

## THE REVELATION TO JOHN

### THE THINGS FUTURE, REVELATION 4 - 22

### THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST, REVELATION 19

#### INTRODUCTION

- Thomas Constable, *The four songs in verses 1–5 look back to the judgment of Babylon, and the song in verses 9–10 looks forward to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. The prostitute dies, but the bride begins to enjoy new life.*
- Charles Swindoll, ... *it should be no surprise that when something as dangerous and despicable as the Antichrist's kingdom meets its just end, God's people will rejoice with a joyful chorus of hallelujahs ... That common Old Testament exultation, hallelujah, appears four times here in the pronouncement of praise (19:1, 3, 4, and 6) ... Three groups cry "hallelujah" before God: the saints in heaven (19:1–3), the twenty-four elders before the throne of God (19:4), and the great multitude (19:6) ... In 19:1–10, we see at least four reasons for celebration ... First, they celebrate because the power of God has vanquished evil (19:1–2) ... Second, they celebrate because the Lord God reigns (19:3–6) ... Third, they celebrate because the marriage of the Lamb has come (19:7–8) ... Fourth, they will celebrate because the marriage supper begins (19:9).*

#### THANKSGIVING AND ANTICIPATION, REVELATION 19:1-10

- A. Rejoicing in heaven (1-5),
1. By a great multitude (1-3), *After this I heard what seemed to be the loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, crying out, "Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God, 2 for his judgments are true and just; for he has judged the great prostitute who corrupted the earth with her immorality, and has avenged on her the blood of his servants." 3 Once more they cried out, "Hallelujah! The smoke from her goes up forever and ever."*
  - a. Related verses
    - 1) Revelation 11:15, *Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever."*
    - 2) Revelation 7:10, *and crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!"*
    - 3) Revelation 16:7, *And I heard the altar saying, "Yes, Lord God the Almighty, true and just are your judgments!"*
    - 4) Revelation 17:1, *Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and said to me, "Come, I will show you the judgment of the great prostitute who is seated on many waters,*
    - 5) Revelation 6:10, *They cried out with a loud voice, "O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?"*
  - b. Comments
    - 1) J. Vernon McGee, *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 ... It is the bridge between the Great Tribulation and the Millennium.*
    - 2) Charles Ryrie, *"After these things" evidently refers to the visions of the chapters immediately preceding. In 18:20 the call to rejoice was issued; here is the response to the call ... This is most likely the "great multitude" of 7:9-12 ... The word "Hallelujah" occurs only in this chapter in the New Testament. In the Old Testament it is often translated "Praise the Lord," and occurs twenty-four times in the Psalms. Here the crowd praises the Lord for four things: (1) for His redemption (v.1); (2) for His righteous judgments, particularly on Babylon, whose punishment is eternal since her smoke rises up forever (vv. 2-3); (3) for His worth (the meaning of worship in v.4); and (4) for His coming reign (v. 6).*
    - 3) Warren Wiersbe, *The song emphasizes God's attributes, which is the proper way to honor Him. We do not rejoice at the sinfulness of Babylon, or even the greatness of Babylon's fall. We rejoice that God is "true and righteous" (Rev. 15:3; 16:7; 17:6) and that He is glorified by His holy judgments.*

