

The Bride is Ready for Supper

Revelation: How It All Ends

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Bible Text: Revelation 19:1-9

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Look at verse 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: 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. And again they said, Alleluia.” That's two, “And her smoke rose up for ever and ever.” The smoke of the great whore that was judged by the Lord. Verse 4, “And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia.” That's three. “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. 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.” That's four times the word Alleluia is used. “For the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. 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. 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.”

By the way, don't forget, next week we'll have our time of fellowship in here so bring a snack to share and don't stay at the house. It's important. We'll have a 10-15 study and then we'll pray and enjoy some fellowship together.

Some quick notes I want you to notice: first of all, this word “Alleluia” is really a Hebrew word that's found in the New Testament and it means “praise to Yahweh” or “praise to Jehovah” or “praise the Lord” and it's only used in the New Testament here. I'll say that again: this word in the New Testament is only used here and it's used four times. Then, to add punctuation if you want to, look at verse 5, the middle of the verse. You have a voice coming out of the throne saying, Praise our God so that voice is speaking in Greek. So, really the word is used five times in this passage of Scripture.

The second thing I want you to notice is that this is the first time the marriage supper of the Lamb is mentioned. So, we have an intricacy that we need to address. 1. There are those who would say that it's been happening for seven years already. Well, if it has been,

then why hasn't it been mentioned yet? This is the first time this marriage supper of the Lamb is mentioned yet so that is significant.

Now, I want to draw your attention, if I could, to verse 1, "And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven." It shows up again in verse 6, "And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude." The word "voice" in verses 1 and 6 are the same word, of course. "Great multitude" in verse 6 if you have a King James version in your lap, is the same two Greek words as the word "much people" in verse 1. So, it's like you have these two bookends in chapter 19:1-6. One is a voice of great people and the other is a voice of great people and in between what are they saying?

So, I want to know who these voices of great people are so let's ask ourselves that question: who are these people? Who are these people talking in verse 1 because it says they are a great voice of much people? Well, we have one option. Chapter 5 of Revelation, "I beheld and heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and beasts and elders and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands saying with a loud voice." So, we have this loud voice happening and it says, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing." So, the question is: is this the same loud voice that's used here in chapter 19? Well, that's a possibility. We'd have to say are angels, beasts and elders the same as people in Revelation 19.

Let's see if there are any other options of previous usages in the book of Revelation of a great voice. How about 6:10, "And when he'd opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar souls of them that were slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held and they cried with a loud voice. Saying, How long O Lord holy and true dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" Again, the question is: is this that loud voice we see in chapter 19:1, 19:6? Is this that loud voice? Well, we have to ask this question: are souls under the altar the same as the people in chapter 19:1? It's possible. It's possible that the four beasts, the 24 elders, the great company of angels in chapter 5, it's possible that the souls of people under the altar in chapter 6 are the great voice but I think there's a better answer.

Look at this, chapter 7:9-10, "After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude," it's the same two words translated "much people" in chapter 19:1, "a great multitude which no man could number, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands." Remember that lesson, we talked about that strange rendering. It's short for palm branches, okay? Everyone, I think, to this day still has palms in their hands so it's talking about palm branches. "Palms in their hands And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne." Now, do you remember the first eight verses of Revelation 7? Who are the people being spoken of there? And so 7:1-8 is talking about the 144,000 male Jewish virgins and so when we see in verse 9 a great multitude of all nationalities, I think it matches pretty good: we've got great voice, great voice; loud voice, loud voice; salvation to our God, salvation to our God.

If I were a guessing man and I take educated guesses, then I would say probably that this is that same group of people in chapter 19:1. This is that multitude of which no man can number. Alright, let's remind ourselves from chapter 7, these are they that came out of what? Great tribulation. These are they that are coming out of great tribulation and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. So, chapter 7 left column there is talking about those who are coming out of great tribulation. So, in chapter 19:1 if it is the same crew and I have an educated guess here that says so, "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." It looks like they're giving some sort of praise as well in the first time that we find them.

