

# Marriage of the Lamb

Revelation 19:1-8

SS Lesson for 11/21/2021

**Devotional Scripture:** Matt 25:1-13

## OUTLINE

### LESSON BACKGROUND AND KEY VERSE

*Background from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary*

*Key Verse: Rev 19:7*

*Commentary from the Bible Knowledge Commentary*

### MAJOR THEME ANALYSIS

#### CALLS TO CELEBRATE (REV 19:1-4)

##### *Call to the multitude (1)*

Called by God who chose us before the creation (Eph 1:4-5)

Called according to God's purpose (Rom 8:28-29)

Called by grace (Rom 11:2-5)

Called through the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit (2 Thess 2:13)

##### *Call to judgment (2-3)*

Judgment of the unrighteous (2 Peter 2:7-10)

Judgment of God's stored up wrath (Rom 2:5)

Judgment of those who do not know or obey God (2 Thess 1:5-9)

Judgment for the ungodly (2 Peter 3:7)

Judgment for those who have oppressed others (Mal 3:5)

##### *Call to worship (4)*

Worship with joy, gladness and thanksgiving (Ps 100:2-4)

Worship with reverence and awe (Heb 12:28)

Worship during calamities (Job 1:18-20)

Worship by rejoicing in God (Phil 4:4)

#### REASONS TO CELEBRATE (REV 19:5-8)

##### *Because God is God (5)*

God is God because there is no other besides Him (Deut 4:35)

God is God because He is faithful eternally (Deut 7:9)

God is God because He is the Rock of Ages (Ps 18:31)

God is God because He guides us until death (Ps 48:14)

God is God because He is the Holy One (Ps 68:5)

God is God because He created us (Ps 100:3)

God is God because He establishes us (2 Cor 1:21)

##### *Because God is Omnipotent (6)*

God is Omnipotent because all things are possible for God (Matt 19:26)

God is Omnipotent because He is majestic in power (Ex 15:6-8)

God is Omnipotent because of His greatness and mighty deeds (Deut 3:24)

God is Omnipotent because He brings to life and puts to death (Deut 32:39)

God is Omnipotent because He is great and powerful (1 Chron 29:11)

God is Omnipotent because He is Almighty (Ps 89:8)

God is Omnipotent because He is endowed with power (Ps 89:13)

God is Omnipotent because He created and controls the universe (Ps 104:1-10)

God is Omnipotent because He can kill the body and the soul (Matt 10:28)

##### *Because the Lamb is coming (7)*

The Lamb is coming so be prepared (Matt 25:1-13)

The Lamb is coming so let us rejoice (Ps 96:11-13)

The Lamb is coming in all His glory (Matt 25:31)

The Lamb is coming to glorify His people (2 Thess 1:10)

The Lamb is coming so listen for Him (John 3:29)

The Lamb is coming who took away the sins of the world (John 1:29)

The Lamb is coming to lead us to the springs of living water (Rev 7:17)

The Lamb is coming so that His people will follow Him wherever He goes because He purchased them (Rev 14:1-4)

##### *Because God's Church will be ready (8)*

God's Church will be ready because He keeps us blameless until that day (1 Cor 1:8)

God's Church will be ready because He cleansed us so we will be ready (Eph 5:25-28)

God's Church will be ready because He sanctified us (1 Thess 5:23)  
God's Church will be ready because we belong to Him (1 Cor 15:21-23)  
God's Church will be ready because He is coming to bring salvation (Heb 9:26-28)  
God's Church will be ready because we eagerly await our redemption (Rom 8:23)  
God's Church will be ready because our citizenship is in heaven (Phil 3:20-21)  
God's Church will be ready because we have been predestined to be ready (Eph 1:11-14)

## CONCLUSION AND OTHER THOUGHTS

COMMENTARY THOUGHTS FROM ALLEN CARR  
CONCLUDING THOUGHTS FROM THE NIV STANDARD LESSON COMMENTARY  
CONCLUDING THOUGHTS FROM THE ECHOES COMMENTARY

## Lesson Background and Key Verse

### Background from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

A major figurative image throughout the book of Revelation is that of “Babylon” (see Revelation 14:8; 16:19; 17:5; 18:2, 10, 21; compare 1 Peter 5:13). John uses the image of Babylon to picture forces that oppose the will of God and oppose his people. We should note at the outset that the word figurative does not mean “not real” or “fictional”; rather, it means to express one thing in terms of another (examples: Matthew 16:5–21; John 16:25–30). And so it is with the word Babylon. The actual city of ancient Babylon, so powerful during the sixth century BC, was a zero on the world stage of the first century AD. Apocalyptic literature frequently uses vivid images to make a point, and the image of Babylon does just that. In John’s vision, Babylon symbolizes worldly powers that oppose God and his people. Some scholars propose that, for John’s audience, Babylon was a code word for the city of Rome (compare 1 Peter 5:13). Both Rome and Babylon oppressed the people of God and opposed God’s rule. Centuries before the time of John, the Babylonians (Chaldeans) had been God’s instrument in punishing Judah (Jeremiah 40:1–3; Habakkuk 1:1–11; etc.). But the Babylonians went too far and ended up as objects of God’s wrath in turn (Jeremiah 50; Habakkuk 2:6–17). Babylon experienced divine wrath for opposing God in both word and deed. Similarly, the Roman Empire was insatiable in its conquests as it enslaved peoples across the Mediterranean world of the first century AD. Palestine had begun to experience Roman might in 63 BC, when Pompey besieged Jerusalem. The Jewish revolt of AD 66–70 resulted in the sacking of Jerusalem and the destruction of its temple. John wrote the book of Revelation some 25 years afterward. Prior to today’s passage, Revelation 18 sketches a lengthy celebration of the downfall of Babylon, rehearsing charges against it. That prophetic text guarantees, by extension, the ultimate downfall of all kingdoms and entities that oppose God. Today’s passage takes us to what happens after the collapse of those foolish opponents.

