

The Revelation of Jesus Christ – Revelation Chapter 19

Bible Study Notes on the Return of the King

Chapter 19: The Return of the King

What is the nature of Chapter 19?

- *Chapter 19* continues the sequential story of the tribulation
- It reveals the events of the end of the 7-year Tribulation period – the Fall of Babylon really marks the end of the Tribulation...the beast's power has gone and his city has fallen – and its smoke rises up for ever (*verse 3*)
- This chapter tells of the big event in future history – the Return of The King
- He is returning to rule and reign (*Luke 1: 31-33*)
 - To sit on the throne of His father David
 - To reign over the house of Jacob forever
 - His kingdom will never end
- Those who believe these things (yet to happen) literally are, sadly, a minority in the church today

God's Promise of Christ's Kingdom

- The Davidic Covenant – the words of Nathan the Prophet to David
2 Samuel 7: 10-16
- David's Royal Dynasty
Isaiah 7: 13-14
- An Eternal Throne
2 Samuel 7: 13 and 16; 1 Chronicles 17: 12, 22:10; Isaiah 55: 3; Ezekiel 37: 25
- A Political Kingdom
Genesis 17: 2-8
- Confirmed By Oath
Psalms 132: 11, 89: 3-4, 34
- It Cannot Be Applied To The Church
Ezekiel 37: 21-28
- Recognised By The First Church Council
Acts 15: 14-18
 - Quoting *Amos 9: 11-12* (see *Jeremiah 30: 7, 11, 18*)
- The Oldest Prophecy in the Bible is of the Second Coming of Messiah
 - The first prophecy uttered by a prophet in the scriptures
 - Prophecy of Enoch recorded in *Jude 14-15*

Ch 19 Vs 1-4 Heaven Rejoices over Babylon's Fall

A Great Multitude Rejoices

Verses 1-3

What does John hear and what does it signify?

- Yet again in *verse 1* (Greek: '*meta tauta*') – after these things – after the previous recorded event (the fall of Babylon) – as in *Revelation 18: 1-3*
 - Indicates that the narrative of the end time events is continued
 - A Mighty Angel had declared Babylon's fall – *Revelation 18: 21-24*
 - This mighty angel had described the manner of its fall, and expressed her ruin in the strongest terms, with the reasons for it
 - Saints were enjoined to rejoice over Babylon's fall – *Revelation 18: 20*

- A Loud Voice (Greek: *megas phōnē*) – of a Great Multitude (Greek: *polus ochlos* meaning an abundant throng)
 - This is the host of heaven – angels, cherubim & seraphim, the four living creatures...and, possibly, also the 24 elders...that is the raptured church
 - Rejoicing at Babylon’s fall, they will all realise that the return of the Lord, Yeshua, as King and Judge is imminent
- Alleluia!
 - A cry of rejoicing at God’s righteous judgements
 - In verse 1, Alleluia is praise for God’s salvation, glory, honour and power – these attributes, which Babylon presumed for itself, are the attributes of the Lord God alone
 - Salvation (Greek: *sōtēria*) – God is the author of deliverance through the work of His Son, Yeshua (see *John 3: 16, Hebrews 12: 2*)
 - Glory (Greek: *doxa*) – God is glorious and He alone should be glorified
 - Honour (Greek: *timē*) – Esteem and Reverence are God’s due from man
 - Power (Greek: *dunamis*) – God alone is all-powerful
 - ‘Alleluia’ (Greek: *allēlouia*) occurs 4 times in the NT (all in this chapter)
 - The Four Alleluias occur in *verses 1, 3, 4 and 6*
 - Alleluia! – Literally ‘Praise ye Yah’ (Yahweh)
- It is the response of heaven to the call (in *Revelation 18: 20*) to rejoice at God’s righteous judgement of Babylon (and ‘earth dwellers’) – rejoicing at His vengeance for the blood of His saints shed by her
 - A Loud Voice – an exceedingly great shout
 - A Great Multitude – a throng – probably indicates all of heaven, the raptured saints; (and possibly including angels though scripture says ‘people’ [*ochlos*] not angels [*aggelos*])
- God is praised for His ‘judgments’ (Greek: *krisis*) – the justice of a righteous God
 - It is Babylon’s fornication (Greek: *porneia*), meaning idolatry, which is judged – Babylon is named as the ‘great whore’ who corrupts the earth
 - It is Babylon’s seducing of the world which is judged
 - It is Babylon’s shedding of the blood of the apostles, the prophets and the saints is especially judged (*verse 3*)
 - Smoke rises from the ruins of Babylon forever and ever – indicating it is the ruin of spiritual Babylon which is in focus here
 - It is the smoke from the fire of God’s judgement (see *Revelation 18: 8-10*)
 - God’s judgements elicit a second ‘Alleluia’ from the multitude in heaven
- Praise of God forms so much of the Bible – a huge percentage of the book of Revelation is praise
- It is the same praise of Heaven that we see at the 7th bowl, trumpet and seal:
 - After the Seventh Bowl (*Revelation 16: 17-18*) – “It is done”
 - After the Seventh Trumpet (*Revelation 11: 15-19*) – “The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!”
 - After the Seventh Seal (*Revelation 8: 1-5*) ‘there was silence in heaven for about half an hour’ – awe at the God’s justice and kingdom
 - Matthew Henry comments ‘The surest way to have our deliverances continued and completed is to give God the glory of what he has done for us.’

