

PART 13: THE RETURN OF THE KING

CHAPTER 19



MAIN IDEA

The Tribulation is ending and the scene now shifts from earth to heaven. The praise seen in heaven throughout Revelation reaches a crescendo in this chapter. The scene focuses on Jesus Christ who is about to completely remove all evil doers from the world. God will then be properly honored, Jesus Christ enthroned on earth, and the earth restored to its lost glory. Rejoicing in heaven spontaneously breaks out.

COMMENTS

Five Reasons for Rejoicing in Heaven (19:1-10)

It is a time for rejoicing and praising God for his great victory that is about to be culminated by the second coming of Jesus Christ, the King.¹

Reason 1: Salvation has come (19:1). The Hallelujah in verse 1 is the first of four Hallelujahs in the New Testament, all of which are found in this chapter. The word Hallelujah literally means “praise ye YAH (Yahweh).”² Heaven rejoices because salvation³ has come for God’s people, and the glory and power that belong to God have

¹ (Walvoord 616).

² (Mounce 316-317)

³ Salvation is God’s deliverance of a people from a threatening situation from which that group is unable to rescue itself. (BibleWorks, LLC, Version 10), Salvation, Eerdmans’ Bible Dictionary.

been put on display.⁴

Reason 2: God has judged the great prostitute (19:2). Heaven rejoices because God's judgments are "true and righteous," as evidenced by the destruction of the "great prostitute." This false religion was Satan and the Antichrist's system for seducing the unbelieving world to accept Satan's lies by worshipping the Antichrist rather than Jesus Christ.

Reason 3: The evil city of Babylon has been destroyed (19:3). The phrase "smoke from her goes up for ever and ever" is most likely referring to the judgment of Babylon which is consumed by fire (18:8). The language here is similar to that used of God's destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 19:28) and Edom (Isa. 34:10).⁵

Reason 4: The Lord God Almighty reigns supreme (19:4-6). Hallelujahs also rise up from other heavenly beings. The twenty-four elders (4:4) and the four living creatures (4:6) fall down and worship the living Sovereign God. There is no one greater than him.

Reason 5: The wedding supper of the Lamb (19:7-10). Next, John hears the rejoicing announcement in heaven about the wedding of Lamb (Jesus Christ), to his bride the church (cp: Eph. 5:25-27). To understand the nature of this event, Walvoord compares it to the traditional stages of the ancient near-East.⁶

Four Ancient Near East Marriage Stages	Four Possible Analogies
<p><u>The Betrothal.</u> This was the legal binding of a young boy and girl, usually arranged by their parents. The children (for they were often ten to thirteen years of age at this point) were legally married, however, there was no physical (sexual) contact for many years. It was a period when the two were given a chance to grow in their relationship.</p>	<p><u>Conversion (1 Cor. 12:27):</u> When a person accepts Christ, he becomes a member of the Body of Christ, the Church, also referred to as the Bride of Christ. During this time, the Christian does not physically see Christ but is given the opportunity to grow in his relationship with Christ.</p>
<p><u>The Marriage.</u> At the appropriate time, the young husband, accompanied with his friends, would go to the house of the bride for the marriage ceremony. After the marriage and the marriage feast, the groom would take the bride to his</p>	<p><u>The Rapture (1 Thess. 4:16-17).</u> When Christ comes for his bride (the Church) at the Rapture, we will physically see Him face to face for the first time. Christ will adorn the Church in white robes which</p>

⁴ (MacArthur, Because the Time is Near 282).

⁵ (MacArthur, Because the Time is Near 283).

⁶ (Walvoord 617-618).

home which was usually an "add-on" to his father's home (cf. John 14:2)	represent its righteousness and holiness made possible by His shed blood on the cross (Rev. 7:9).
<u>The Marriage Feast.</u> Friends of the bride and groom joined them in a happy, celebrative supper, rejoicing in the consummation of their marriage. The friends would give the bride and groom lavish gifts.	<u>Wedding supper of the Lamb (Rev. 19:9,17).</u> Christ will also have a marriage feast with His bride. Whether this marriage feast takes place in heaven or on earth is not clear. In this chapter, only an announcement of the feast is made, and therefore it is possible that the feast may take place after Christ's return to the earth. ⁷
<u>The Honeymoon.</u> Following the marriage feast there was usually an extended honeymoon period.	<u>The Millennium (Rev. 20:1-6).</u> The 1,000-year Millennial period when Christ will reign on earth with his bride, the church.