- 4) Thomas Constable, *This great multitude in heaven praises God because of His true (fair) and righteous (just) judgments (cf. 15:3; 16:7) especially upon the great prostitute Babylon. It is only right that Babylon, which brought moral ruin on the earth, should lie in ruins ... The outpouring of God's wrath on the earth-dwellers will come in part as a result of believers' petitions (cf. 5:8; 6:9–11; 8:3–5; 9:13; 10:6; 14:18; 16:7; 19:2) ... A second burst of praise from the same group glorified God for judging Babylon summarily, for good and for all time, so that its influences will never rise again.*
  - 5) John Walvoord, *The ascription of praise is followed by a second alleluia and the statement that the smoke of Babylon will continue to rise forever. This cannot refer to the city itself, but will be fulfilled by a perpetual judgment of the people who engaged in her wicked deeds ... The judgment that is wrought on her, however, is only the beginning of the eternal punishment of the wicked, indicated in the statement that the smoke from her goes up forever and ever.*
  - 6) Grant Osborne, *This "smoke of torment" is the polar opposite of the "smoke of incense" describing the sweet-smelling prayers of the martyrs in 8:4 and the "smoke from the glory of God," the Shekinah, that filled the temple in 15:8. When God creates a soul, he is creating an eternal being, and thus the punishment and torment must be "forever and ever."*
  - 7) William Barclay, *God is praised because salvation, glory and power belong to him. Each of these three great attributes of God should awaken its own response in human hearts. The salvation of God should awaken our gratitude; the glory of God should awaken our reverence; and the power of God is always exercised in the love of God and should, therefore, awaken our trust. Gratitude, reverence, trust—these are the elements that make up real praise.*
2. By the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures (4-5), ***And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who was seated on the throne, saying, "Amen. Hallelujah!" 5 And from the throne came a voice saying, "Praise our God, all you his servants, you who fear him, small and great."***
- a. Related verses
    - 1) Revelation 4:4, 6, *Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and seated on the thrones were twenty-four elders, clothed in white garments, with golden crowns on their heads. 6 and before the throne there was as it were a sea of glass, like crystal. And around the throne, on each side of the throne, are four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind:*
    - 2) Psalm 113:1, *Praise the LORD! Praise, O servants of the LORD, praise the name of the LORD!*
    - 3) Revelation 11:18, *The nations raged, but your wrath came, and the time for the dead to be judged, and for rewarding your servants, the prophets and saints, and those who fear your name, both small and great, and for destroying the destroyers of the earth."*
    - 4) Psalm 115:13, *he will bless those who fear the LORD, both the small and the great.*
  - b. Comments
    - 1) Charles Ryrie, *... the twenty four elders and the four living ones hav joined in a hallelujah (v.4), and a voice from heaven has called for additional praise (v. 5). The voice from the throne is not named, but it probably belongs to an angel.*
    - 2) Thomas Constable, *The one who sits on the throne is evidently God the Father. "Amen" voices the elders' and creatures' approval of the two previous expressions of praise (vv. 1–2, 3), and "Hallelujah" expresses their own praise (cf. 7:12) ... The authoritative voice from the throne probably belonged to an angel (v. 10). It called for added continuous praise from all of God's bond-servants (cf. Ps. 113:1; 115:13) ... The bond-servants to whom the voice appealed for praise probably include all the servants of God in heaven, both angelic and human, including the small and the great, the saints and the prophets (cf. 18:14, 20; 19:2).*
    - 3) John Walvoord, *The 24 elders and the 4 living creatures also sing a hallelujah chorus. This is another reminder that the 24 elders, representing the church of the present Age, are distinguished from the Tribulation saints, described in verse 1 as "a great multitude." The 4 living creatures, previously introduced in 4:6–8, seem to refer to angels who praise God. Still another voice of praise, apparently coming from an angel, also praised God and exhorted all you His servants (19:5) to join in this praise.*
    - 4) Grant Osborne, *Prostrating oneself is a more serious form of worship, symbolizing total surrender. The emphasis is on God's complete sovereignty, symbolized in "who was seated on the throne.*
    - 5) William Barclay, *Two sets of people are called on to praise God. First, there are his servants. In Revelation, two kinds of people are especially called the servants of God—the prophets (10:7, 11:18, 22:6) and the martyrs (7:3, 19:2). First, then, this is the praise of the prophets and the martyrs who have witnessed for God with their voices and with their lives. Second, there are the small and the great ... this comprehensive phrase embraces 'Christians of all intellectual capacities and social grades, and of all stages of progress in the life of Christ.' It is a universal summons to praise God for his mighty acts.*

B. The Marriage Supper of the Lamb (6-10)

1. A multitude give praise (6), ***Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude, like the roar of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, crying out, "Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns."***

a. Related verses

- 1) Daniel 10:6, *His body was like beryl, his face like the appearance of lightning, his eyes like flaming torches, his arms and legs like the gleam of burnished bronze, and the sound of his words like the sound of a multitude.*
- 2) Revelation 14:2, *And I heard a voice from heaven like the roar of many waters and like the sound of loud thunder. The voice I heard was like the sound of harpists playing on their harps,*
- 3) Revelation 11:15, *Then the seventh angel blew his trumpet, and there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign forever and ever."*
- 4) Psalm 97:1, *The LORD reigns, let the earth rejoice; let the many coastlands be glad!*

b. Comments

- 1) John Walvoord, *The fourth and final hallelujah of this chapter, according to John, sounded like a multitude of people, rushing waters, and loud thunder. Here the rejoicing is prophetic for what is about to happen rather than for the judgment just executed. The second coming of Christ is anticipated in the words, for our Lord God Almighty reigns.*
- 2) Thomas Constable, *The praise in this verse followed the call to praise in verse 5, and it probably included that of the angels. Together all of God's servants in heaven now praised Him for the fact that He now reigns—after destroying Babylon ... Here He receives the title the Lord our God, the Almighty. This praise is appropriately great because Messiah's earthly reign is the climax of history. Thus John heard a voice that sounded like a great multitude of people, like the roar of a huge waterfall and loud claps of thunder, that announced Messiah's arrival to reign (cf. Ezek. 1:24; 43:2; Dan. 10:6). The singers are evidently angels (cf. 6:1; 10:1-4; 11:15-17; 14:2).*
- 3) Charles Swindoll, *One day the dominion that Adam surrendered to Satan through sin will be returned to the Perfect Man—Jesus Christ. Then all people everywhere can sing together the words of Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus"—not in anticipation of what God will do one day, but in celebration of its arrival: "Hallelujah, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth!"*