See Supplementary Note 1: ‘A Suggested Chronology of the Great Tribulation Period’

Who next joins the Praise of the Lord God?

- The 24 Elders (representative of the raptured church) and 4 Living Creatures also give praise and worship God for His judgement of Babylon
 - This is the last reference where the 24 Elders are mentioned
 - Hereafter it is 'The Bride' who is in focus – the '24 Elders' do not co-occur with 'The Bride', for the redeemed saints are the bride
- The 4 Living Creatures, who continually worship the Lord God Almighty, join with the 24 Elders in praise and worship (see *Revelation 4: 6-11*)
- Their cry is 'Amen, Alleluia' (the third 'Alleluia')
 - Amen (Greek: *amēn*) means trustworthy, verily, surely or 'so be it'
 - They are affirming the praise of the great multitude
- This concludes the Triumphant Song of the heavenly assembly

Ch 19 Vs 5-6 Heaven Praises the Lord God***What does John hear next and what does the response in praise signify?***

The Voice from the Throne

Verse 5

- A voice 'from out of the throne' (KJV)
 - Not the Father – it is He whose praise is being urged
 - Possibly it is Yeshua or the Holy Spirit; or more probably it is one of the cherubim or angels around the throne
- The cry is 'Praise our God'
 - The call is to all His servants (Greek: *doulos*) meaning slave – the same word Paul uses to describe himself 'bondservant' (*Romans 1: 1*)
 - The call is to those who fear (Greek: *phobeō*), meaning to be afraid or to hold in awe, the Lord God
 - Both small and great – all distinctions and ranks are to be transcended

The Marriage Song Begins

Verse 6

- It is an '*epithalamium*' – a song or poem written specifically to celebrate the bride on the way to her marital chamber
- It is a crescendo of worship and praise to God
 - The response is from a great multitude
 - This multitude is all of heaven: living creatures, cherubim and seraphim, angels and all the redeemed saints (the small and the great)
 - Some commentators think it is only the tribulation saints singing; because this multitude rejoice about the marriage of the Lamb and sing of the bride's readiness (*verse 7*) – the raptured saints being 'the bride'
 - Like the sound of many waters (like Yeshua's voice in *Revelation 1: 15*)
 - Like the sound of mighty thunderings – always heard at the time of something significant; like as at:
 - The Throne Room of Heaven (*Revelation 4: 5*)
 - The Opening of the Seventh Seal (*Revelation 8: 5*)
 - The Sounding of the Seventh Trumpet (*Revelation 11: 19*)
 - The Outpouring of the Seventh Bowl (*Revelation 16: 18*)

- Alleluia (the 4th ‘Alleluia’) – praising, ‘for the Lord God Omnipotent reigns’
 - Omnipotent (Greek: *pantokratōr*) meaning ‘all ruling’ or ‘almighty’
 - God’s absolute and universal sovereignty is, with the fall of Babylon, again apparent to all, both saints and ‘earth-dwellers’
 - It is as the 24 Elders proclaimed at the seventh trumpet (*Revelation 11: 16-18*)

Ch 19 Vs 7-9 **The Marriage Supper of The Lamb**

What does John hear the great multitude say?

- The great multitude continues to rejoice – still with voices as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thundering
- Now it is because the Marriage Supper of The Lamb has come!
 - It is the first of two ‘suppers’ in this chapter – one joyful, one awful
 - The Marriage Supper (*verses 7-10*)
 - The Supper of the Great God - A Feast of The Unsaved (*verses 17-18*)

The Marriage of the Lamb

Verse 7

What is ‘the Marriage’ which is celebrated?

