

## 19. The Appearance of Heaven's King

Revelation 19:1-21

YouTube Link: <https://youtu.be/Ywqyur6ZyAI>

Before I came to Christ, sometime in my early twenties, I had a dream, vision, or vivid picture in my mind—call it what you will—but it was of Christ coming in the clouds of Heaven with His angels. In the dream or vision, I began to try to find a cave or a hole where I might hide from the coming of the Lord Jesus to execute judgment on those who were His enemies. The dream or vision had a powerful effect on me, waking me up to eternal things and putting me on the path to get my life right with God. My prayer is that this chapter of Revelation might do the same for each of you reading it.

In this chapter, we finally come to the most beautiful part of our study of the Book of Revelation. We turn our attention to the Second Coming of Jesus as Lord and King. To give a quick recap of earlier chapters, we saw seven bowls of wrath being poured out in chapters fifteen and sixteen. God judged the nations of the Earth, with specific mention of Babylon the Great. (Revelation 16:19). In chapters 17 and 18, John the Apostle, the writer of the Book of Revelation, gives us a description of this world system's worldwide toxicity and, specifically, the destruction of a city where demonic powers have a stronghold on the Earth. Chapter nineteen tells us about God's people (The Bride of Christ) who have been prepared for His coming. After witnessing such future evil, darkness, and destruction, John's heart indeed must have been lifted to finally behold such a different picture: one of a great multitude in Heaven and the throne room of God (v. 1).

### Rejoicing in Heaven

<sup>1</sup>After this I heard a sound like the roar of a great multitude in Heaven, shouting: "Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God! <sup>2</sup>For His judgments are true and just. He has judged the great prostitute who corrupted the Earth with her immorality. He has avenged the blood of His servants that was poured out by her hand." <sup>3</sup>And a second time they called out: "Hallelujah! Her smoke rises forever and ever." <sup>4</sup>And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sits on the throne, saying: "Amen, Hallelujah!" <sup>5</sup>Then a voice came from the throne, saying: "Praise our God, all you who serve Him, and those who fear Him, small and great alike!" (Revelation 19:1-5).

In verse one, we are taken back to the scene before the throne of God, where we see a great multitude (Revelation 7:9-17.) The multitude of saints and angels cannot contain their jubilation at the destruction of the world system, typified by the great prostitute (v. 2). They watch the collapse of the world system's cities and see the smoke rising from the evil city, Babylon the Great, that will burn forever (v. 3). Why will God's people rejoice? Because God's justice will prevail over the city that has corrupted the Earth with her deception, immorality, and sorcery (v. 2). God will avenge the martyrdom of the servants of God that takes place during the Great Tribulation spoken of in Revelation 6:9-11.

In contrast to the lament coming from those on Earth who mourn Babylon's fall, we witness a triumphant shout of joy arising from the saints of God. Four hallelujahs ring out (vs. 1, 3, 4, 6). The word *Hallelujah* is a Greek translation of the Hebrew words *Hallel* and *Yahweh*, which means

“Praise the Lord.” The word *Hallelujah* is used only four times in the New Testament, and all four are found in this chapter. The Hebrew word *Hallel* is used in Psalms 113-118. The Jewish people sang these Psalms as they went up to the heights of Jerusalem and the Temple for the yearly Passover celebration. They praised God for His glorious deliverance of the nation in the Book of Exodus from Egypt's slavery (Psalms 111:1; 112:1; 113:1;).

In the Book of Revelation, we read of a second deliverance from slavery. The first was Pharaoh and Egypt, but in the end-times, God will deliver His people again from slavery to Antichrist, and this time, it will not only be Jews but also lovers of God among the Gentiles (Jeremiah 16:14-15). Messiah will come to save and deliver all who have placed their trust in Him. They praise God for His salvation, His glorious appearance in light, His power to destroy the enemy, and His bringing to nothing the earthly kingdoms that are in opposition to the Lord at this time.

