

A mother invited several people from the church over for supper at her home. At the table, with all the guests seated, she turned to her six-year-old daughter and asked, “Would you like to say the blessing?”

“I wouldn’t know what to say,” answered the little girl.

“Just say what you hear Mommy say,” replied the mother.

So, the little girl bowed her head and with all sincerity in her voice prayed, “Lord, why on earth did I invite all these people to supper? Amen.”

You might be thinking “What does that little story have to do with the book of Revelation?” but this morning, we are going to talk about supper – actually two suppers – both of which are in the future. One supper you want to be invited to, while the other – you want no part of. One supper is full of worship, whereas the other is full of wrath. One supper is for a bride and the other is for the birds.

Now, before we proceed, I want to take a moment to recap what we have seen thus far during the future Tribulation period as described to us by the Apostle John.

If you recall, Jesus took a sealed scroll from the hand of His Father in heaven. This scroll was a title deed of sort to the Earth, given to Jesus as an inheritance, and it contained His plan to deal with the affairs of this world – a plan from long ago to condemn wickedness, to bring repentance to those who will, to reward righteousness, and to establish the Lord’s promised kingdom upon the Earth. With the scroll in hand – one at a time, Jesus broke the seven seals fixed to it which unleashed the seven “*seal*” judgments. Seven different judgments were released one at a time, then out of the seventh seal – seven more judgments, called the “*trumpet*” judgments were sounded, and once we got to the seventh trumpet, we were introduced to seven more judgments called the “*bowl*” judgments. These bowl judgments came at the end of the Tribulation period – they were the worst of all, and when they were poured out, they devastated everything.

In the future, God’s judgment and wrath will fall upon the inhabitants of this world who have rejected Jesus Christ, and yet, true to God’s character, He ensures the gospel is still preached and salvation is still offered. Yes, the church will have been raptured before the Tribulation period begins – but the gospel will still be preached. It’ll be preached by the two prophets. It’ll be preached by the 144,000 Jewish evangelists, and it’ll be preached by angelic beings. Throughout the entire Tribulation period, even toward the very end, God is still calling people to Himself before it is too late.

Now, for the last two weeks, we have looked closely at Babylon – its emergence and its destruction. If you remember, this future Babylon is the capitol city as well as the global system of the Antichrist comprised of a religious arm and a secular arm. We first looked at the religious arm in **Chapter 17** called the “great harlot.” She represented the false religious system – very enticing, extremely wealthy, and completely immoral. At first, this false religious system was supported by the Antichrist – he used her like a harlot, but at the mid-point of the Tribulation period, he wants to be worshipped as God without any competition, and so he strips this false religious system of everything and kicks her to the curb so to speak.

In **Chapter 18**, we looked the secular arm of Babylon – more specifically the political and the economic systems of the Antichrist who were judged along with the capitol city. It was all thrown down, just like a boulder thrown into the sea, sinking to the depths, never to be found again. Babylon’s associates – those who became powerful and wealthy from her, grieved deeply because her destruction was their destruction. They knew the party was over, but as their party ended – another party, a supper party was just getting started, and that’s where we begin.

So, if you have your Bible, turn to **Revelation 19** and we will begin with **verse 1**.

¹After these things I heard something like a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, “Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God; ²BECAUSE HIS JUDGMENTS ARE TRUE AND RIGHTEOUS; for He has judged the great harlot who was corrupting the earth with her immorality, and HE HAS AVENGED THE BLOOD OF HIS BOND-SERVANTS ON HER.” ³And a second time they said, “Hallelujah! HER SMOKE RISES UP FOREVER AND EVER.” ⁴And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sits on the throne saying, “Amen. Hallelujah!” ⁵And a voice came from the throne, saying, “Give praise to our God, all you His bond-servants, you who fear Him, the small and the great.”

In **Chapters 17** and **18**, John’s focus was directed toward the events occurring on the Earth during the Tribulation period, but now his focus shifts back up to heaven where he hears the loud roar of a **great multitude** – likely hundreds of millions in heaven – all giving praise to God at the same time, and in their praise, John hears the word “**Hallelujah**” mentioned several times. That word is an untranslated Hebrew word. It’s not Greek like the rest of this book. This word appears in the Old Testament multiple times, especially in **Psalms**; however, this is the first time it is used in the entire New Testament – it’s as if God saved it for this special occasion. **Hallelujah** simply means “*praise the Lord*” and this praise is prompted

first because of who God is, and secondly, because of what God has done – namely, God has judged evil Babylon in His **truth** and **righteousness**, and He has **avenged the blood** of the martyred saints.

If you recall back in **Chapter 6**, when Jesus broke the fifth seal on the scroll, John saw underneath the altar in heaven the souls of those who had been martyred during the Tribulation period, and these martyrs cried out, wanting to know when the Lord would avenge their blood, when would justice finally prevail, when would evil be dealt with. Well, the Lord answered them and said, *“it’s coming – but for now, they have wait because there are more who will be added to their numbers.”* In other words, they had to wait because there are more who would trust Jesus as their Savior and Lord, and as a consequence, they would be killed during the Tribulation period.