2. A proclamation concerning the Bridegroom and the Bride (7-8), ***Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready; 8 it was granted her to clothe herself with fine linen, bright and pure"—for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints.***

a. Related verses

- 1) Matthew 22:2, 2 *"The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son,*
- 2) Revelation 21:2, *And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.*
- 3) Ezekiel 16:10, *I clothed you also with embroidered cloth and shod you with fine leather. I wrapped you in fine linen and covered you with silk.*
- 4) Isaiah 61:10, *I will greatly rejoice in the LORD; my soul shall exult in my God, for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation; he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself like a priest with a beautiful headdress, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.*

b. Comments

- 1) Charles Swindoll, *When the King of kings conquers evil and begins to reign, then His bride—the church—will stand at His side and reign with Him. No longer will the church be marred with conflict, tainted with division, or soiled with heresy. Rather, as Paul predicted in Ephesians 5:27, Christ will "present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but ... holy and blameless." What a cause for celebration!*
- 2) Charles Ryrie, *The marriage is announced as that of the Lamb. Normally a wedding is announced in the name of the bride, but not this one. It is His marriage, and he, not the bride, will be the center of attraction. The delicate balance between the sovereignty of God and human responsibility is maintained in the two phrases "has made herself ready" (she did it) and "it was given to her" (God did it). The bride's array is "fine line," which is explained as "the righteous acts of the saints." In other words, the bride's wedding garment will be made up of the righteous deeds done in life. The bride is the bride because of the righteousness of Christ; the bride is clothed for the wedding because of her acts. Righteous acts flow from a righteous character, which is entirely of the grace of God.*

- 3) John Walvoord, *The fine linen with which the bride will be adorned is explained as representing the righteous acts of the saints (Rev. 19:8) ... While some think this refers to the fact that the saints are justified by faith, the plural expression "the righteous acts" seems to refer to the righteous deeds wrought by the saints through the grace of God.*
  - 4) Thomas Constable, *The bride is the Lamb's newly married wife having been joined to Him in heaven immediately after the Rapture ... Why is it the wedding of the Lamb? Why is this title of Christ used rather than one of the hundreds of others? Perhaps it is because it is the Lamb, who offered Himself as a sacrifice for our sins, that the church loves ... We can clarify the general time and place of the marriage of the Lamb by comparing it with marriage customs in the ancient Near East. There were three main events involved in a marriage: First, the parents chose a bride for the groom. This takes place presently in the Church Age as the Holy Spirit calls the elect out of the world to be Christ's bride through regeneration. Second, when the time for marriage (the wedding ceremony) had come the groom would leave his home with his friends, go to the home of the bride, and escort her from her home to his. The bride did not know when this would occur, just as Christians do not know when the Rapture will occur. This will take place when Christ comes to take His bride from her home, earth, to His home, heaven—at the Rapture—for their wedding (cf. John 14:1–2).*
  - 5) Mark Hitchcock, *The marriage celebration was a lengthy party given by the bridegroom's family and attended by many guests. Revelation 19 states that Christ's bride, arrayed in white linen, will return with Him to earth at His second coming. The marriage supper of the Lamb and His bride will occur on earth during the millennial reign of Christ. Jesus frequently compared His millennial reign to a wedding feast (Matthew 8:11; 22:1-14; 25:1-13; Luke 14:16-24). Many guests, including resurrected Old Testament saint and Tribulation saints, will be invited to the messianic banquet (Matthew 8:11).*
3. An angelic command (9), ***And the angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb." And he said to me, "These are the true words of God."***
- a. Related verses
    - 1) Luke 14:15, *When one of those who reclined at table with him heard these things, he said to him, "Blessed is everyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!"*
    - 2) Revelation 21:5, *And he who was seated on the throne said, "Behold, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this down, for these words are trustworthy and true."*
  - b. Comments
    - 1) Charles Ryrie, *The wedding is followed by a supper, and a special blessing is pronounced upon those who are called to the meal. These are the friends of the Bridegroom, and one immediately recalls John 3:29, where John the Baptist is called a friend of the Bridegroom. These guests are not the bride, and they are not unsaved people, so they must be redeemed people who are not members of the church, the body of Christ. The certainty of this beatitude is underscored by the proclamation, "These are true words of God."*
    - 2) Thomas Constable, *The person who now spoke to John is apparently the same angel who had been guiding him through the revelation concerning Babylon (cf. 17:1, 15). He instructed John to write again (cf. 1:11, 19; 14:13; 21:5). This time he was to write another beatitude (cf. 14:3). This blessing will give the Tribulation saints an additional motivation to remain faithful. Those invited to the Lamb's marriage supper include His friends, not just the bride (cf. 3:20). This implies the presence of other believers besides church saints at this celebration ... These other believers will be the Tribulation martyrs and believers who survive the Tribulation and enter the Millennium alive (cf. 12:13–17; 20:4–5; Matt. 22:11–14; 25:1–13). They may also include the Old Testament saints who will experience resurrection at the beginning of the Millennium (cf. Isa. 26:19; Dan. 12:2) ... "These are the true words of God" (cf. 22:6, 8–9). He could have been referring to what we read in the first part of this verse. But since this statement concludes all that this angel had revealed since 17:1, it seems better to take it as referring to all the intervening revelation.*
    - 3) Warren Wiersbe, *Certainly the bride is not invited to her own wedding! This invitation goes out to the guests, believers from the Old Testament era and the Tribulation. During the eternal state, no distinctions will be made among the people of God; but in the Kingdom Age, differences will still exist as the church reigns with Christ and as Israel enjoys the promised messianic blessings.*
    - 4) John Walvoord, *... the wedding feast is an earthly feast, which also corresponds to the illustrations of weddings in the Bible (Matt. 22:1–14; 25:1–13), and thus will take place on earth at the beginning of the Millennium. The importance of the announcement and invitation to the wedding supper, repeated in Revelation 22:17, is seen in the angel's remarks, These are the true words of God.*

