

Judgment, Praise, and a Wedding!

Thursday, 10/20 at 7 + Sunday, 10/23 at 8:00 & 10:45

19th Sunday after Pentecost / 18th Sunday after Trinity – 2011

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ, so far in the book of Revelation, we have studied:

- Jesus' instruction to the churches – ♦commending them where they are doing well, ♦calling them to repent wherever necessary, and ♦promising eternal blessing to all who continue in Him to the very end!
- Awesome heavenly scenes – including ♦the Holy Trinity, ♦the four living creatures, ♦the twenty-four elders, and ♦those who have been washed clean by the precious blood of Jesus!
- The NT era from various angles – in the form of ♦7 seals, ♦7 trumpets, ♦7 visions, and ♦7 bowls, which included Christians being persecuted, but also ♦the end of the world, ♦God punishing the unrepentant, and ♦Christians finally winning in Christ!

Currently we are studying God's judgment and victory over the great harlot, even *all false representatives of God*, who are currently working together to deceive many people.

Today the forces of evil seem to be winning, *but their day of defeat will come!* Now, in the first half of chapter 19, *heaven rejoices and Christians are forever blessed!*

1. **Multitudes Praise the Lord:** In Rev. 18:20 the Church in heaven was called upon to rejoice over God's judgment of Babylon the great; here we see the actual rejoicing:
1 *After these things I heard something like a loud voice of*

a great multitude in heaven, saying, “Hallelujah! [The] Salvation and [the] glory and [the] power belong to our God; ² BECAUSE HIS JUDGMENTS ARE TRUE AND RIGHTEOUS; for He...judged the great harlot who was corrupting the earth with her [fornication], and HE... AVENGED THE BLOOD OF HIS ~~BOND-SERVANTS~~ [SLAVES] ~~ON HER~~ [FROM HER HAND].” ³ And a second time they said, “Hallelujah! [AND] HER SMOKE RISES UP FOREVER AND EVER.” // Notice how the saved in heaven acknowledge that God has ♦the salvation, ♦the glory, and ♦the power. All of us could easily have been deceived, lost, and condemned, *BUT GOD has saved us and will judge the great harlot*; therefore, even now, let us take no credit, *but give HIM all the glory for the gift of heaven!* Let’s know that all who – *by God’s grace* (Eph. 2:8-9; 2 Cor. 8:9) – embrace Christ as Savior will be **forever** blest, while those who choose to go *in any other way* will be **forever** tormented. (Remember, we are called to forgive [Mark 11:25; Eph. 4:32], vengeance belongs to God [Rom. 12:19].)

- a. ⁴ And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sits on the throne saying, “Amen. Hallelujah!” // From very near the throne of God – *from the elders and the creatures*, we hear words of *agreement* and *praise* (Amen and Hallelujah); *they agree that God’s judgments are true and righteous!*
- b. ⁵ And a voice came from the throne, saying, “Give praise to our God, all you His ~~bond-servants~~ [slaves], ~~you who fear~~ [the ones fearing] Him, the small and the great.” ⁶ [And] I heard *something* like the voice of a great multitude and like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, saying,

“Hallelujah! [Because] the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns.” // Finally, *if there remains any doubt about whether God should be praised for His judgment*, a voice comes “from the throne, saying, ‘Give praise to our God...’” Then, again, we hear a mighty “Hallelujah,” which means *praise the Lord!* May we also praise Him, *not only with our words*, but also with: →our thoughts, →our deeds, →our relationships, →our love for others, →our use of our spiritual gifts, →our work, →our money, and →our obedience to His Holy Word! *He is worthy!*

2. **The Marriage of the Lamb and the Church:** ⁷ Let us rejoice and [let us] be glad and [we will] give the glory to Him [the Lord, our God], [because] the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready.” // Since *the fall into sin* and *the promise of the Savior* (Genesis 3), the COMPLETE reunion between God and people has been anticipated. Here, in v. 7, we are drawing very near to that most blessed time; *in Revelation 21 we will read of the actual event!*
- a. ⁸ [And] It was given to her ~~to~~ [in order that] ~~clothe herself~~ [she might be clothed] in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. // *Let’s be careful here!*
- i. SHE is the Church; the Church is not a building, nor a worship service, nor a Christian denomination; instead, *the Church includes all who trust in JESUS ALONE AS SAVIOR!*
 - ii. Notice that her clothes were “given to her,” pointing to *God’s gift of salvation to us in Jesus (Rom. 6:23)*. Even if we speak of “righteous acts,”

they come only from our saving relationship with Jesus (Heb. 11:6; Romans 14:23); therefore, *all credit belongs to God!*

b. ⁹ [And] he said to me, “Write, ‘Blessed are those ~~who are~~ [having been] invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.’” And he said to me, “These are [the] true words of God.” // Again, those who are invited have not earned such an invitation; instead, it came as a blessing – as a gift from God, *an unmerited gift!* We are so very blessed in Jesus Christ!

3. **Worship Only God:** Imagine being the apostle John; in exile on Patmos because of His testimony of Jesus, *yet hearing and seeing super awesome things to come because of God’s love for him through Jesus!* Therefore, possibly overwhelmed with peace and joy, we see his reaction: ¹⁰ [And] I fell at [the angel’s] feet to worship him. But he said to me, “Do not do that; I am a fellow ~~servant~~ [slave] of yours and your brethren who hold the testimony of Jesus; worship God. [Because] the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.” // Holy angels are super awesome beings, *yet they are not to be worshiped!* Therefore, we should never worship any great person, or event, or thing; instead, *we should worship only GOD – the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit!* They work together to bless us now and always, **but our focus is on Jesus;** by the Spirit *we have been united to Jesus* and through Jesus *we know the Father!*

Conclusion: *Now, let us ever look forward to the great blessings yet to come through Jesus! Amen!*

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