So, they had to wait, and this brings up an age-old question for many of us. *“Why doesn’t God just wipe out all the evil in this world now?”* For example, I wish He would put an end to Putin right now. I’m tired of him. *“Why doesn’t God rid this world of people like that?”* Surely, the world would be a better place. Well, God could, but why stop with Putin? Why not take out all the murderers and the rapists too? How about those who prey upon vulnerable people – like children and the elderly? God could take them out as well – but is that enough? How about the drug dealers, the thieves, and the swindlers? How about those who cheat and lie, those who lust, those who are hateful and unkind?

You see if we let this play out and run its course, God could do a clean sweep now and rid this world of all evil – get rid of all sin, but if He did that now, He would rid the world of all people – for all people have sinned. If God wipes out all evil now, He wipes out all people.

But thank God, He is loving and He is patient. He is waiting. In fact, God waited for you and me, and just like the Lord told the martyrs in heaven, He is waiting for others until the very end, but as we know – the waiting is not forever, and there will come a time in the future when everything that is wrong in this world will be made right – and that’s precisely what’s being described in our passage – all things are being made right, and it prompts worship and praise and a great celebration.

Then the scene changes a bit and the praise shifts because it’s supper time in heaven. Let’s read on beginning with **verse 6**.

‘Then I heard something like the voice of a great multitude and like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, saying,

“Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns. ⁷ Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready. ⁸ It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. ⁹ Then he said to me, ‘Write, ‘Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.’” And he said to me, “These are true words of God.”

We’ve come to the **marriage supper of the Lamb** – it’s the wedding celebration for the Lord and **His bride** – and **who is the bride?** Most suggest it is the church, at that is true, but beyond that, it seems to include all the saints of all ages.

I say that because later in **Revelation 21**, when the new Jerusalem – the holy city comes down from heaven, she is identified as **“the bride, the wife of the Lamb”** and this holy city will have twelve gates named for the twelve tribes of Israel and twelve foundations named for the twelve apostles. Essentially, the city is identified as the bride because the bride, God’s people are in it – people who appear to be both Old Testament and New Testament saints.

Now, the main focus of this passage is how the bride is prepared for the marriage supper. We are told the bride **makes herself ready** through her **righteous acts**, but before we jump to any wrong conclusions about works, we have to be mindful of a very important word.

If you notice, the clothing of righteousness was **given** to the bride, and so this picture we see presents a couple of interesting truths for us. First, God’s righteousness is given to believers. We know that from God’s perspective, our righteousness is as filthy rags to Him, but through the finished work of Jesus Christ, God has clothed those who believe with the salvation and the righteousness of His Son. That’s how God sees those who are in Christ. We are righteous.

Now with that said, even though we are righteous in Christ – that’s who we are in Him – we have a part to make ourselves ready by abiding in Him. That means we are to remain in an ever-growing relationship with Him. We are to be connected to Him as we walk with Him, and it’s through this connection that He transforms us – He changes our character, and He works in us and through us to do His good will.

It is the Lord who produces the righteous acts. He produces the fruit in us. That’s why the Apostle Paul calls it the **fruit of the Spirit** – not the fruit of Bob. The fruit is God’s part. Our part is simply to abide – moment by moment, step by step, one day at a time, surrendering our attitudes, and our ways, and our wills to Him.

There is an old hymn entitled “*Are you Washed in the Blood*” written by Elisha Hoffman which speaks to what I just said. The first stanza focuses on God’s part in our righteousness. It reads:

Have you been to Jesus for the cleansing power?

Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?

Are you fully trusting in His grace this hour?

Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?

The second stanza then draws our attention to our part of abiding in Christ, and it goes like this:

Are you walking daily by the Savior’s side?

Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?

Do you rest each moment in the Crucified?

Are you washed in the blood of the Lamb?

Simply put, we are righteous in Christ – that’s who we are, and consistent with our identity, we abide in Him, we remain in an ever-growing relationship with Him, and as a result, He produces the righteous acts in us.

So, John sees the bride, all dressed up in righteousness – called to the marriage supper of the Lamb. For John, this had to be a welcome sight for sore eyes in light of all the judgment and the wrath he has witnessed thus far – it was probably a lot to take in, and in **verse 10** John tells us,

Then I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, “Do not do that; I am a fellow servant of yours and your brethren who hold the testimony of Jesus; worship God. For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.”

Apparently, John is overwhelmed with it all and he falls down to worship the angel, but the angel says “*Oh, don’t do that – worship God.*” This is all about Jesus, and this brings up something really foreign to us as Westerners. In an ancient Jewish wedding celebration – just as we see here, the main person is the groom, not the bride. Sorry ladies, but we got it all backwards in our culture.

