

The Revelation to John
Chapter Nineteen
The Fourfold Hallelujah, The Marriage of the Lamb
The Coming of Christ, the Doom of the Beast and the False Prophet

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The scene now shifts to heaven as praises begin to flow concerning the great fulfillment of God's plan. These first six verses are the celebration in heaven of the great judgments of God on the evil cities and people of the world. The rest of the chapter deals with a magnificent scene as Jesus reigns and the evil ones receive justice.

Rev 19:1 “After these things I heard, as it were, a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, ‘Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God; Rev 19:2 because 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.’”

The singings of the uncounted millions of angels are heard in such unison that they sound like one voice. They sing hallelujah, which means Praise God. This is the only place in the English Bible in which this word appears although it is translated in some of the psalms. We are going to see several reasons for them to praise God. The first is that salvation has come in fulfillment with the glorification of the saints. The second reason is that absolute justice has finally come to the earth and mankind. The great whore who had caused so much immorality has been judged. She not only ravaged that world with corruption, she also killed many of God's bond-servants. Even though it has seemed like the wicked would always prosper, true judgment came in God's time.

Hallel consists of six psalms (113-118) and it is read as a unit in times of great joy. It is also read during evening prayers the first night of Passover. The first two are sung before the meal and the remaining four are sung after the meal. This is undoubtedly the song sung by Jesus and the disciples after their Last Supper (Mark 14:26; Matt 26:30) before going to the Mount of Olives. The psalms are also called the Hallel of Egypt due to their many references to the Exodus. We cannot read this section without thinking of the great “Hallelujah Chorus” in Handel's Messiah. This celebration and praise is due to God for He has vindicated the injustice brought upon His servants by bringing about His justice on the great Prostitute Babylon. This evil corruption was brought upon the earth (11:18; Jer 51:25) and killed the saints of God (18:24). As we continue to wait today (2014 A.D.), we anticipate singing this praise to God when, in His time, He will bring about the destruction of this world-wide evil.

Rev 19:3 “And a second time they said, “Hallelujah! Her smoke rises up forever and ever.”

Rev 19:4 And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sits on the throne saying, ‘Amen. Hallelujah!’”

A second chorus rang out with another “Praise God” as they now celebrate the third reason for this praise: the end of rebellion. When they sing that the smoke rises up forever and ever they are saying that the judgment on the wicked is final and will never be removed. The Almighty God has judged and nobody can argue against His judgment. Now the throng of angels is joined by those who had been close to God in the judgments: the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures. The cherubim and the elders worshiped God in His majestic site (throne) with an agreement (Amen) and a Praise God. The words of verse there are similar to the judgment of ancient Babylon: *“It will not be quenched night or day; Its smoke will go up forever. From generation to generation it will be desolate; None will pass through it forever and ever.”* (Isa 34:10) However now this judgment is upon the entire corruption over the world in a manner similar to what happened to the original city. The four elders were discussed when studying Revelation 4:4. The identity of the elders has been considerably discussed. The number 24 is representative of completion and representation so these people probably are representative of some group. Some people say that the number is for the twelve tribes of Israel and the other twelve are for the apostles but the number is never split in the book. These elders are undoubtedly people rather than angels and are then representatives of people who have persevered through tribulation and trials on earth and are the people of God ruling like promised to the true believers at the church of Thyatira. H. A. Ironside also reminds us that King David appointed 24 elders to represent the Levitical priesthood as discussed in 1 Chronicles 24. He then says that, in like manner, these 24 elders are representatives of all of the priests (children of God) who have been saved during all time. Most interpreters think the four living creatures are cherubim. The last phrase comes from a psalm: *“Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, From everlasting even to everlasting. And let all the people say, “Amen.” Praise the LORD!”* (Psa 106:48) as they agree with the heavenly voices over this great destruction.

Rev 19:5 “And 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.’

Rev 19:6 And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude and as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty peals of thunder, saying, ‘Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns.’”