We've noticed the Alleluia, we've noticed that it's probably, unless there's a better answer out there. Now, let's rehearse because we do have some people that this is their first time with us and I'm glad you're here but the perspective that we're taking in this church with our prophetic perspective is not one of historicism, that is, we don't believe that Revelation is just this overview of history; it's not preterism, that means that we don't believe that it's been fulfilled back in AD 70 with the Roman General Titus, soon to be Emperor after that victory, surrounding Jerusalem and taking it down, we don't believe that. We are futurists which means that we believe that this seven year period here is still future. We're going to call it a tribulation period even though the Bible calls the time of Jacob's trouble or Daniel's 70th week. So, if you want those two references, Jeremiah 30:7 says it's a time of Jacob's trouble and Daniel 9:24 says it is the 70th week.

So, a seven year tribulation period and then somewhere over here with very little time in between, starts this thing known as the thousand year reign on the earth. Now, we're taking that from a fluid, I think, natural reading of this book of Revelation. Are there good-golly men that disagree with everything that I just said? Yes. So, that doesn't mean that I think that they are as right as I am. I mean, it's just that plain and simple. You have an opinion because you believe it's the best thing, right? If you didn't agree with them, you had better have a reason why but if you believe what you believe, then I trust you have a reason for believing what you believe and that's why you don't believe what they believe.

If you are one of the folks that fits in one of those groups I mentioned, that's okay, we can still be friends but the perspective we're showing here is that Revelation 19 happens somewhere over here. Remember from last week, so we believe we're looking not just into the tribulation period but towards the end of it and last week we looked at the seventh vial. James taught that while I was away playing Army and I enjoyed listening to that lesson. So, the seventh vial took place and what did we see happen in the seventh vial? We saw signs of a resurrection, signs of Armageddon, the great Babylon was destroyed and so today we're looking at Revelation 19, a time in the future when what looks like... what is the last 3 ½ years of the tribulation period called? The Great Tribulation and since we just identified that those folks on the left are those that are coming out of great tribulation and have made their robes white in the blood of the Lamb, then it makes sense that they are collected and about ready to return with their King in chapter 19 and that's what happens in verses 11-18.

Let's go on. Look at verse 2, "For true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication." I mentioned in the email and I got maybe 1-2 comments about the fact that I was planning on not teaching verse-by-verse through 17 and 18 because we have taught, I think now, a total of 2 or 3 lessons on Babylon so I don't think there's any need to carry on with that unless there is a particular question. But, having said that, I do want to just point out that in chapter 17:2, it talks about the great whore sitting upon many waters. Look at verse 1, look at the end of the verse. No, let's look at the verse, "And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me," or seven bowls, "saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication." See it? The kings of the earth have been made drunk with her fornication. Do you see that? Everyone see that?

Look at the end of verse 4, "And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her," there it is again, "fornication." And then if you thought that maybe she really was just a chaste girl, she was just misunderstood, verse 5 says, "And upon her forehead was a name written, Mystery Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots." So much for that. Three times in four verses, she is loose and we remember from our lessons on Babylon that we're dealing here with the city of Jerusalem. That is our best answer. In fact, it's Revelation's answer that calls it the great city several times over.

Let me show you something here. You might notice in chapter 17:1 we have one of the angels taking John away to show him the great whore which is a great city. How do I know it's a great city? Because in chapter 18 it calls it a great city. Verse 18 at the end of the verse, it calls it a great city. So, this angel, one of the angels, one of the seven vials of God's – let me hear it to make sure you're listening, what's in these seven vials? Wrath, right. Takes John away to show John this woman who is known as the whore who is a great city. Did you all get that? And she's sitting on many waters.

So, hold your place here and look at chapter 21. Look at the question on the screen: have you considered the similarities between Revelation 17 and 18 and Revelation 21 and 22? You saw at the beginning of 17, we have John being invited by the angel to come and look at this woman who is the great whore and she has committed fornication with the kings of the earth, she sat among many waters. Now look at chapter 21, please, and look at verse 9. "And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife." Well, that looks a lot like chapter 17:1 except it's just a different woman he's going to look at, metaphorically speaking. Right? Hello?