- Hebrew weddings consisted of four phases:
 - (1) Betrothal – often when the couple were children/teenagers
 - (2) Presentation – the bridegroom comes for his bride and there are festivities, often lasting several days, that precede the ceremony
 - (3) The Marriage Ceremony – the exchanging of vows
 - (4) The Final Supper celebrating the marriage
- The statement that ‘the Marriage of the Lamb has come’ indicates that the time of the Marriage Ceremony has come
 - Later it is said ‘Blessed *are* those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!’ (*verse 9*) indicating the final supper after the marriage ceremony
- His wife has made herself ready
 - The Bride is ready for the Ceremony – as described in *verse 8*
- The Marriage of Yeshua (the Lamb) to the Church (Bride/Wife) is fulfilled
 - A Marriage Covenant Established – *1 Corinthians 11: 25-26*
 - A Bride Purchase Price Paid (Yeshua’s blood) – *1 Corinthians 6: 19-20*
 - The Bride is Set Apart – *Ephesians 5: 25-27; 1 Corinthians 6: 11; Hebrews 10: 10, 13: 12*
 - Bride is Reminded of the Covenant in Communion – *1 Corinthians 11: 25-26*
 - Bridegroom left for His Father’s house to prepare a place for His bride – *John 14: 2-3*
 - The Bridegroom Returns for His Bride – *1 Thessalonians 4: 16-17*
 - Yeshua is the Bridegroom – *Matthew 9: 15, 22: 1-14; 2 Corinthians 11: 2; Ephesians 5: 22-32*
 - John the Baptist – the Friend of the Bridegroom – *Matthew 11: 11-15; Luke 16: 16; John 3: 29*
 - A Banquet is Prepared – *Isaiah 25: 6-9; c.f. Luke 22: 15-16; Matthew 26: 29*
 - The Bride enjoys a Unique Relationship – *John 17: 23-26*

Who is the Wife?

- The 'wife' is the bride of the Lamb
- The Lamb is Yeshua – Yeshua is The Bridegroom – *John 3: 29*
- The Bride of Yeshua is The Church
 - The church is betrothed to Christ - *2 Corinthians 11: 2*
 - She is to be a chaste virgin – *2 Corinthians 11: 2; Ephesians 5: 22-23*
 - While the term bride often refers to the church (i.e. of the millennia since Yeshua's first coming), and does so here; it ultimately expands to include all the redeemed of all ages, which becomes clear in the remainder of Revelation
- Yeshua, like the Jewish bridegroom after betrothal, goes to prepare a place for the Bride – *John 14: 2-3*
 - He comes for His bride at 'The Harpazo', the rapture
 - He comes (Second Coming), with His Bride, to Judge and Rule the Earth – as told in *Revelation 19: 11-16*
- The Church is the Bride
 - Betrothed to Christ by His sovereign choice in Eternity Past (*Ephesians 1: 4*)
 - Believers become part of the Church (and are thus Betrothed to the Lord) by faith (see *Romans 1: 16-17, 10: 10; Ephesians 2: 8-9*)
 - Believers are to be a chaste virgin for the Lord (*2 Corinthians 11: 2*)
 - He will Come for His Bride at the Rapture where she will be presented to Him clothed in white robes of holiness (see *John 14: 1-3; 1 Corinthians 15: 51-54; 1 Thessalonians 4: 13-18; Revelation 4: 4, 7: 9, and 19: 8*).
 - The Marriage Ceremony and the Marriage Supper (signifying the end of the ceremony) takes place at the end of the Tribulation but they take place before Yeshua's return (Second Coming) as King and Judge
 - The Supper is a celebration meal which is symbolic, taking place, it seems, just before Yeshua's return and the establishment of His millennial kingdom
 - Human Marriage is a Picture (i.e.; it is prophetic) of the Relationship between the Church and the Lamb (Yeshua) – see *Ephesians 5: 22-33*
 - The Bride (Wife) is to obey her husband
 - The Husband is to sacrificially love his Bride (Wife)

See Supplementary Note 61: 'The Jewish Wedding'