Well, one supper is down and the Lord has another supper to prepare for – a supper you want no part of. Let's continue, beginning with **verse 11**.

¹¹ And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and wages war. ¹² His eyes are a flame of fire, and on His head are many diadems; and He has a name written on Him which no one knows except Himself. ¹³ He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God. ¹⁴ And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses. ¹⁵ From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty. ¹⁶ And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."

If you don't recognize it yet, this is the Second Coming of Christ, which I want to quickly distinguish from the Rapture of the church. The Rapture occurs *before* the Tribulation period – the Second Coming comes *after* the Tribulation period. In the Rapture, Jesus comes *for* His bride. At His Second Coming, Jesus comes *with* His bride. At the Rapture, Jesus meets us in the *air* – at His Second Coming, Jesus returns to the *Earth*. In the Rapture, there is *no* judgment, but at His Second Coming – it's *all* judgment.

Now if you remember, when the sixth bowl was poured out, all the leaders of the nations, influenced by demons, gathered together with their military forces for a battle – the battle of Armageddon. So, while Babylon has gone up in smoke, they are on the battlefield, and they have called Jesus out, and unfortunately for them – He shows up.

Instead of humbly riding on a donkey like He did into Jerusalem amid the praise and the palm branches – out of heaven, descending from the clouds, Jesus who is called **Faithful** and **True** swoops down on a **white horse** – a horse for war, not peace, and John notices that Jesus is not alone, for behind Him is a massive army who John previously identified in **Chapter 17** as *the called, the chosen, and the faithful*. Jesus comes with His saints, His bride, but He also comes with His angels for that is what Jesus told us in **Matthew 25**.

So, this is a picture of all the hosts of heaven showing up for this great battle at the Second Coming of Christ, and it's important to point out that none of those with Jesus are carrying weapons. They're just dressed up in white – riding on their

white horses. They come with Jesus, but they do not come to do battle – for there really is no need. The only weapon that will be used comes out of the mouth of the Lord, and “no” there won’t be **swords** flying out of His mouth – rather He destroys His enemy with the spoken word.

Just as Jesus spoke to the fig tree and it withered, just like He spoke to the stormy winds and the waves and they became still, all who come to fight against the Lord will fall by the power of His word – and it’s a mighty, sovereign word for it comes from the One identified as the **King of Kings and Lord of Lords**. No matter who is leading these military forces, no matter who is running these nations, no matter who appears to be in control – all must submit to the supreme earthly King and to the supreme divine Lord.

There’s going to be a battle – if you want to call it that. Let’s pick back up beginning with **verse 17** to see what happens. John says,

17 Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he cried out with a loud voice, saying to all the birds which fly in midheaven, “Come, assemble for the great supper of God, 18 so that you may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of commanders and the flesh of mighty men and the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them and the flesh of all men, both free men and slaves, and small and great.” 19 And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies assembled to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army. 20 And the beast was seized, and with him the false prophet who performed the signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image; these two were thrown alive into the lake of fire which burns with brimstone. 21 And the rest were killed with the sword which came from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh.

This is the second supper – **the great supper of God**, and as we can see, it’s for the birds. In fact, before the battle even gets started, an angel has already invited the birds to get ready for supper. They are circling in the air just waiting for the dinner bell to ring.

Right out the gate, the Antichrist and the False Prophet are seized by the Lord, and these two are thrown alive into the **lake of fire** – the final place of eternal suffering. Then after those two are out of the way, the rest on the battlefield who remain, from the highest of generals to the lowest of soldiers, will fall to the ground by the spoken word of Jesus, and then it’s supper time for the birds.

Revelation 19 pictures two future great suppers. In heaven, the first will be the “marriage supper of the Lamb”, and only those who are called will dine at the table. By contrast, there is another supper, “the great supper of God” and it’s the birds who are called. Those who have trusted Jesus Christ as their Savior and follow Him as Lord will share in the marriage supper, but those on the earth who have rejected Jesus, after repeated opportunities to repent, will be on the menu for the birds.

Several years ago, Johnny Carson had Billy Graham as a guest on The Tonight Show. At one point there was a lull in the conversation and Johnny said, “You know what, Billy? I bet if Jesus ever came back to earth, we’d do Him in again!”

Billy Graham leaned forward in his seat, and said, “In the Bible we read that Jesus will someday return to earth again. The first time He came in love. The next time, He’ll come in power – and no one will do Him in!”

Let me give this to you straight. Jesus came to give us life – His life, but when Jesus comes again, it will not be to give life – it will be to take it. That sounds harsh, **doesn’t it?** But it’s the truth, and it’s a truth that should encourage us to persevere and to remain daily connected in our walk with the Lord, and not only that, it is a truth that should motivate us to share what we know with those who do not know the Savior.

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