### Key Verse: Rev 19:7

*Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready*

### Commentary from the Bible Knowledge Commentary

**19:1.** Beginning in chapter 19 a chronological development is indicated by the phrase **after this** (*meta tauta*). Literally this phrase means “after these things,” and refers to the events of chapter 18. Accordingly John **heard what sounded like the roar** of many people **in heaven** praising God, obviously because of the judgment on Babylon. Interpreters have shown much confusion in understanding the order of the events in chapters 19-20; thus it is important to note that this praise in 19:1 follows Babylon’s destruction in chapter 18. The word “roar” (*phōnēn*) is literally a “sound,” modified by the adjective “great” (*megalēn*). This loud noise is from **a great multitude**, the same phrase used in 7:9 where the “great multitude” refers to the martyred dead of the Great Tribulation. For them in particular the judgment of Babylon is a great triumph. The Greek word for **Hallelujah** is *hallēlouia*, sometimes translated “alleluiah.” The word “hallelujah” is derived from the similar Hebrew word in the Old Testament. It occurs in the New Testament only four times, all of them in Revelation 19 (vv. 1, 3-4, 6). This is the biblical “Hallelujah Chorus.”

**19:2-3.** In expressing their praise of God, God’s glory and power resulting from and caused by His salvation are mentioned along with the fact that **His judgments are true and just**. The destruction of the **great prostitute** (cf. 17:1, 4) is a proper act of vengeance for her martyring the **servants** of God (17:6).

The judgment that is wrought on her, however, is only the beginning of the eternal punishment of the wicked, indicated in the statement that **the smoke from her goes up forever and ever.**

**19:4-5.** The 24 elders and the 4 living creatures also sing a hallelujah chorus. This is another reminder that the 24 elders, representing the church of the present Age, are distinguished from the Tribulation saints, described in verse 1 as “a great multitude.” The 4 living creatures, previously introduced in 4:6-8, seem to refer to angels who praise God. Still another voice of praise, apparently coming from an angel, also praised God and exhorted **all you His servants** (19:5) to join in this praise.

**19:6-8.** The fourth and final hallelujah of this chapter, according to John, sounded like a **multitude** of people, **rushing waters**, and loud **thunder**. Here the rejoicing is prophetic for what is about to happen rather than for the judgment just executed. The second coming of Christ is anticipated in the words, **for our Lord God Almighty reigns**. John used the word “Almighty” (*pantokratōr*; also in 1:8; 4:8; 11:17; 15:3; 16:7, 14; 19:15; 21:22). Along with the exhortation to **rejoice**, announcement is made that **the wedding of the Lamb has come, and His bride has made herself ready**. In Scripture, marriage is often used to describe the relationship of saints to God. In the Old Testament Israel is pictured, as in Hosea, as the unfaithful wife of Yahweh who is destined to be restored in the future kingdom. In the New Testament, marriage is also used to describe the relationship between Christ and the church, but the illustration contrasts with the Old Testament, for the church is regarded as a virgin bride waiting the coming of her heavenly bridegroom (2 Cor. 11:2). The **fine linen** with which the bride will be adorned is explained as representing **the righteous acts of the saints** (Rev. 19:8). (In the OT the high priest’s clothing included linen: Ex. 28:42; Lev. 6:10; 16:4, 23, 32.) While some think this refers to the fact that the saints are justified by faith, the plural expression “the righteous acts” seems to refer to the righteous deeds wrought by the saints through the grace of God. Though all this has been made possible by the grace of God, the emphasis here seems to be on the works of the bride rather than on her standing as one who has been justified by faith. This is the last of 14 outbursts of praise to God in the Book of Revelation by saints, angels, the 24 elders, and/or the 4 living creatures. The hymns or shouts of praise are in 4:8, 11; 5:9-10, 12-13; 7:10, 12; 11:16-18; 15:3-4; 16:5-7; 19:1-4, 6-8 (see the chart near 4:8).