Now look at verse 10, "And he carried me away in the spirit." Let's see here, that looks a lot like chapter 17:1, saying, Come hither and so look at verse 3 of chapter 17, he carried

me away, how? In the spirit into the wilderness. Now look at chapter 21:10, “he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city.” We have a different great city. How do we know it's a different great city? Because it's called something different, “The great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God.” Isn't that something. So, we have – I guess I haven't seen it up until maybe 21 hours ago. I did not see that you could put 17 and 18 next to 21 and 22. Now, typically I'm done for three days by the time I'm ready for Sunday School. That really bothered me and so here we are now I have to look at 17 and 18 and 21 and 22 and see, is this really a consummation of a story between a great whore, a city that is known as the great whore and it is committing fornication with the kings of the earth and are we really going to see its demise and then see the arising of another great city that is not committing fornication with the kings of the earth but is rather the bride of Christ and are we going to see that this is a pure city? Then, are we really going to see that chapter 17 and 18 describe the decoration of that great whore of Babylon and its demise and then in chapter 21 and 22 we're going to talk about the décor of the New Jerusalem and its exaltation.

So, let me give you ten examples. One of the primary reasons for chapter 21 and 22 is so that you can see the New Jerusalem is the perfect version of Babylon the great whore. Isn't that something? Is anyone else amazed by that? I mean, it's really neat to know what an author is doing. By the way, if I could just remind us now that we have been told by John, since we have been told by John what the wife of the Lamb is in chapter 21:9-10. Well, let's read chapter 19:7-9 again. “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. 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.” Who is the bride of Christ? The New Jerusalem, Babylon, let's just say it's Jerusalem, some in here might disagree. But let's say it's Jerusalem. Is God upset with the buildings in the city? Is he upset with the roads in the city? The sewage system? The electricity? Is he upset with any of the substructures, superstructures? None at all, right? What is it about the city that he calls the great whore? The people, that's right.

Then you have over here the New Jerusalem that's called the bride of Christ and the bride of Christ is also the residents of the city. Jesus is not marrying a city. Think about this now. You say, “I think you're bending the Scripture.” Okay, hang on. Let's draw that back. Think about Matthew 23, the last two verses of Matthew 23. Does Jesus say, “O residents of Jerusalem, residents of Jerusalem, how often I would have gathered you together as a hen gathers her chicks but you would not.” Is that what he said? No, what did he say, he said, “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem,” so he addresses the residents of a city with the city name.

So, you're right, the people of Christ are his bride but in Revelation they are referred to by the place where they live. What would that make the New Jerusalem? A bridal chamber and so in John 14 when Jesus says, “I go to prepare a place for you and if I go and prepare and place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself that where I am there you may be also.” That is very, very, very, very marital language. Very marital.

Back in the day, the bridal chamber was an addition to the father's house of the groom. And the groom would build a part onto the father's house and when the father thought that the groom's addition to the home was ready for a new bride to be brought home, the father would say, "Son, I think that's just about right and I think it's time for a wedding." So, I guess all we're waiting for is the Father to look at the Son and say, "Well, I believe it's just about ready. I think it's about time for a wedding." It makes you plum giddy, doesn't it?

Look at verse 4 and then I need to show you one more thing that's up on the board already so let's get to verse 4, "And the four and twenty elders." By the way, you might notice in verse 1, the first Alleluia is about what? It's about the judgment of the great whore, yes? The second Alleluia found in verse 3, and again they said Alleluia for her smoke rose up forever and ever. So, the second Alleluia is about the destruction of that whorish city. Verse 4, "And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia." So, they're saying Amen to what? The destruction of Babylon, right, in verse 3. So, the third Alleluia is about the destruction of Babylon. Are you all with me? Then we look at verse 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."

Four Alleluias, the first three are clearly about the destruction of Babylon. The fourth one is now that Babylon is destroyed, God reigns. Babylon is another name for what in the Old Testament? Tower of Babel, Babylonia, Babel, interchangeable. They sure are, yes siree Bob. You might remember in Genesis 11, those people met in the plain of Shinar, they meet at the place of the Tower of Babel. Do you remember what they said? They said, "We're going to meet here and we're going to make a name for ourselves," and they were under a leader by the name of Nimrod and they said, "We are going to have a name for us and Nimrod is our leader and we're going to speak one language and we're going to have," are you all with me? Are you all catching on to this? This almost sounds like Revelation, just Genesis. "We're going to have one leader. He is our god and we're going to do what we want to do." So they cast off restraint you might remember and God said, "Uh, let's go on down there and take a look at that tower," that's Genesis 11:6. "Let's go on down and look at this thing that they do." That's what it says. It's great, great language. In other words, as high as their tower was, he said, "Well, let's go on down there and take a peek." It says that they were not going to let God rule over them. Well, now that Babylon is destroyed, look who is ruling. It's one author. Genesis to Revelation, one author.

