

Revelation 19

1. Introduction and Overview

- a. Revelation 19 marks a **dramatic change in tone** from the previous chapter.
 - i. In Revelation 18, God gave us a tragic vision of the fall of Babylon (Rome), but in Revelation 19 God lifts the eyes and hearts of His people to their glorious future.
 - ii. In the previous chapter, the kings and merchants of the earth were *lamenting* the fall of their city, but in this chapter, God's people are *rejoicing*.
- b. Jay Adams: "Chapter 19 is the story of **two suppers**. They contrast sharply. One is a joyous marriage feast; the other is a carnage of vultures."

2. Rejoicing in Heaven (Revelation 19:1-5)

- a. After Babylon falls, heaven rejoices.
 - i. There is a voice of a great multitude in heaven (v. 1).
 1. God was saving large amounts of people. By the end of the first century, there were over one million Christians in the Roman Empire.
 - ii. This is the only NT occurrence of the word, "Hallelujah," which means "Praise Yahweh" (vv. 1, 3, 4, 6). This word is mostly used in the book of psalms.
- b. There are **three primary reasons** for this rejoicing in heaven:
 - i. **God's glory is displayed.**
 1. He reveals His salvation and glory and power (v. 2).
 2. His judgments are true and just (v. 2; cf. Rev. 15:3; 16:7).
 - ii. **God's enemies are defeated.**
 1. The great prostitute has been judged (v. 2).
 2. David Scott Clark: "The devil may rage, and the beast may fight, and the false prophet may join hands with both, and the harlot may entice and seduce, but all of them together are no match for the Lord, they only show their impotence in conflict with the Almighty."
 - iii. **God's people are vindicated.**

1. God's servants, whether small or great, may praise Him (v.5).
3. **The Marriage Supper of the Lamb (Revelation 19:6-10)**
- a. The Church is the Bride of Christ (Ephesians 5:25-33). This is important for us to understand for two main reasons.
 - i. Christ has a special love for His Church.
 - ii. Christ and His Church are united ("one flesh").
 - b. **The Bride has made herself ready for the marriage supper (v. 7).**
 - i. This speaks of sanctification.
 - ii. The fine linen, bright and pure, is the righteous deeds of the saints (v. 8).
 1. Earlier in Revelation, this was a picture of our *justification* in Christ's blood (Revelation 7:14), but here the emphasis is on *sanctification* ("the righteous deeds of the saints").
 - iii. A question for personal reflection: When you think of being clothed in white, do you *only* think about imputed righteousness (justification)? Do you ever think about practical righteousness (sanctification)?
 - c. **"Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb" (v. 9).**
 - i. Isaiah 25:6-9 foretold a great feast for God's people.
 - ii. Milton Terry: "The feast or supper of that marriage is a figure for the delightful fellowship, the blessed entertainment and fruition of such vital union with the Prince of life. The marriage of the Lamb is a process continually going on as long as such unions of Christ and His beloved and elect ones continue to be consummated. The glory and blessedness of life with Christ in heaven are but the perpetuation of the union formed by faith and love in this world. The marriage and feast of this apocalyptic song are accordingly to be understood as referring to the same spiritual fact as the parables of the marriage of the king's son in Matthew 22:2-13 and the great supper in Luke 14:15-24."
 - d. **When John is tempted to worship the angel, he is redirected (v. 10).**
 - i. Like John, we are tempted to miss the point of all this. However, God graciously keeps our focus on Jesus.
 - ii. Worship God!

- iii. “For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy” (v. 10).
 - 1. This shows us that all prophecy is ultimately about Jesus. In our study of prophecy, if we are missing Jesus, then we are missing the point!

4. The Rider on a White Horse (Revelation 19:11-21)

- a. Although this is often understood to be a vision of the Second Coming of Christ at the end of history, **there are some good reasons to see this as a vision of Christ’s ongoing triumph throughout history.**
 - i. Recall the significance of Revelation 1:7.
 - ii. In Acts 1:11 we are told that Jesus will come in the same way as His apostles saw Him go into heaven. He did not ascend on a white horse.
 - iii. Jesus is killing His foes with a sword that comes from His mouth (v. 15). This is clearly a reference to the power of God’s Word, not a literal sword that brings about a physical death. His enemies are being destroyed by the power of His Word. At the Second Coming, Jesus will physically destroy His enemies with flaming fire (2 Thessalonians 1:8-10). This will happen in a moment and will not be a process (1 Corinthians 15:52).
 - iv. In Revelation 19:20, Jesus is defeating the beast and the false prophet, which we have already established as first-century enemies of the Church (Revelation 13, 17). For this to be a futuristic Second Coming, you need to invent a future revival of the beast and false prophet that is not required by the text.
 - v. David Scott Clark: “Now I submit the question: Is this not the conquering power of the gospel and the triumph of Christianity? The sword of the Spirit which is the word of God, by preaching, and teaching, and testimony conquers the world for Christ. And for this very reason I think the writer was so particular to point out that the sword was in the rider’s mouth. The world is to be conquered by the gospel. Christ said: ‘Go ye and make disciples of every creature baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.’”
- b. **This is a powerful description of the glory of Christ!**

- i. Faithful and True (v. 11, cf. Rev. 1:5; 3:14)
- ii. Righteous Judge and Warrior (v. 11, cf. Exodus 15:3)
- iii. Eyes of Flaming Fire (v. 12, cf. Rev. 1:14)
- iv. Many Diadems on His Head (v. 12)
- v. A Name Written Known Only to Him (v. 12)
- vi. A Robe Dipped in Blood (v. 13)
- vii. He is the Word of God (v. 13, cf. John 1:1)
- viii. He Leads His People in Victory (v. 14)
 - 1. The armies of heaven are identified with the Church as they both wear white (Rev. 19:8; 6:11; 7:14) and they follow Him (cf. Rev. 14:4).
 - 2. They also ride white horse because they share in His victory (cf. Rev. 12:11; 15:2)!
- ix. He Executes God's Wrath (v. 15)
- x. He is the Supreme King (v. 16)
- c. **God's enemies are decisively defeated (vv. 17-21).**
 - i. Much of the imagery here resembles the battle of Revelation 16:12-16 which described the fall of Rome (refer to those notes for the reasons why). It is not describing the final battle at the end of the world.
 - ii. The call for the birds to feed on the corpses of God's enemies resembles an OT curse (Deuteronomy 28:26; cf. Ezek. 39:17-20).
 - iii. Christ defeats the enemies by the power of His Word (v. 21).
 - iv. "From victory unto victory, His army shall He lead, till every foe is vanquished, and Christ is Lord indeed."