We do not know the owner of the voice that now came from the throne but it was probably an angel since he said “our God”. All of the bond-servants of God are told to give praise to God. He includes all of God’s redeemed people as we are the ones who fear God and have faithfully served Him all of our allotted lives on earth. When now the angels, the twenty-four elders, the cherubim, and the redeemed people of God all lift their voices in praise to God, the sound would have been deafening. They all sing the final “Praise God” for the fourth reason that the Lord God Almighty fully reigns for all to see. What a wonderful scene! It is obvious from the writing that what he heard was not what he describes but that what he heard reminded him of those things. This was a wonderful praise of God for His reign is obvious for all to see and hear The world system has finally been defeated and God reigns! The verb tense of “reigns” can better be translated as “He has begun to reign”. Hallelujah, indeed!

The Marriage of the Lamb

Rev 19:7 “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.”

The rejoicing now shifts from an emphasis on what has transpired to what is now going to occur. Of course the Lamb is Jesus Christ and the time has now come for the complete joining of the chosen people of God with the Son of God. The Bible will refer to the relationship between God and His chosen people in the context of a wedding:

- *Hos 2:19-20 “And I will betroth you to Me forever; Yes, I will betroth you to Me in righteousness and in justice, In lovingkindness and in compassion,²⁰ And I will betroth you to Me in faithfulness. Then you will know the Lord.”*
- *Isa 54:5 “For your husband is your Maker, Whose name is the Lord of hosts; And your Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel, Who is called the God of all the earth.”*

Many times in Scripture we are described as being “in Christ” and being the temple of the Holy Spirit. Here are a few of the verses in which Paul tells us that we are **in Christ**:

- *Rom 6:23 “For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*
- *Rom 8:1 “There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”*
- *Rom 8:10 “And if Christ is in you, though the body is dead because of sin, yet the spirit is alive because of righteousness.”*
- *Rom 16:3 “Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus,”*
- *Rom 16:7 “Greet Andronicus and Junias, my kinsmen, and my fellow prisoners, who are outstanding among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me.”*
- *Rom 16:9-10 “Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and Stachys my beloved.¹⁰ “Greet Apelles, the approved in Christ. Greet those who are of the household of Aristobulus.”*
- *1Cor 1:30 “But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption”*

Here are a few of Paul’s teaching about us being a temple of the Holy Spirit:

- *1Cor 3:16 “Do you not know that you are a temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?”*
- *1Cor 6:19 “Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?”*
- *2Cor 6:16 “Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God; just as God said, “I will dwell in them and walk among them; And I will be their God, and they shall be My people.”*
- *Eph 2:21 “in whom the whole building, being fitted together is growing into a holy temple in the Lord;”*

So there is no doubt that, since we were first born again, all of God's bondservants are "in Christ" and indwelt by the Holy Spirit. Paul also teaches us that we are members one of another and one in Christ Jesus:

- *Rom 12:5 "so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another."*
- *Gal 3:28 "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus."*

But there will be a time when we are glorified and our bodies are then ready as has been our spirit. At that time the bonding between God's chosen people and Jesus will be complete. The Jewish concept of marriage seems to be in mind here for there are three stages to such a marriage:

- 1.) The engagement, which was legally binding. It could only be broken by divorce much in conflict with engagements in our time and country. Sometimes between this first stage and the second stage the groom would go and prepare a dwelling for his bride.
- 2.) The second stage was the presentation, which was a time of celebration. It immediately preceded the third stage. After a week or so of these festivities the groom and attendants would go to the bride's house and bring her to the third stage.
- 3.) The third stage was the actual ceremony with the exchanging of vows. After this ceremony there would be a great meal followed by consummation of the wedding.

It seems that this Jewish process is symbolized because we have been engaged since our rebirth. Jesus also said that He was going to prepare a house for us:

John 14:2-3 "In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. ³And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also."

All the preparations have been made and now we are ready for the third stage of the process. Paul also described the church as the bride of Christ that would be presented to Him pure:

Eph 5:25-27 "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, (26) so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, (27) that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless."

Rev 19:8 "And 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."