**19:9.** The angel who commanded John to write (14:13) commanded him again to record the message, **Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!** One of the false interpretations that has plagued the church is the concept that God treats all saints exactly alike. Instead, a literal interpretation of the Bible distinguishes different groups of saints, and here the bride is distinguished from those who are invited to the wedding supper. Instead of treating all alike, God indeed has a program for Israel as a nation and also for those in Israel who are saved. He also has a program for Gentiles in the Old Testament who come to faith in God. And in the New Testament He has a program for the church as still a different group of saints. Again in the Book of Revelation the Tribulation saints are distinguished from other previous groups. It is not so much a question of difference in blessings as it is that God has a program designed for each group of saints which corresponds to their particular relationship to His overall program. Here the church, described as a bride, will be attended by angels and by saints who are distinct from the bride. Expositors have debated whether the wedding will be in heaven or on earth. While the difference is not that important, the interpretive problem can be resolved by comparing the wedding described here to weddings in the first century. A wedding normally included these stages: (1) the legal consummation of the marriage by the parents of the bride and of the groom, with the payment of the dowry; (2) the bridegroom coming to claim his bride (as illustrated in Matt. 25:1-13 in the familiar Parable of the 10 Virgins); (3) the wedding supper (as illustrated in John 2:1-11) which was a several-day feast following the previous phase of the wedding. In Revelation 19:9 “the wedding supper” is phase 3. And the announcement coincides with the second coming of Christ. It would seem, therefore, that the wedding supper has not yet been observed. In fulfilling the symbol, Christ is completing phase 1 in the Church Age as individuals are saved. Phase 2 will be accomplished at the Rapture of the church, when Christ takes His bride to heaven, the Father’s house (John 14:1-3). Accordingly it would seem that the beginning of the Millennium itself will fulfill the symbolism of the wedding supper (*gamos*). It is also significant that the use of the word “bride” in 19:7 (*gynē*, lit., “wife;”) implies that phase 2 of the wedding will have been completed and that all that remains is the feast itself. (The word commonly used for “bride” is *nymphē*; cf. John 3:29; Rev. 18:23; 21:2, 9; 22:17.) All this suggests that the wedding feast is an earthly feast, which also corresponds to the illustrations of weddings in the Bible (Matt. 22:1-14; 25:1-13), and thus will take place on earth at the beginning of the Millennium. The importance of the announcement and invitation to the wedding supper, repeated in Revelation 22:17, is seen in the angel’s remarks, **These are the true words of God.**

**19:10.** So impressive was the scene in heaven with the four great hallelujahs and the announcement of the coming wedding feast that John once again fell down to worship the angel, as he had done before (1:17).

Then, however, he was worshiping Christ, which was proper. But here the angel rebuked him, urging him to worship only God and not him since he was **a fellow servant** with John. The angel added, **For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy**, that is, the very nature or purpose of prophecy is to testify of Jesus Christ and to bring glory to Him. In the present Age one of the special functions of the Holy Spirit is to glorify Christ and to inform believers of “what is yet to come” (John 16:13). The tremendous revelation in the first 10 verses of Revelation 19 is a fitting introduction to what is about to be revealed, the second coming of Jesus Christ, the subject of the entire book (1:1).

## Major Theme Analysis

*(Scriptural Text from the New King James Version; cross-references from the NIV)*

### **Calls to Celebrate (Rev 19:1-4)**

1 After these things I heard a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, "Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honor and power belong to the Lord our God!  
2 For true and righteous are His judgments, because He has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication; and He has avenged on her the blood of His servants shed by her."  
3 Again they said, "Alleluia! Her smoke rises up forever and ever!"  
4 And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sat on the throne, saying, "Amen! Alleluia!"

### **Call to the multitude (1)**

*Called by God who chose us before the creation (Eph 1:4-5)*

4 For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love 5 he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will

*Called according to God's purpose (Rom 8:28-29)*

28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. 29 For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

*Called by grace (Rom 11:2-5)*

2 God did not reject his people, whom he foreknew. Don't you know what the Scripture says in the passage about Elijah — how he appealed to God against Israel: 3 "Lord, they have killed your prophets and torn down your altars; I am the only one left, and they are trying to kill me"? 4 And what was God's answer to him? "I have reserved for myself seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to Baal." 5 So too, at the present time there is a remnant chosen by grace.

*Called through the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit (2 Thess 2:13)*

13 But we ought always to thank God for you, brothers loved by the Lord, because from the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the truth.

### **Call to judgment (2-3)**

*Judgment of the unrighteous (2 Peter 2:7-10)*

7 and if he rescued Lot, a righteous man, who was distressed by the filthy lives of lawless men 8 (for that righteous man, living among them day after day, was tormented in his righteous soul by the lawless deeds he saw and heard)— 9 if this is so, then the Lord knows how to rescue godly men from trials and to hold the unrighteous for the day of judgment, while continuing their punishment. 10 This is especially true of those who follow the corrupt desire of the sinful nature and despise authority. Bold and arrogant, these men are not afraid to slander celestial beings;

*Judgment of God's stored up wrath (Rom 2:5)*

5 But because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed.

*Judgment of those who do not know or obey God (2 Thess 1:5-9)*

5 All this is evidence that God's judgment is right, and as a result you will be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which you are suffering. 6 God is just: He will pay back trouble to those who trouble you 7 and give relief to you who are troubled, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. 8 He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. 9 They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power

*Judgment for the ungodly (2 Peter 3:7)*

7 By the same word the present heavens and earth are reserved for fire, being kept for the day of judgment and destruction of ungodly men.