So, where did we first see the four and twenty elders and the four beasts, do you remember? What chapter of Revelation. Four. And where is God sitting in chapter 4? On his throne. Very little has changed. Seven years probably, 15 chapters and God is still on his throne and the 24 elders and the four beasts are still worshipping him. There is clearly a parallel between chapters 17 and 18 description of the great whore and chapter 21 and 22 description of the bride of Christ. One is the great whore, one is the bride of Christ. Both are cities: one is destroyed, one is brought down. And when all things are made new,

hopefully you saw that, then hopefully you saw now these 11 parallels between Genesis and Revelation.

(...) That's a great question and Brother Walt, you're exactly right, there is probably at least 12 people wondering that in this room.

(white raiment) Corbin's question is: will we be nudists? What a great question. I have time to answer. Well, let's back up to Genesis then and let's ask ourselves. In Genesis, were they naked before they knew they were naked? John 17:1-5, we have Jesus praying to God the Father on the eve of his death. In chapter 17:5 of John, Jesus says, "Father, restore unto me the glory which we had, which we shared before the world was." Do you remember that verse? Jesus earlier in his ministry is found on the Mount of Transfiguration, otherwise known as Mount Hermon if today's geography means anything to you, in Galilee, I believe it is. I think it's even north of the Sea of Galilee. On the Mount of Transfiguration, Jesus' appearance was what? Yeah, it was bright and glorified temporarily but Elijah and Moses were glorified at that time as well, you might remember. Elijah was probably already raptured because the Bible says that no flesh can inherit the Kingdom of God so in order for Elijah to go to heaven without dying, he had to be glorified like you and I would be if the rapture happened. Are you all with me? "This mortal must put on immortality, this corruption must put on incorruption," 1 Corinthians 15.

So, I would say that Elijah is glorified when they see him on the Mount of Transfiguration and in heaven I would say there is no curse yet even today and so since there is no indication and it says that their raiment was white as snow in Luke at Luke's account of the Mount of Transfiguration. The fact that I have to believe that there is no curse in heaven today and the fact that every time we find someone in heaven, they are wearing a white robe, my best guess is that we'll still be wearing white robes in the kingdom to come. My second best guess is Mike's and that is that I believe and have always believed that the reason that they saw themselves as naked is that they were no longer dwelling in the presence of God and were not covered by his glory. I can give you an allusion to that, alluding might be a better way to say it. Listen to this verse in 2 Corinthians 4, "If our gospel is hid it is hid to those that are lost in whom the god of this world has blinded the minds of them which believe not." So, we're talking about the god of the world has blinded the minds and who is the first mind that the devil blinded? Eve. Yup, she was tricked. It says that, verse 4 so Paul might be thinking back to the Garden of Eden here and he says, "has blinded the minds of them which believe not lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ who is the image of God should shine into them." So, an inward thing. "For we preach not ourselves but Christ Jesus the Lord, ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." Listen to this, "For God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness," day one of creation, "has shined in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. We have this treasure in earthen vessels that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us."

Having said that, it seems like Paul is saying just like the light was shining in the darkness in day one of creation and I believe he's saying we have the glory of God in our

bodies and we have to settle that for now. We have to be okay with that for now. Now, let me read verse 16 and 17 to you, “For which cause we faint not but though our outward man perish, our inward man is renewed day by day.” What is in the inward man? The glory of God, it says. Do you all remember that? We have this treasure in earthen vessels, Christ has commanded the glory of God to shine in our hearts. Listen to this now, verse 17, “For our light affliction that dwells on the outward man that is perishing day by day,” that is an earthen vessel, a piece of pottery, “our light affliction which is but for a moment, works for us a far more exceeding and eternal,” listen to this term, “weight of glory.” Not wait, weight, a substance known as glory that will be on the outward man. When? When our temporal-ness is complete.

So, I will admit that it's an implication but I believe that if I'm wrong about us wearing white raiment in the New Jerusalem, I believe that if we are naked, we won't know that we're naked because we will have the glory of God upon us much like Adam and Eve did before they sinned. My best guess is that when Adam and Eve sinned, that weight of glory left them and they saw each other and became ashamed. 2 Corinthians 4 is where that's from.

Write that down, too: the very next chapter, 2 Corinthians 5:1-8 say the same thing talking about us not being found naked.