- 5) Charles Swindoll, *Will it be a sit-down, multicourse dinner or an extravagant buffet? What kind of food will be served? How silly! Though these questions tantalize the imagination, they completely miss the point. That great banquet will not be about the menu, but about the Master. It's the end-time answer to Christ's words to His disciples at the Last Supper: "But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom" (Matt. 26:29). With the whole church glorified and united in the kingdom of God, Christ will take His seat with the saints and enjoy that long-anticipated face-to-face fellowship with those He loves.*
4. An angelic correction (10), ***Then I fell down at his feet to worship him, but he said to me, "You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brothers who hold to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God." For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.***
- a. Related verses
- 1) Revelation 22:8, *I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed them to me,*
  - 2) Revelation 22:9, *but he said to me, "You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brothers the prophets, and with those who keep the words of this book. Worship God."*
  - 3) Revelation 1:2, *2 who bore witness to the word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, even to all that he saw.*
- b. Comments
- 1) Charles Ryrie, *John seems to have been overawed by this revelation of the marriage of the Lamb, and he falls at the feet of the messenger. But he is restrained by what the messenger tells him - that he is not deity but a fellow servant; therefore, he should recognize the place of angels in carrying out the purposes of God, and consequently respect them, this verse clearly shows the impropriety of kneeling before an angel (or a representation of one) ... "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy" simply means that the study of prophecy should point to Jesus.*
  - 2) Thomas Constable, *... the best explanation of why John should worship the angel: Jesus is the source of revelation, but angels only communicate it.*
  - 3) John Walvoord, *The angel added, "For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy," that is, the very nature or purpose of prophecy is to testify of Jesus Christ and to bring glory to Him. In the present Age one of the special functions of the Holy Spirit is to glorify Christ and to inform believers of "what is yet to come" (John 16:13). The tremendous revelation in the first 10 verses of Revelation 19 is a fitting introduction to what is about to be revealed, the second coming of Jesus Christ, the subject of the entire book (1:1).*

<b>SUMMARY</b>
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- John Walvoord, *How poverty-stricken is any Christian theology which minimizes the second coming of Christ and how limited the Christian hope which does not include this glorious climax to God's announced program of exalting His Son and putting all creation under His control (cf. Ps. 2).*
- Charles Swindoll, *At the end of these astounding visions of earthly horrors and celestial hallelujahs, the angel turned John's attention back to the One to whom the book of Revelation ultimately points. Indeed, He is the one to whom all prophecy has always pointed—Jesus Christ, the "spirit of prophecy" ...*

**TO BE CONTINUED LORD WILLING**