*Judgment for those who have oppressed others (Mal 3:5)*

5 "So I will come near to you for judgment. I will be quick to testify against sorcerers, adulterers and perjurers, against those who defraud laborers of their wages, who oppress the widows and the fatherless, and deprive aliens of justice, but do not fear me," says the Lord Almighty.

**Call to worship (4)**

*Worship with joy, gladness and thanksgiving (Ps 100:2-4)*

2 Worship the Lord with gladness; come before him with joyful songs. 3 Know that the Lord is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture. 4 Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name.

*Worship with reverence and awe (Heb 12:28)*

28 Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe,

*Worship during calamities (Job 1:18-20)*

18 While he was still speaking, yet another messenger came and said, "Your sons and daughters were feasting and drinking wine at the oldest brother's house, 19 when suddenly a mighty wind swept in from the desert and struck the four corners of the house. It collapsed on them and they are dead, and I am the only one who has escaped to tell you!" 20 At this, Job got up and tore his robe and shaved his head. Then he fell to the ground in worship

*Worship by rejoicing in God (Phil 4:4)*

4 Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!

**Reasons to Celebrate (Rev 19:5-8)**

5 Then a voice came from the throne, saying, "Praise our God, all you His servants and those who fear Him, both small and great!"

6 And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, "Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns!

7 Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready."

8 And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.

## **Because God is God (5)**

*God is God because there is no other besides Him (Deut 4:35)*

35 "To you it was shown that you might know that the Lord, He is God; there is no other besides Him.

*God is God because He is faithful eternally (Deut 7:9)*

9 "Know therefore that the Lord your God, He is God, the faithful God, who keeps His covenant and His lovingkindness to a thousandth generation with those who love Him and keep His commandments;

*God is God because He is the Rock of Ages (Ps 18:31)*

31 For who is God, but the Lord? And who is a rock, except our God,

*God is God because He guides us until death (Ps 48:14)*

14 For such is God, Our God forever and ever; He will guide us until death.

*God is God because He is the Holy One (Ps 68:5)*

5 A father of the fatherless and a judge for the widows, Is God in His holy habitation.

*God is God because He created us (Ps 100:3)*

3 Know that the Lord Himself is God; It is He who has made us, and not we ourselves; We are His people and the sheep of His pasture.

*God is God because He establishes us (2 Cor 1:21)*

21 Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and anointed us is God,

## **Because God is Omnipotent (6)**

*God is Omnipotent because all things are possible for God (Matt 19:26)*

26 Jesus looked at them and said, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."

*God is Omnipotent because He is majestic in power (Ex 15:6-8)*

6 "Your right hand, O Lord, was majestic in power. Your right hand, O Lord, shattered the enemy. 7 In the greatness of your majesty you threw down those who opposed you. You unleashed your burning anger; it consumed them like stubble. 8 By the blast of your nostrils the waters piled up. The surging waters stood firm like a wall; the deep waters congealed in the heart of the sea.

*God is Omnipotent because of His greatness and mighty deeds (Deut 3:24)*

24 "O Sovereign Lord, you have begun to show to your servant your greatness and your strong hand. For what god is there in heaven or on earth who can do the deeds and mighty works you do?

*God is Omnipotent because He brings to life and puts to death (Deut 32:39)*

39 "See now that I myself am He! There is no god besides me. I put to death and I bring to life, I have wounded and I will heal, and no one can deliver out of my hand.

*God is Omnipotent because He is great and powerful (1 Chron 29:11)*

11 Yours, O Lord, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendor, for everything in heaven and earth is yours. Yours, O Lord, is the kingdom; you are exalted as head over all.

*God is Omnipotent because He is Almighty (Ps 89:8)*

8 O Lord God Almighty, who is like you? You are mighty, O Lord, and your faithfulness surrounds you.

*God is Omnipotent because He is endued with power (Ps 89:13)*

13 Your arm is endued with power; your hand is strong, your right hand exalted.

*God is Omnipotent because He created and controls the universe (Ps 104:1-10)*

1 Praise the Lord, O my soul. O Lord my God, you are very great; you are clothed with splendor and majesty. 2 He wraps himself in light as with a garment; he stretches out the heavens like a tent 3 and lays the beams of his upper chambers on their waters. He makes the clouds his chariot and rides on the wings of the wind. 4 He makes winds his messengers, flames of fire his servants. 5 He set the earth on its foundations; it can never be moved. 6 You covered it with the deep as with a garment; the waters stood above the mountains. 7 But at your rebuke the waters fled, at the sound of your thunder they took to flight; 8 they flowed over the mountains, they went down into the valleys, to the place you assigned for them. 9 You set a boundary they cannot cross; never again will they cover the earth. 10 He makes springs pour water into the ravines; it flows between the mountains.

*God is Omnipotent because He can kill the body and the soul (Matt 10:28)*

28 Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell.