### **The Marriage of the Lamb**

*6And I heard a sound like the roar of a great multitude, like the rushing of many waters, and like a mighty rumbling of thunder, crying out: “Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns. 7Let us rejoice and be glad and give Him the glory. For the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His bride has made herself ready. 8She was given clothing of fine linen, bright and pure.” For the fine linen she wears is the righteous acts of the saints. 9Then the angel told me to write, “Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.” And he said to me, “These are the true words of God.” 10So I fell at his feet to worship him. But he told me, “Do not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brothers who rely on the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy” (Revelation 19:6-10).*

John hears a great multitude so loud that it sounds like a vast waterfall—a rushing of many waters. We should all try to imagine what John is describing, and of course, if you have entrusted your life to Christ, there will come a day when you will hear this noise and see the incredible spectacle before you. One more Hallelujah rises to God at the awareness that the evil age has ended and that the Messiah of Israel sits on the throne of His father, David (v. 6). There will be heavenly rejoicing because the marriage of the Lamb has come. What glorious fine linen robes we will be wearing on that day! (v. 9). Believers in Christ will be changed into His image and show forth His glory (2 Corinthians 3:18), *“For he has clothed me with garments of salvation and arrayed me in a robe of his righteousness, as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels” (Isaiah 61:10).* Fine bright, pure linen was the priests' clothing who ministered before the altar; they were the only ones who could draw close to God.

*When they enter the gates of the inner court, they are to wear linen clothes; they must not wear any woolen garment while ministering at the gates of the inner court or inside the Temple (Ezekiel 44:17).*

Nothing of wool was to be worn by the priesthood because wool brings forth sweat. No man shall draw near to God by the sweat of his brow, i.e., the work done under the curse placed on the Earth: *“By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground” (Genesis 3:19).* The fine linen clothes, bright and pure given TO her (v. 8), speaks of believers in Messiah becoming the new priesthood. God has made His bride to be kings and priests: *“You have made*

them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth” (Revelation 5:10).

What words or phrases describing God’s purpose and plan for redeemed humanity stand out to you from verses 6-10?

### **The Parable of the Ten Virgins**

In the Parable of the Ten Virgins (Matthew 25:1-13), Jesus typified the marriage supper of the Lamb as a bridegroom coming for His bride and having ten virgins or bridesmaids whose task was to light the way into the marriage supper. At the darkest point, at midnight (Matthew 25:6), when sleep was at its deepest, the suddenness of the call awakened the ten virgins with a start. They all heard the herald calling out that the Bridegroom was coming. Quickly, they arose to meet him. Those who were wise and prepared put more of their oil in the lamps from the jars they had brought (Matthew 25:5). They then trimmed their lamps and went to meet the Bridegroom. The biblical truth of the matter, though, is that we, the servants of God, will be married to Him when He comes.

Can there be anything more glorious than to look into His beautiful face as He pronounces His everlasting love to us? We shall be with Him forever. No one shall speak a word against us on that day, and there will be no one to accuse us before the Father because all sin has been forgiven and is under Jesus’ blood. Divine justice was fully met at the cross due to Christ’s substitutionary death for us—One died for all who put their trust in Him. The five wise virgins were those who were prepared and ready. They were the ones who went *with Him* into the wedding banquet: “**The virgins who were ready went in with him to the wedding banquet. And the door was shut**” (Matthew 25:10).

The marriage celebration entrance will not be as witnesses to His marriage; we are to be *married to Him*. These festivities are not a wedding on Earth; this is a wedding *in Heaven*. This celebration will be many times more glorious than any wedding you have ever seen, and I remind you again, if you are a believer in Christ, you are the bride! You will one day hear Jesus speak His eternal vows of marriage over you. At this moment, on this side of Heaven, we are only espoused, engaged, or promised in marriage, as Paul explained to the Corinthian church: “**I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy. I promised you to one husband, to Christ, so that I might present you as a pure virgin to him**” (2 Corinthians 11:2), but when the Bridegroom comes, then will be the wedding.

The next time you go to a wedding on Earth, you can view it as a dim foreshadowing of that day when He comes for you as The Heavenly Bridegroom. They “**who were ready went in with Him to the wedding banquet.**” It is said of the Son of God, “**He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death, mourning or pain, for the old order of things has passed away**” (Revelation 21:4). When Christ comes, there will be an immediate entrance to the wedding supper or banquet. We are not listening to fables as we think about that moment when we hear the call. Do not entertain any fallacies of purgatory to go through first. No, it will be instantaneous upon His coming. You shall be ushered in with great joy if you are a believer. Your face shall light up as you behold His coming, for John tells us a remarkable truth.

Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when He appears, we shall be like Him because we will see Him as He is (1 John 3:2).