All the fifth chapter of Ephesians speaks of how we are to be sanctified and then Paul gives us a hint of the mystery:

- Eph 5:25-26 *“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her; ²⁶that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word,”*
- Eph 5:32 *“This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church.”*

Paul says that the analogy of earthly marriage with the preparation of the church for Christ is a mystery. It is now being revealed in its totality. Earthly marriage may seem at times to be a poor comparison with the bonding of the saints with Christ, but all the elements are there. As we mature in our marriage relationship each individual becomes less important than the mate. We work to keep the marriage pure and we love our partner more each day as we are willing to die for the good of him/her.

Through the work of the Holy Spirit and our cooperation we will have been in the process of sanctification during our stay on earth. Then finally we will be glorified in heaven. There we will have the fulfillment of the sanctification in our glorification signified by our being clothed in fine, bright, clean linen. Even the linen given us at that magnificent moment will be the culmination of all of the righteous acts of all of the saints of all time. Now I may contribute a small portion to that outfit but when the works of all the saints of all time are combined the garments will be without comparison truly white. God has prepared the way for our good works to be done:

Eph 2:10 “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.”

We probably do not even know of many of these works but they will be revealed at the end times as they become part of the total cleansing of the saints. The white linen contrasts with the scarlet clothing of the great prostitute (17:4; 18:16). Linen was very expensive and used for the clothing worn by priests and royalty. The word for bright (lampros) is the color of radiant whiteness signifying glorification (Matt 13:43) and the word for clean (katharos) signifies purity, loyalty, and faithfulness. The last phrase of verse 8 is sometimes put in brackets as it is an explanatory interjection seemingly added by John. The righteous acts are not meant to imply any meritorious actions by God’s people that bring salvation but the actions of people who have been given salvation. John is contrasting the actions of God’s children with those heinous actions of those seduced by the beast and the prostitute.

Rev 19:9 “And 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.’”

The angel commands John to write the fourth of seven beatitudes in this book. The marriage supper as the final stage of the wedding process is open to invitation only. Some interpreters say that these guests are the Old Testament saints because the bride would not be invited to her wedding. I do not agree with that interpretation for I believe the invitation was extended to each bondservant when he/she was born again and it is only those who were so chosen by God who will persevere and then be at the marriage

supper. The word translated invited is *keklemenoi* and is really “called” and is the NT call to salvation:

- Matt 9:13 "But go and learn what this means: 'I DESIRE COMPASSION, AND NOT SACRIFICE,' for I did not come to call the righteous, but sinners."
- Rom 8:30 and these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.
- Rom 9:24 *even* us, whom He also called, not from among Jews only, but also from among Gentiles.
- 1Co 1:9 God is faithful, through whom you were called into fellowship with His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.
- 2Th 2:14 It was for this He called you through our gospel, that you may gain the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The angel makes sure that John understands that the words he has given him are truly from God. A similar verse appears in 22:6 to verify the assurance of the entire book.

Rev 19:10 And I fell at his feet to worship him. And 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."

John was so awed by all of this information that he even mistakenly fell at the feet of the angel to worship him. However angels are not to be worshiped as this would be a violation of the first commandment. We can only worship God. Mankind is prone to worship all sorts of beings and things but we are warned against worshiping angels as well as other actions:

Col 2:18 "Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize by delighting in self-abasement and the worship of the angels, taking his stand on visions he has seen, inflated without cause by his fleshly mind,"

All Christians witness to the actions of Jesus that He gave His life for the salvation of God's children and so act as prophets for Him. The spirit of prophecy then continues concerning the gospel message until the End Times when all is complete.

The Coming of Christ

Rev 19:11 "And I saw heaven opened; and behold, a white horse, and He who sat upon it is called Faithful and True; and in righteousness He judges and wages war."

John is on the earth as he sees heaven opened to allow Jesus to ride forth on a white horse. There can be no doubt as to the identity of the rider.

1. He is faithful: *2Cor 1:20 "For as many as may be the promises of God, in Him they are yes; wherefore also by Him is our Amen to the glory of God through us."*

2. He is true:

- *John 8:45-46 “But because I speak the truth, you do not believe Me. ⁴⁶Which one of you convicts Me of sin? If I speak truth, why do you not believe Me?”*
- *Titus 1:2 “in the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised long ages ago,”*

Since He is righteous, He can properly judge at the time established by God:

Acts 17:31 ‘because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead.’