### **Because the Lamb is coming (7)**

*The Lamb is coming so be prepared (Matt 25:1-13)*

25:1 "At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. 2 Five of them were foolish and five were wise. 3 The foolish ones took their lamps but did not take any oil with them. 4 The wise, however, took oil in jars along with their lamps. 5 The bridegroom was a long time in coming, and they all became drowsy and fell asleep. 6 "At midnight the cry rang out: 'Here's the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!' 7 "Then all the virgins woke up and trimmed their lamps. 8 The foolish ones said to the wise, 'Give us some of your oil; our lamps are going out.' 9 "'No,' they replied, 'there may not be enough for both us and you. Instead, go to those who sell oil and buy some for yourselves.' 10 "But while they were on their way to buy the oil, the bridegroom arrived. The virgins who were ready went in with him to the wedding banquet. And the door was shut. 11 "Later the others also came. 'Sir! Sir!' they said. 'Open the door for us!' 12 "But he replied, 'I tell you the truth, I don't know you.' 13 "Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour.

*The Lamb is coming so let us rejoice (Ps 96:11-13)*

11 Let the heavens rejoice, let the earth be glad; let the sea resound, and all that is in it; 12 let the fields be jubilant, and everything in them. Then all the trees of the forest will sing for joy; 13 they will sing before the Lord, for he comes, he comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples in his truth.

*The Lamb is coming in all His glory (Matt 25:31)*

31 "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his throne in heavenly glory.

*The Lamb is coming to glorify His people (2 Thess 1:10)*

10 on the day he comes to be glorified in his holy people and to be marveled at among all those who have believed. This includes you, because you believed our testimony to you.

*The Lamb is coming so listen for Him (John 3:29)*

29 The bride belongs to the bridegroom. The friend who attends the bridegroom waits and listens for him, and is full of joy when he hears the bridegroom's voice. That joy is mine, and it is now complete.

*The Lamb is coming who took away the sins of the world (John 1:29)*

29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!

*The Lamb is coming to lead us to the springs of living water (Rev 7:17)*

17 For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of living water. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

*The Lamb is coming so that His people will follow Him wherever He goes because He purchased them (Rev 14:1-4)*

14:1 Then I looked, and there before me was the Lamb, standing on Mount Zion, and with him 144,000 who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads. 2 And I heard a sound from heaven like the roar of rushing waters and like a loud peal of thunder. The sound I heard was like that of harpists playing their harps. 3 And they sang a new song before the throne and before the four living creatures and the elders. No one could learn the song except the 144,000 who had been redeemed from the earth. 4 These are those who did not defile themselves with women, for they kept themselves pure. They follow the Lamb wherever he goes. They were purchased from among men and offered as firstfruits to God and the Lamb

### **Because God's Church will be ready (8)**

*God's Church will be ready because He keeps us blameless until that day (1 Cor 1:8)*

8 He will keep you strong to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

*God's Church will be ready because He cleansed us so we will be ready (Eph 5:25-28)*

Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her 26 to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, 27 and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless .

*God's Church will be ready because He sanctified us (1 Thess 5:23)*

23 May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

*God's Church will be ready because we belong to Him (1 Cor 15:21-23)*

21 For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. 22 For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive. 23 But each in his own turn: Christ, the firstfruits; then, when he comes, those who belong to him.

*God's Church will be ready because He is coming to bring salvation (Heb 9:26-28)*

27 Just as man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment, 28 so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people; and he will appear a second time, not to bear sin, but to bring salvation to those who are waiting for him.

*God's Church will be ready because we eagerly await our redemption (Rom 8:23)*

23 Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

*God's Church will be ready because our citizenship is in heaven (Phil 3:20-21)*

20 But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, 21 who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.

*God's Church will be ready because we have been predestined to be ready (Eph 1:11-14)*

11 In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, 12 in order that we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory. 13 And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, 14 who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession — to the praise of his glory.



# Conclusion and Other Thoughts

## Commentary Thoughts from Allen Carr

Revelation 19:1-9

### A MARRIAGE MADE IN HEAVEN

**Intro:** We all know that weddings can be spectacular. Thousands of dollars are spent trying to produce a perfect moment in time that will join a couple together in marital bliss. Typically, the church is decorated to the hilt; the bride is resplendent in her pure white wedding dress; and the groom stands nervously at the front of the church. It is a special moment in the lives of those two individuals and for the people who know and love them. Weddings, here on earth, are a special thing!

Sometimes, weddings can simply be a spectacle! I could tell you some horror stories about some of the weddings I have seen. And, who can forget the twisted tale of Jennifer Wilbanks, the runaway bride from Duluth, GA. She faked a kidnapping and was found in Albuquerque, NM. Thankfully, most weddings turn out better than that!

Everyone who has a wedding is looking for one thing: a marriage made in heaven! I just want you to know that while some marriages may have been made in heaven, they still have to be lived out here on earth. That tends to make most of them less than perfect. (Ill. Not ours dear!)

We have arrived at an exciting portion of the Bible. After the dark, dreary passages we have been enduring these verses gleam with the glory of Heaven. We are going to talk about a wedding today. Not just any wedding, but the marriage super of the Lamb. This wedding will be a time of great joy for all the redeemed people of God!

