

The Marriage

Revelation 19

Rejoicing in Heaven

After this I heard what seemed to be the loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, crying out,

“Hallelujah!
Salvation and glory and power belong to our God,
2 for his judgments are true and just;
for he has judged the great prostitute
who corrupted the earth with her immorality,
and has avenged on her the blood of his servants.”

3 Once more they cried out,

“Hallelujah!
The smoke from her goes up forever and ever.”

4 And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who was seated on the throne, saying, “Amen. Hallelujah!” 5 And from the throne came a voice saying,

“Praise our God,
all you his servants,
you who fear him,
small and great.”

The Marriage Supper of the Lamb

6 Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude, like the roar of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, crying out,

“Hallelujah!
For the Lord our God
the Almighty reigns.
7 Let us rejoice and exult
and give him the glory,
for the marriage of the Lamb has come,
and his Bride has made herself ready;
8 it was granted her to clothe herself
with fine linen, bright and pure”—

for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints.

9 And the angel said to me, “Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage

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supper of the Lamb.” And he said to me, “These are the true words of God.” 10 Then I fell down at his feet to worship him, but he said to me, “You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brothers who hold to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God.” For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

The Rider on a White Horse

11 Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! The one sitting on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. 12 His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems, and he has a name written that no one knows but himself. 13 He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God. 14 And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses. 15 From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. 16 On his robe and on his thigh he has a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords.

17 Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and with a loud voice he called to all the birds that fly directly overhead, “Come, gather for the great supper of God, 18 to eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and their riders, and the flesh of all men, both free and slave, both small and great.” 19 And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth with their armies gathered to make war against him who was sitting on the horse and against his army. 20 And the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet who in its presence had done the signs by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped its image. These two were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulfur. 21 And the rest were slain by the sword that came from the mouth of him who was sitting on the horse, and all the birds were gorged with their flesh.

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I hope you have seen throughout the study of Revelation the supernatural ability of John to tell a riveting story. We should not be surprised. After all, Revelation is written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

The truth apparent in Revelation is the same truth apparent throughout the other 65 books of the Bible: God rescues His people from His just condemnation.

God communicates the truth of the Gospel by giving us a compelling story in which we are active participants. There is no greater experience in life than worshipping God through his Word. This is a big part of what it means to participate in worship.

The appearance of the King resembles the entrance of the hero in many of our favorite movies.

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My personal favorite is the scene in Braveheart where William Wallace rides onto the battlefield, gives the “they may take our lives, but they will never take our freedom” speech, and then takes charge of the army.

These entrances are crucial to telling a great story because of the longing in every human heart to be swept up in a story of rescue.

- What is your favorite movie scene of the hero's entrance?
- Why do you think that scene is so compelling in consideration of the way Jesus appears here?

Revelation 19 can be summed up in one simple Hebrew expression, “Hallelujah.”

This is the only use of Hallelujah in the New Testament -- and it is used four times. The expression means, “Praise Yahweh.”

When God’s people receive our ultimate redemption, our response is to simply praise God for his rescue.

Question one of the Westminster Catechism sums it up like this: “What is the chief end of man? To glorify God and enjoy him forever.” This is precisely what is taking place in Revelation 19.

The imagery in Revelation 19:6-10 recounts one of the Bible's powerful recurring themes. It is the picture of marriage as the union of God and his people.

The church should make a big deal out of marriage (as Venture will in our next sermon series) because God makes a big deal of it.

Our marriages reflect what we believe about salvation. In the marriage feast (Rev. 19:6-10) we have rejoicing and exultation. It is the greatest celebration in the history of the universe. We (the church) are the bride in a wedding secured, bought, and paid for by the groom (Christ). Even our wedding garments (righteousness) have been given to us as a free gift.

In Matthew 25:1-13, Jesus spoke of his coming as the bridegroom. Our only job in life is to be prepared in patient expectation of the day of our wedding!

- Why do you think righteous deeds are portrayed as fine white linen wedding garments?
- Why are we commanded to clothe ourselves in light of the coming wedding?
- How do we clothe ourselves?

The remainder of Revelation 19 is a battle scene. This battle, however, does not typify what we usually see in the movies. It is all one-sided!

The important piece of this passage is the depth to which it goes to give us the true identity of Christ.

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It's interesting to note that the bowl judgements are what compelled the kings of the earth to gather together to oppose Christ. What seemed like the victory of Satan turns out to be the victory of God's judgement because he was simply gathering the kings together for their flesh to be feasted upon by the birds.

- What can we learn about Jesus from this passage?
- Does this identity reflect the way Jesus is treated in the church?
- Does this identity reflect what people typically think about Jesus in the world?
- Do you think people will be surprised at the slaughter?
- Why do you think the sharp sword comes from Jesus' mouth?
- Do you comprehend how powerful is the Word of God?
- How do we celebrate our rescue without celebrating the awful fate of a world that is being judged?