At this stage in our study, there is a critical thought we cannot pass by. It is that God will shut the door upon Christ's arrival. Some say that there is still a chance to become a Christian after Christ comes for His church, but in this writer's opinion, that is a deception. That teaching would mean that people could put off their repentance until after the church was caught up to Christ. The Parable of the Ten Virgins teaches that this is not the case, for we read that the door will be shut after the five wise virgins enter the marriage celebration (Matthew 25:10-11). The door's closure symbolizes that our experience as believers of this new order of things is eternal. What God has been doing in your life has been preparation for that day, but when that day comes, those who have trusted Christ will be full of joy to know that they are shut in with Christ.

None of us are naturally ready for the joys of Heaven; no person can ever be good enough. There must be a receiving of the robes of righteousness that only King Jesus has provided, i.e., the life of God into your spirit. There must be a change within each of us. Jesus said, "You must be born again," or born from above (John 3:3). The Greek word translated *again* in that sentence also means "from above." When we sincerely repent (turnaround from our sin toward obedience to the Lord Jesus) and receive the gift of God, i.e., eternal life in Christ, from that point on, our names are written in the Lamb's book of life (Revelation 21:27). As much as it is painful for those shut out, it is pure joy for those of us who, by God's grace, are inside the door at the wedding.

Notice that their entrance into the wedding was most intimate, for it was *with Him*. What a glorious thought that Jesus the Bridegroom will take us by the hand and lead us into the presence of His Father and the marriage celebration. At the coming of Christ, we will be united with Him forever in a covenant of marriage.

### 3 Things Before the Coming of Christ

J. Oswald Sanders, in his book *Spiritual Discipleship*, lists three things that are involved in the timing of Christ's return. These three things will happen:

- 1) *The Bride must be ready in some degree (v. 7)...* It should be noted that this is something that the Bride does in anticipation of the return of the Bridegroom. The apostle John says the same thing in other words in his first letter. "Everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as He is pure." (1 John 3:3). Whatever else these verses may mean, a purging and purifying of the Church is in view.
- 2) *The Bride must be complete before He comes...* The Apostle John's description of the multitude assembled in Heaven is the picture of a group that is fully representative of humanity. (The great multitude that no one could count was "from every nation, tribe, people, and language (Revelation 7:9).
- 3) *The Church must have finished its task...* This is more nearly the case than ever before in history. For the first time, Christianity is known worldwide. Matthew 24:14 tells us: "And

“this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.”<sup>1</sup>

The Bride of Christ will be given clothing that is fine linen, bright, and pure, so what does it mean that she has made herself ready? (Revelation 19:7-8).

John is struck with awe at the presence of the angel, and out of a natural inclination before supernatural beings, he falls to worship the angel (v. 9), but the angel quickly rebukes him (Tells him off) for his action. We are to worship the Lord only, for “there is only one mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus” (1 Timothy 2:5).

What does it mean that the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy? (Revelation 19:10).

In the Old Testament, the spirit of the world system was especially antagonistic towards the prophets who spoke to men on behalf of God. Prophets were often persecuted and sometimes killed because they dared to confront the evil they saw, e.g., think of John the Baptist or Elijah. When a person testifies about the Lord Jesus and tells men how they might receive deliverance and salvation, there will be opposition by the spirit of the age that will sometimes result in persecution or even martyrdom. Thus, the testimony of Jesus is like moving under an anointing of the spirit of prophecy. It is the Spirit of Christ engaging the spirit that is in the world.

### **The Rider on the White Horse**

<sup>11</sup>Then I saw Heaven standing open, and there before me was a white horse. And its Rider is called Faithful and True. With righteousness, He judges and wages war. <sup>12</sup>He has eyes like blazing fire, and many royal crowns on His head. He has a name written on Him that only He Himself knows. <sup>13</sup>He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and His name is The Word of God. <sup>14</sup>The armies of Heaven, dressed in fine linen, white and pure, follow Him on white horses. <sup>15</sup>And from His mouth proceeds a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and He will rule them with an iron scepter. He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. <sup>16</sup>And He has a name written on His robe and on His thigh:

KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS (Revelation 19:11-16).

I want to draw your attention to the way John describes the rider of this horse, the One Who is called Faithful and True.

What stands out to you about this vision of the Lord? What name or description makes it clear that John is writing about the Lord Jesus?