In this book, there is only one other reference to Christ waging war and that involves His judgment against the church: *“Therefore repent; or else I am coming to you quickly, and I will make war against them with the sword of My mouth.”* (Rev 2:16) It then seems that this last waging of war will also involve His judgment against all rebellious nations rather than a strictly military action.

Rev 19:12 “And His eyes are a flame of fire, and upon His head are many diadems; and He has a name written upon Him which no one knows except Himself.”

His eyes can see through to the soul of any man in relation to 1:14. There is no way to hide any thoughts or actions from Him. The crowns on His head are the crowns of a ruler. Since He has many such crowns, He is the ruler of all nations. In the ancient world victors would collect the crowns of those defeated and this is the symbolism here also.

2Sa 12:30 “Then he took the crown of their king from his head; and its weight was a talent of gold, and in it was a precious stone; and it was placed on David's head. And he brought out the spoil of the city in great amounts.”

The name written on Jesus Christ was not for anyone else to know. In black magic, to know someone's name allowed the person to control him. In other contexts knowing someone's name meant knowing all about the person. Jesus cannot be controlled and nobody can know all about Him. He is God and some secrets remain.

Deut 29:29 “The secret things belong to the Lord our God, but the things revealed belong to us and to our sons forever, that we may observe all the words of this law.”

We have enough revelation about God to keep us busy forever so we should curb our innate desire to know what is hidden. Two names of Christ are revealed to John:

1. The Word of God (v. 13 below)
2. King of Kings and Lord of Lords (v. 16 below)

It seems that the final name will only be revealed at His return.

Rev 19:13 “And He is clothed with a robe dipped in blood; and His name is called The Word of God.”

Some people say that the blood is of other foes that He has conquered throughout His waging of war against His enemies related to Isaiah 63:1-6. Others think the blood is that of the saints and Christ will use that to effect victory over His enemies. I prefer to think that the blood is representative of the blood He shed on the cross. He conquered evil not by taking of blood but by shedding of His own blood. Jesus is referred to as the Word of God in other places because He is the revelation of God to His people:

- *John 1:1 "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."*
- *John 1:14 "And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth."*
- *1John 1:1 "What was from the beginning, what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, what we beheld and our hands handled, concerning the Word of Life—"*

Rev 19:14 "And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses."

Some people say that these are the saints, but the saints are the bride. These armies came from being in heaven, which implies that is their abode. It seems that the army is made up of angels whose garments have never been stained with blood or sin. They also were riding white horses. The armies are not armed and will not be called upon to engage in battle! We know that elsewhere the coming of Jesus is associated with the coming of angels:

- *Mat 13:41-42 "The Son of Man will send forth His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all stumbling blocks, and those who commit lawlessness, (42) and will throw them into the furnace of fire; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.*
- *Mat 16:27 "For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and WILL THEN REPAY EVERY MAN ACCORDING TO HIS DEEDS.*
- *Mat 24:30-31 "And then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the SON OF MAN COMING ON THE CLOUDS OF THE SKY with power and great glory. (31) "And He will send forth His angels with A GREAT TRUMPET and THEY WILL GATHER TOGETHER His elect from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other.*

Rev 19:15 And from His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may smite 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.

Rev 19:16 And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, 'KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.'"

The weapon of Jesus is the sword that comes from His mouth and that weapon is His Word. Isaiah also told us that God slays by His word, which is also referred to as a rod also such is referred in a psalm:

- *Isa 11:4 "But with righteousness He will judge the poor, And decide with fairness for the afflicted of the earth; And He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, And with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked."*
- **Psa 2:9 'You shall break them with a rod of iron, You shall shatter them like earthenware.'"**

The Greek has an emphatic sense with "He will rule" and "He will tread", which indicates that He alone can do as He does. We also see the wine press illusion in the pouring out of His enemy's blood in the following:

Isa 63:2-3 "Why is Your apparel red, And Your garments like the one who treads in the wine press? ³"I have trodden the wine trough alone, And from the peoples there was no man with Me. I also trod them in My anger, And trampled them in My wrath; And their lifeblood is sprinkled on My garments, And I stained all My raiment."