- The Wife – some say this is Israel – but this is not so
 - Israel is the Wife of Yahweh even though she has been unfaithful
 - The Lord's word to Desolate (Exiled) Israel - *Isaiah 54: 1*
 - The Lord's word of Restoration to Israel – *Isaiah 54: 4-8*
 - Israel has a Covenant Relationship with Yahweh
 - Established in the Abrahamic Covenant (an Unconditional Covenant) – *Genesis 12: 1-3, 13: 14-17, 15: 18-21, 17: 1-8*
 - A Covenant repeated to Isaac – *Genesis 26: 2-5*
 - A Covenant repeated to Jacob – *Genesis 35: 9-12*
 - Developed through the Mosaic Covenant (a Conditional Covenant) - *Exodus 19: 5-6, 20: 1-17*
 - The Promise of an Everlasting Kingdom in the Davidic Covenant (an Unconditional Covenant) – *2 Samuel 7: 5-16*
 - The New Covenant the Lord will make with Israel of inner renewal of heart and mind – *Jeremiah 31: 31-34*

- Hosea's Object Lessons concerning Israel
 - A Wife from Harlotry (whoredoms) – *Hosea 1: 2*
 - She gives gifts to lovers to prevent want
 - Bought at a slave market (Hosea was to love her anyway)
 - Three Children – with special names which speak of Israel as an adulterous and idolatrous wife (*Hosea 1: 3*)
 - Jezreel – cast away, sowed for later harvest (*Hosea 1: 4-5*)
 - Lo-Ruhamah – un-pitied, without mercy (*Hosea 1: 6-7*)
 - Lo-Ammi – not my people (*Hosea 1: 8*)
 - The Lord will have Mercy on His people and Restore them – they will no longer call Him 'My Master' but instead call Him 'My Husband' – betrothed forever (*Hosea 2: 14-23*)
- The Contrast of Mystery Babylon and Israel
 - Mystery Babylon 'She says in her heart, 'I sit as queen, and am no widow, and will not see sorrow.'" (*Revelation 18: 7*)
 - But she is judged by Yahweh and falls in ruins
 - Israel – portrayed in scripture as:
 - A Harlot – *Isaiah 50: 1; Jeremiah 3: 6-10; Ezekiel 16: 35*
 - Cast Away/Widowed – *Romans 11: 1; Lamentations 1: 1-2; Isaiah 54: 4-8;*
- Israel is Not Permanently Cast Away – *Isaiah 49: 14-26, 50: 1, 51: 1-5, 11, 54: 4-8, 11-15, 62: 1-5; Hosea 1: 10-11, 2: 14-23; Zechariah 10: 6-12, 12: 10, 13: 1; Romans chapters 9, 10 & 11*
- The Abrahamic Covenant is an unconditional one – the Lord God is committed to it unconditionally (see *Genesis 12: 1-3, 13: 14-17, 15: 18-21, 17: 1-8*)
- Jewish understanding of Prophecy – '*Prophecy is Pattern*'
 - Throughout the Bible God uses marriage to communicate intimacy
 - Christ is called the last Adam (*1 Corinthians 15: 45-47*) – the first Adam is thus a model:
 - Before the fall they were eternal
 - Eve takes the apple then offers it to Adam
 - Eve was deceived, but Adam was not - *1 Timothy 2: 14*
 - Adam loved Eve so much that he chose to join her in her predicament, so he took the apple – Adam (The First Adam) is thus a model of Yeshua (The Second Adam) who loved us so much that He became sin for us
 - Boaz and Ruth are another model – the kinsman redeemer and the gentile bride
 - There are 7 gentile brides in scripture – interestingly, in none of their cases is their death recorded
 - The Marriage Supper anticipated at the 'Last Supper' – *Luke 22: 15-18*
 - Christ drinks the third cup (Cup of Redemption or Blessing)
 - He says he will not drink the fourth cup (the Cup of Praise/Restoration) until the Kingdom of God comes – that is, at the marriage supper

The Wife of the Lamb

Verse 8

What is distinctive about the Wife (Bride)?

- The Lamb's Spouse – she is called His wife rather than His bride (as in *verse 7*)
 - This is possibly indicating that the Marriage Ceremony as already occurred

- Thus, all that remains is for the Marriage Supper to take place
- Note again, that this is prior to Yeshua's return (on a white horse) – 'His Second Coming' as King and Judge
- The Wife (His Bride) has made herself ready – by the Bridegroom's purifying work
 - She is Purified, Spotless – *Ephesians 5: 27*
 - This signifies Holiness (set apart to the Lord) – the work of Yeshua through the washing of water (symbolically the Holy Spirit) by the Word (Scripture) – *Ephesians 5: 26*
 - She is Ready
 - This signifies both devotion to the Bridegroom and Watching and Waiting – *Matthew 25: 1-13*
 - She is Clothed in Fine Linen, clean and bright (radiant)
 - Not only does she have the imputed righteousness of Yeshua, by faith in Him, but – as the tribulation saints had done – she has washed her robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb – *Revelation 7: 14*
 - Hence it has been 'granted to her' to array herself in fine linen – it is the blessing of devotion to the Lord
 - Fine linen – is the righteous acts of the saints
 - Not Christ's imputed righteousness granted to believers at salvation, but the practical results of that righteousness in the believers' life
 - It is the outward manifestation of inward virtue.

