Second Coming, while verses 11-21 describe the Second Coming and subsequent events.

The thing that should be carefully noted here is that the

Church is already in Heaven *before* the Second Coming.

Furthermore, the Church has been in Heaven long enough to undergo the Judgment Seat of Messiah.

This clearly means that the Rapture and the Second Coming cannot be the same thing but must be separated by some duration of time. Revelation 19:6-8 is further evidence for this fact.

The marriage ceremony will take place in Heaven after the Rapture and before the Second Coming, involving only the Church saints.

THE FOURTH STEP: THE MARRIAGE SUPPER

“Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.” – v. 8

The marriage supper will take place on earth after the Second Coming during the Messianic Kingdom.

For that reason, some of Messianic Kingdom parables were in reference to the marriage feast (Mat. 22: 1-14; 25: 1-13).

- **Remember: The marriage ceremony involves only the Church and the marriage feast will include the Old Testament and the Tribulation saints.**

The Wedding Guests [v. 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.”

Those who are invited to the wedding supper are said to be blessed. This means “happy, joyous, satisfied and fulfilled.”

This is the fourth of seven beatitudes in Revelation [1:3; 14:13; 16:15; 20:6; 22:7, 14].

- Rev. 1:3 – “Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.”
- Rev. 14:13 – “Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.”
- Rev. 16:15 – “Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.”
- Rev. 19:8 – “Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.”
- Rev. 20:6 – “Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.
- Rev. 22:7 – “Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.”
- Rev. 22:14 Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.

Because they are invited to the wedding supper, this distinguishes them as a separate group from the church. The

bride would not be invited to her own wedding. The wedding ceremony and the wedding supper are two different events.

The Angel's Rebuke [v. 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.”

1. Worship God Only

Caught up in the astonishment of what he heard, John thoughtlessly fell-down to worship the angel, which was strictly forbidden in Scripture [Col. 2:18; Matt. 4:10].

The angel is a servant of God just like John, and the angel reminds this apostle that only God is to be worshiped. Worship will be the occupation of both angels and believers throughout eternity.

2. Prophecy reveals Jesus Christ

The angel's final word to John is that prophecy was designed to reveal God's Son, Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ is the central theme in both Old Testament prophecy and in the New Testament preaching of His saints. All those who are faithful to the testimony of Jesus will share in His kingdom.

Conclusion:

As chapter 19 begins, the inhabitants of heaven are rejoicing over the destruction of Babylon, the godless world religion and political system that have led many away from the true worship of God.

The inhabitants of heaven systematically join in to sing their praises to the Lord their God. They look with great anticipation, as the Lamb of God gets ready to return with His bride to earth to rescue His people, to bring judgment to the unredeemed and to set up His kingdom of earth. It is truly a time of great celebration for their God truly reigns forever.