The result is so similar to that described in the fourteenth chapter that this must be a recapitulation of that event. The name on His robe and on His thigh would be so that all could see that He is over all kings and over all lords everywhere. He is sovereign over all creation and over all people everywhere.

This name has already been seen as attached to Him (17:14). His word is referred to as an instrument of judgment and salvation: *"He who rejects Me and does not receive My sayings, has one who judges him; the word I spoke is what will judge him at the last day.* (John 12:48) This reference by John is then a Last Day event and not to be applied to the entire periods preceding it.

Rev 19:17 And 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;

Rev 19:18 in order 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. "

The angel seen by John has a vantage point so that all can see. The birds flying in midheaven would be the ones flying near high noon. He calls to them that they will soon have a feast of dead flesh on which to dine. Obviously these are carnivorous birds such as vultures, crows, buzzards, and other such birds. He tells them that they are going to see the dead flesh of mankind from kings to slaves. There is going to be a slaughter of humanity that shows no regard for status or race except that God's people are exempt. This is a horrible event that Ezekiel had also discussed:

- *Ezek 39:4 "You shall fall on the mountains of Israel, you and all your troops, and the peoples who are with you; I shall give you as food to every kind of predatory bird and beast of the field."*

- *Ezek 39:17-20 "And as for you, son of man, thus says the Lord God, 'Speak to every kind of bird and to every beast of the field,' Assemble and come, gather from every side to My sacrifice which I am going to sacrifice for you, as a great sacrifice on the mountains of Israel, that you may eat flesh and drink blood.¹⁸"You shall eat the flesh of mighty men, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth, as though they were rams, lambs, goats, and bulls, all of them fatlings of Bashan. ¹⁹"So you will eat fat until you are glutted, and drink blood until you are drunk, from My sacrifice which I have sacrificed for you ²⁰"And you will be glutted at My table with horses and charioteers, with mighty men and all the men of war," declares the Lord God."*

There is no need to press the literalness of this vision for we know that this depicts the destruction of the great evil system of the world from God's viewpoint. The language is used so that one may know that the destruction is complete as a great victory is about to occur.

The Doom of the Beast and the False Prophet

Rev 19:19 "And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies, assembled to make war against Him who sat upon the horse, and against His army."

John then saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and all their armies. This great assembly of warriors is ready to make battle against Jesus Christ and His army. It does not matter how many they are or how prepared they are for the outcome has been ordained since before the foundation of the world. This is not a local battle for all the kings of the earth are joined against Jesus Christ and His people. We can see this joining of forces today (2014) as the battle cry of His enemy is clearly heard throughout the world. One such cry is: "You can't judge us!".

Rev 19:20 "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."

John does not even comment upon any battle. There may have been no fighting at all for no army can stand up to the Lord of Hosts. We do not know who seized the beast and the false prophet but they were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur. It is very interesting that two of God's people, Enoch and Elijah, were taken alive into heaven and now two of Satan's people are taken alive into hell. Conservation of mass in a supernatural way has been achieved! The world cannot be deceived any longer by these two members of the evil trinity.

Rev 19:21 "And the rest were killed with the sword which came from the mouth of Him who sat upon the horse, and all the birds were filled with their flesh."

Jesus did kill the rest of the kings and armies with the word of His mouth as we have previously quoted from Isaiah:

Isa 11:4 “But with righteousness He will judge the poor, And decide with fairness for the afflicted of the earth; And He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, And with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked.”

Since the birds were all filled with the flesh of the dead enemies, we know that the battle was totally victorious. This imagery was common to signify total annihilation. Do remember that this vision portrays the destruction of a world system of evil and not a physical battle. This is obvious from the context and that Jesus uses the sword of His mouth and not a physical sword. His word is the absolute judge of the wicked.