The Marriage Supper of the Lamb

Verse 9

The Church is the Bride – so who are the Invited Guests?

- Blessed are those called to the marriage supper
 - Many are invited but many decline to come – *Luke 14: 15-24*
 - Each Christian believer is 'called' – *Romans 8: 30*
 - However, the Church is the heavenly Bride
 - So who are the invited guests?
- Those who are invited guests are the rest of the redeemed
- These are those saved before Pentecost – it will include:
 - All the faithful believers saved by grace through faith up to the birth of the church (see *Acts 2*, especially *verses 1-4, 22-24, and 38-42*)
 - It will also, very likely, include Old Testament prophets and saints
 - Hence there will be Gentile and Jewish invitees to witness the Marriage Ceremony and celebrate at the Marriage Supper
 - Gentile (pre-Church) invitees, though they are not the bride, they still are glorified and reign with Christ in the millennial kingdom
 - Jewish invitees will dwell in Israel as wife of Yahweh
 - It is really differing imagery rather than differing reality
- Timing
 - The marriage is recorded in *verse 7*
 - The marriage supper is announced in *verse 9*
 - Both are before Yeshua's Second Coming (*verses 11-16*)
 - Some scholars suggest that possibly the 'marriage supper of the lamb' is on earth – sometime after the 'marriage' which takes place in heaven (after the Harpazo) – this based on an interpretation of *Daniel 12: 11-12*

- Some scholars say this symbolic meal will take place at the establishment of the millennial kingdom and last throughout that 1,000-year period
- The angel reinforces the importance of the blessing of attending the Marriage Supper by insisting that it, and the prior things John has been told, are “the true sayings of God”
 - This probably refers to everything John has been told in *chapters 17, 18 and 19* – it is all true
 - The marriage and supper take place after the completion of God’s judgments
 - John will see next the Second Coming of Yeshua and the defeat of the Beast and his armies

Ch 19 V 10 Worship God!

What is John’s reaction and what is he told?

Verse 10

- John has been told to ‘write’ (*verse 9*) by an angel (unstated but most probable) having heard the praises and words of the great multitude (*verses 1-8*)
 - ‘He’ in *verse 9* is most probably an angel – some suggest it could be a glorified raptured saint (but they are the Bride) or an OT saint
- Overwhelmed by the grandeur of the vision, John collapsed (fell down) in worship of the angel – possibly the mighty angel from the previous chapter (*Revelation 18: 21*)
 - John had fallen down in worship on seeing one like the Son of Man (Yeshua) in all His glory (*Revelation 1: 17*)
- The Angel forbids John to worship him
 - The Bible forbids the worship of angels (*Colossians 2: 18-19*)
 - Angels do not allow themselves to be worshipped – c.f. Satan who desires to be worshipped
 - The ‘angel’ is a ‘fellow-servant’ (Greek: *sundoulos*) meaning co-slave
 - The angel speaks of himself as a fellow-servant of John and those having the testimony of Jesus (i.e. John’s fellow believers) – this is clear in the LITV which translates this as “I am a fellow-slave of yours, and of your brothers, having the testimony of Jesus.”
 - Poorer translations say the ‘angel’ is ‘of your brethren’ – leading some to see it as indicating a saint who has also been redeemed by Jesus – see *Revelation 12: 17*
- The Angel tells John “Worship God!”
 - Worship God – a clear direction that we are to worship Him alone (not saints, angels, icons, idols, etc) – see *Luke 4: 8*
 - The testimony of Jesus – is the spirit of prophecy
 - The true purpose of prophecy is to bear testimony to the person and work of the Lord, Yeshua
 - Hence, the central theme of both OT prophecy and NT preaching is the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ
 - Witness to Christ is the essence of prophecy – see *2 Peter 1: 16 – 21*
 - The Book of Revelation itself is all about Christ it is “The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants – things which must shortly take place – *Revelation 1: 1*
- John makes the same mistake (worshipping an angel) later, and is again forbidden by the angel and told to ‘Worship God’ – *Revelation 22: 8 - 9*