The Return of the King (19:11-18)

The description given here of King Jesus' second coming is in direct contrast to his first coming. Glorified Jesus Christ physically leaves heaven and comes to earth riding a white horse which symbolizes victory. It was customary for Roman generals after a conquest to parade on a white horse with their captive prisoners in the procession that followed.⁸ This is unlike his previous entry into Jerusalem on a donkey when his purpose was to die on the cross and not to conquer the wicked world.

King Jesus is greater than any description or expression the human mind can devise (NIV).

The "armies of heaven" include the church believers who were raptured prior to or during the Tribulation.⁹ They too share in Christ's victory and are riding white horses, dressed in fine linen, white and clean (19:8). They can do so not because of their own

⁷ (Walvoord 618).

⁸ (Walvoord 619).

⁹ (Pentecost 227).

deeds but because they have been made righteous in Christ Jesus (2 Cor. 5:21).

Details concerning Jesus Christ's second coming are also described in other passages:

- Jesus Christ will "touch down" at the Mount of Olives, the very place where he ascended into heaven after his resurrection (Acts 1:10-12).
- The Mount of Olives will split in an east-west direction when Jesus Christ returns. Waters will flow toward the Dead Sea, and toward the Mediterranean Sea. This chasm will create an escape route for the trapped Jews of Israel who are being pursued by the Antichrist and his armies (Zech. 14:3-9).
- The King's return will be seen by all nations. The sun and the moon will be darkened and stars will fall from the sky. Heavenly bodies will be shaken. The unsaved will mourn because they know that they are about to be judged by him (Matt. 24:26-31).

The Battle of Armageddon (19:19-21)



At the end of the Tribulation Jesus Christ and his army will confront the Antichrist, the False Prophet, and all their combined armies in the Valley of Megiddo for the greatest battle ever. Mankind's final, and most devastating war, will take place in the Valley of Megiddo, also called the Valley of Jehoshaphat¹⁰ (Joel 3:12-14).

The army of 200-million soldiers from the east will cross the dried-up Euphrates River and also converge on Israel.¹¹ The Antichrist will align his armies to defend his western empire against this eastern army. Can you imagine this battle as 200-million troops send wave after wave against the smaller but more technically advanced western armies? No doubt every possible weapon, including advanced nuclear weapons, will be unleashed in this last and most intense holocaust.

From Revelation 14:20 we saw that the blood from this final battle on earth will rise as high as a horse's bridle and will cover the length of 1,600 stadia (about 180 miles). There will be so many dead soldiers that hordes of birds will gorge themselves on the carcasses of both dead men and animals.

The Antichrist and False Prophet will be captured and thrown alive into the lake of fire forever. The power of the "sword out of his mouth," or Christ's spoken word alone, will be sufficient to kill all the followers of the Antichrist, and the False Prophet.

¹⁰ J. Dwight Pentecost writes, "Armageddon appears to be mainly the place where the troops will gather together from the four corners of the earth, and from Armageddon the battle will spread over the entire land of Palestine." (Pentecost 342).

¹¹ (Walvoord, Major Bible Prophecies: 37 Crucial Prophecies That Affect You Today 356).

Where is the USA? Even though America is not specifically addressed in the scriptures, it is very likely that it will have become completely dependent on the Antichrist and his powerful Ten-Nation Federation. The USA could possibly provide the Antichrist's western army with the firepower to withstand the onslaught of the eastern army.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What does the word "Hallelujah" mean?

2. Who are the enemies of Jesus in this chapter and what ultimately happens to them?

3. What important truths does this chapter offer us today?