You see, for the church, the end times shape up like this: In the Rapture, we will be *Caught Up*; at the Judgment Seat of Christ, we will be *Cleaned Up*; and at the marriage supper of the Lamb, we will be *Cheered Up*! It is this event that we want to park on for a while today. I want to preach about *A Marriage Made In Heaven*.

If you are saved I want you to know that there are some blessed days ahead for you. If you are lost, I want you to know that you need to get ready to meet the Lord. He is coming and He is coming for His people. The rest will be left behind to endure the Tribulation and face the fires of Hell.

Let's take a journey to glory today and look in on our future. I want to point out the *blessings* contained in this passage as I try to preach on *A Marriage Made In Heaven*.

#### I. V. 1-6 THE EXALTATION OF THE SAVIOR

(Ill. Typically, a wedding is followed by celebration. The time before a wedding is usually filled with tremendous stress and many hours of preparation time. While it is a happy time for those involved, it is anything but a time of celebration. In Heaven, things are different! It seems from this passage that Heaven rejoices before and after the wedding. I like that! The cause of all this rejoicing is mentioned in **verse 7**. It seems that the marriage of the Lord Jesus is the catalyst for Heaven's anthems of praise. Those in Heaven lift their voices in four "*Hallelujah's*" that fill the heavens with praise.)

A. V. 1 The Hallelujah Of God's Salvation - Heaven praises the Lord for all He has done for them, (The cross, the blood, the empty grave, etc.) They are saved, they are in Heaven and they have a reason to shout!

(Ill. Years ago, in Wales, there lived a man by the name of Billy Bray. He was an old time shouter! Many of the people who heard him shout used to rebuke him for praising the Lord so loudly and so often. Whenever they would try to stop him, old Billy would respond by saying, "*I can't help it! God has been so good to me! With every step I take I remember His glory!*" He said, "*I put my right foot down and it says 'Hallelujah'. I put my left foot down and it says, 'Amen'.*" With that, Billy Bray would march off shouting "*Hallelujah*" and "*Amen*" with every step he took. Billy Bray knew that God deserved praise for the salvation He so freely gives!)

B. V. 2-3 The Hallelujah Of God's Sentence - The residents of Heaven praise the Lord for executing His judgment upon a lost, sinful and rebellious world! They know that His judgments are fair, they are right and they are perfect. Therefore, they praise His name!

(III. Lest we forget, we are serving a God Who has already won the war with evil! Thank God, the Lord, and as a result, His people come out on top of this thing! That is enough to shout about now!)

C. V. 4-5 **The Hallelujah Of God's Sovereignty** - If you take the time to look at the book of Revelation, these 24 elders who are mentioned show up about 6 times, (4:10; 5:8; 5:14; 7:11; 11:16; 19:4), and, every time they do, they are doing the same thing: falling on their faces and worshipping the Lord! Just to let you in on a secret, those 24 elders represent the redeemed of God. If you are saved, they picture YOU! Well, why are they praising the Lord so much? Because in Heaven, they are finally free from the limitations of the flesh and they can see God like He really is! They are no longer afraid or ashamed to worship Him, but now they are ready, willing and able to fall down before the Lamb of God and shout His praises!

(III. If it ever dawned on us the reality of all God is, of all He has done for us and of all that is ours as His children, there isn't a saved person in this world who wouldn't shout himself hoarse today! One day we will, but we won't get hoarse!)

D. V. 6 **The Hallelujah Of God's Supremacy** - Then, they praise the Lord for His reign. They glorify the Lord that, at last, He is honored, exalted and worshiped by all His creation! Thank God, there is coming a day when the Lord will have the glory and honor He deserves all the time. I look forward to being in that number when we stand around the throne and lift our "***Hallelujahs***" to the glory of God!

(III. I want to call your attention to **verse 4!** There are two heavenly words mentioned hear that you and I need to look at just for a moment. They are: "***Amen***" and "***Hallelujah***."

The word "***Amen***" is a word "***signifying agreement with and approval of the Word of God.***" When "***Amen***" appears at the beginning of a sentence, it means "***truly***". This word was used by Jesus on many occasions. When it is spoken concerning the words uttered by another, it means "***I agree***" or "***so be it***". "***Amen***" is said to be the most widely known word in the world!

The word "***Hallelujah***" is a Hebrew word meaning "***Praise the Lord***". It is used only one time in the New Testament and that was to give honor and glory to the Lamb. It is heaven's praise word!

I just want to say that if you and I intend to be in tune with Heaven, then we need to learn to use a little heavenly language. Therefore, learn to say "***Amen!***" and "***Hallelujah!***" It is all right to praise the Lord! If something blesses your heart, just try "***Amen!***" If the Lord is moving in your soul, just try "***Hallelujah!***" I will guarantee you one thing. It won't hurt you!

I realize that we live in a day when people frown on old time worship of the Lord. I mean, it's all right for people to sing The Hallelujah Chorus, but if they shout, they are considered nuts and fanatics! I just want you to know that old fashioned praising and glorifying God never goes out of style!)

## II. V. 7-8 **THE EXCITEMENT OF THE SUPPER**

(III. This marriage made in Heaven will be the consummation of some very important and powerful events.)

A. V. 7a **The Excitement Of A Completed Plan** - Notice the words "***is come***". These words imply a sense of relief that a long anticipated event has finally arrived. Nothing could be truer!

At this moment, God's plan for the ages is finally complete. Since man sinned in the Garden of Eden, God has been working to bring man back into fellowship with Him. This was accomplished when Jesus died on the cross for the sins of humanity. Now, all those who place their faith in Jesus are saved by the grace of God and brought nigh unto Him! While many may be saved, they are still not in the very presence of God in Heaven. On this day, that will change! This is the moment when Jesus gets to receive His Bride unto Himself. This will be the most special moment in all the history of creation! It will be the moment when the Lamb of God takes His Bride unto Himself!

(III. By the way, did you notice that at this wedding, the groom, and not the bride, is the center of attention? Down here, everything is on hold until they start playing the wedding march and the bride, the center of attention, makes her way down the aisle. In heaven, things are just a little different! It's not the bride, but it is the groom, the Lord Jesus Who is the center of attention! If that happened here, there would be some angry women! However, over there, it won't matter in the least! In fact, I think it will be the bride herself who gives Him the most attention!)

B. V. 7-8 **The Excitement Of A Completed Presentation** - It might help us to understand a little of the background for weddings of this type. In oriental weddings, there were typically three stages. There was the Betrothal Stage, the Presentation Stage and the Celebration Stage.

1. **The Betrothal Stage** - This was something like what we know in the west as an engagement. However, the major difference lies in the fact that this was a binding agreement! When a couple was betrothed, they were considered married! There was no getting out of it, except through a divorce or death! Even though the couple did not dwell together, or share the marriage bed, they were, nonetheless, married! Another difference was that the marriage partners and the marriages themselves were usually arranged by the parents of the bride and groom. You didn't even get to pick your mate! Love was not usually the basis for marriages. You didn't marry for love, you loved who you married! Many could learn a lesson from that today! (Ill. I can see great danger in that!)

The bride of Christ is in the midst of this betrothal period right now! We have been picked by the Heavenly Father and we are married to Jesus right now! We are just waiting to go to Him.

2. **The Presentation Stage** - When the time of the wedding arrived, the Father of the groom would send the bridegroom and his friends to the bride's home. They would get her and bring her back to the groom's house, which he had prepared for her, with great celebration and joy. There, gifts would be exchanged, the marriage would be consummated and the couple would begin their lives together.

That is what we are waiting on today! We are married, we are just waiting on the Bridegroom to come and call His bride to come meet Him. Friend, that day is coming! Are you ready to meet Him when He comes?

3. **The Festival Stage** - Following the wedding, the couple, their friends and their families would enter a time of celebration. We will deal with that thought in a little more depth in a few moments.

C. V. 7b-8 **The Excitement Of A Completed Preparation** - Notice that the text says "*his wife hath made herself ready.*" Typically, oriental brides prepared their own wedding garments. It could be as elaborate or as simple as they chose to make it. Usually, it consisted of two pieces. One, an inner garment called a tunic and two, the outer garment called a toga. It was the bride's responsibility to get herself ready for the wedding!

(Ill. You and I need to understand that we are to prepare ourselves for that day that is coming as well! You see, **verse 8** says that the Bride of Christ will be clothed in white linen and that this linen is the righteousness of the saints! I take that to imply that how simply or how elaborately we are dressed may depend on the kind of life we lived while we were in this world!

Let me illustrate. There are three kinds of righteousness that a person can have.

1. **Personal Righteousness** - This is the righteousness you can produce all by yourself. It is basically evil and no good at all can come from it - **Isa. 64:6**. In our own righteousness, we are literally dressed in rags before the Lord.

2. **Provided Righteousness** - This is the righteousness we are given when we trust the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior - **2 Cor. 5:21; Rom. 3:21-22**. This refers to that tunic, or inner garment. We have been provided with a spotless inner garment of righteousness!

3. **Practical Righteousness** - This is the righteousness we live out each day we are in this world. It refers to how we conduct ourselves. How well we submit to authority. And. How we use the opportunities, gifts, responsibilities and privileges we are given as children of God. This speaks of the outer garment, or the toga, that the world sees. It is pure speculation, but how well we are dressed at the Wedding may depend on how we live here! It may be that the wedding garments will be handed out at the Judgment Seat of Christ, **Matt. 22:1-12**, and that they will reflect how we lived life here below! It is something worth thinking about!)

(Ill. Whatever the scenario that is played out here, the fact remains that the bride has made the proper preparations and she is ready for the wedding! This means that the faith she place in Jesus was not misplaced. It means that all her trials and struggles are behind her. It means that she has trusted the Lord to save her and He has! She is home! She is loved! And, she is ready to enter into the joy of her Lord! What a day that will be!)

### III. V. 9-10 THE EXPECTATION OF THE SAINTS

(III. This wedding doesn't end with the couple coming together to live. But, this wedding will continue with a celebration like nothing this universe has ever seen! Let me just suggest a few brief thoughts!)

A. **The Guests At The Wedding Supper** - there will be guests at this heavenly wedding. Who? Well, it will be the Old Testament saints and the Tribulation saints. It will be a group made up of all Jews and Gentiles who were saved before Pentecost and after the Rapture! That will be quite an assembly!

B. **The Glory Of The Wedding Supper** - After an oriental wedding, there was always a celebration. The length and the opulence all depended on the wealth of the Bridegroom. When rich men married, their wedding celebrations might last up to 7 days!

The Lord Jesus is going to present His Bride with a celebration that will last 1,000 years! After the wedding, we will return with Him to this earth. He will put down His enemies and establish His throne on this earth. Then, He and His bride will reign together, during the millennium, for 1,000 years!

(III. Many of you can remember the 1981 wedding of Charles, The Prince of Wales and Lady Diana Spencer. It was a spectacle of enormous cost and billions of people watched that royal wedding. However, that wedding was doomed! Later, the world got to watch that same wedding collapse as publicly as it had begun.

Friend, I am trying to tell you about a real royal wedding! It is a wedding that will be attended by more people than any other in history. It is a wedding that will be more extravagant than any in history. It is a wedding that will produce a marriage that will last longer than any in history! It will be a real Royal Wedding!)

C. **The Groom At The Wedding Supper** - In a typical oriental wedding celebration, the groom would mingle with the guests to be sure that everyone had every need met.

Imagine what it will be to be in the presence of the Lord Jesus and have Him be occupied with seeing that our joy is full! Jesus will actually serve His people in that day, **Luke 12:37!** My, that is almost beyond the grasp of my mind!

**Conc:** I can imagine the society page in The New Jerusalem Times the next day! It might read something like this:

*“Yesterday, the Lamb of God took His bride unto Himself in a service presided over by the Heavenly Father. The bride was dressed in garments of glorious white and she spotless and without blemish. The Groom was clothed in glory as is His custom!*

*The angelic hosts lifted their voices together and praised the name of the Most High God, while the cherubim and seraphim hovered overhead crying ‘Holy, holy, holy!’*

*After the service, the couple left Heaven to return to the earth for a 1,000 year honeymoon. When they return, they plan to spend eternity together in the palaces of Heaven.”*

My friends, are you ready for that wedding in the sky? There will be a marriage made in Heaven someday, but only the redeemed are invited. Does that include you? If not it can! Please come to Jesus and be saved today.

For those who are going, consider for a moment how you are preparing for that day! What kind of garments will you be wearing when you stand there at that Royal Wedding? The time to prepare is today! The place to prepare is here! The person to prepare is you. Will you come and let the Lord work in your heart and life?

(Adapted from URL:[http://www.sermonnotebook.org/revelation/Revelation%2019\\_1-10.htm](http://www.sermonnotebook.org/revelation/Revelation%2019_1-10.htm))

### ***Concluding Thoughts from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary***

Weddings are designed to create memories and ingrain those memories in the minds of those who attend. Therefore, the wedding party's clothes are normally chosen with great care and coordinated for maximum effect. The wedding party may take hours to get ready for the ceremony. Because the ceremony will be remembered for years—for its beauty as well as its glitches—everyone goes to great lengths to ensure that everything is “perfect.” The wedding ceremony between the Lamb and his bride culminates in the rescue of the bride from the power of sin and evil. When Jesus, the Lamb, receives his bride, the church, it will be the wedding for all time! The groom has done his part by paying the price for sin on the cross. But the bride has her part to do as well, considering John's statement that she has “made herself ready” (Revelation 19:7). Jesus has provided us with “garments of salvation” and a “robe of his righteousness” (Isaiah 61:10), but we must put them on.

### ***Concluding Thoughts from the Echoes Commentary***

Hallelujah - John, the author of Revelation, repeatedly used the word hallelujah throughout his writings. The expression means, "praise the Lord." It is often about Jesus, the sacrificial Lamb. Everyone in heaven rejoices, giving glory and honor to the Savior of the world. Jesus' affections are exclusively for His bride, the Church.

The Defeat of the Beast - Earlier chapters in Revelation commented on the destruction of the beast (the enemy, Satan). A multitude in heaven made up of those saved out of the Great Tribulation, the 24 elders, and the four living creatures join in the celebration of the demise of the antichrist and the world system under his control. Finally, their doom falls upon their heads. The saints prayed for years for the destruction of God's enemies. Finally, it is over. They are no longer a threat.

The Final Wedding - The bride, Christ's Church, is married to Jesus, the groom. Usually, at a wedding, the bride takes center stage. She is the center of attention. But in this scenario, everyone—the entire audience in heaven—has their eyes on the groom. He received and will continue to receive the honor. In the end, Jesus' bride is the one dressed in the "righteous acts of the saints." Initially, Jesus' marriage partner appeared covered in wrinkles, blemishes, and spots. But the Lamb cleansed her and made her radiant. Presently the Church is engaged to Christ. The two parties love each other. Eventually, in heaven, God's children will see their heavenly Father and Jesus' face. At the appointed time, Jesus will return to earth, rescue His bride, remove any imperfections, and present her to His Father. We will rejoice with Him and reign with Him. What a great reason to praise Him!