At some point in time known only to the Lord, but before the wrath of God is poured out, amid the darkness of that day, people will suddenly see a great light in the heavens, and the Lord Jesus will

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<sup>1</sup> J. Oswald Sanders, *Spiritual Discipleship, Principles of Following Christ for Every Believer*. Published by Moody Bible Institute Publishers, 1990-1994, Pgs 172-175.

come riding a white horse with the armies of Heaven. Matthew also writes of Jesus' words about that time:

<sup>30</sup>"Then will appear the sign of the Son of Man in Heaven. And then all the peoples of the Earth will mourn when they see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of Heaven, with power and great glory.<sup>31</sup>And he will send his angels with a loud trumpet call, and they will gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of the heavens to the other (Matthew 24:30-31).

John describes Him as having "eyes like blazing fire, and many crowns on His head" (Revelation 19:12). John is giving us symbolic language. When John provides us with this picture of Christ's coming on a white horse, we remember that this is the second time a rider is spoken of as riding on a white horse. We can contrast this picture to the first time when a rider on a white horse is mentioned in Revelation 6:2, one who we believe to be referring to the Antichrist. At the opening of the first seal, the white horse came forth carrying the "false one," the Antichrist. He set out to conquer the world, and in his wake was famine and war.

However, now we see the One who is called Faithful and True. This time, it is Christ, the King of Glory, and on His head, there are many crowns. Before, we read that the Antichrist had a victor's laurel wreath, which symbolized his earthly conquests. However, our Christ, the True victor, wears many crowns, for He is the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. His eyes will melt all hearts, and the many crowns upon His head symbolize His rulership of all nations and tongues.

John calls Him Faithful and True. Living and walking with somebody for three years helps you get to know a person's character. John writes that He is faithful because all of what He said and did on Earth confirmed to John that Jesus was and is the Messiah of Israel. Secondly, John calls Him True (v. 11). We can trust Him to fulfill all that He has spoken. We are not reading about a hope fest; instead, we are reading about prophecy and reality that will come entirely true.

There will be two classes of beings with Christ at His appearance.

1). First, Christ will come with His angels:

This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from Heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. <sup>8</sup>He will punish those who do not know God and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. <sup>9</sup>They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his might <sup>10</sup>on the day he comes to be glorified in his holy people and to be marveled at among all those who have believed (2 Thessalonians 1:7-10).

Again, at His coming, there will be no second chance at salvation. Those who refused the offer of a pardon through Christ's substitutionary sacrifice will be shut out from the presence of the Lord (v. 9). In Paul's letter above, he describes Christ as being marveled at by all who love Him. Marveling at Him at that time will be quite an understatement.

2). Secondly, Jesus will also bring with Him all those who have fallen asleep or died in Christ.

For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him (1 Thessalonians 4:14).

What a sight it will be to see Christ coming in glory and power. Then will take place the resurrection, also called the regeneration, along with rewards given: “Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, **in the regeneration** when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel” (Matthew 19:28).

### **The Defeat of the Beast and False Prophet**

In the last passage of Revelation 19, we get another view of the final battle of humankind:

<sup>17</sup>Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and he cried out in a loud voice to all the birds flying overhead, “Come, gather together for the great supper of God, <sup>18</sup>so that you may eat the flesh of kings and commanders and mighty men, of horses and riders, of everyone slave and free, small and great.” <sup>19</sup>Then I saw the beast and the kings of the Earth with their armies assembled to wage war against the One seated on the horse, and against His army. <sup>20</sup>But the beast was captured along with the false prophet, who on its behalf had performed signs deceiving those who had the mark of the beast and worshiped its image. Both the beast and the false prophet were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur. <sup>21</sup>And the rest were killed with the sword that proceeded from the mouth of the One seated on the horse. And all the birds gorged themselves on their flesh (Revelation 19:17-21).

Again, we see a picture of the last battle as evil spirits will draw armies to fight on Israel's heights against the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. What we read here is the end of the age with the victory over the enemy. Hallelujah!

I want to leave you with some more thoughts from J. Oswald Sanders about the Church's tasks in the last days. He asks an interesting question: *“Is the task of worldwide evangelism possible in this generation? No previous generation has achieved it, so should ours be the exception?”*

He also asks this question in connection to the previous one: *“Why has God reserved most of the great inventions for this generation, if not to facilitate and accelerate the spread of the gospel?”* Think of the advantages we now enjoy compared to all previous generations. Here are 3 to consider:

- 1) We have almost total mobility. With the advent of the airplane, the world has become a global village.
- 2) Radio, television, and other electronic media have brought the whole world within range of the gospel.
- 3) Improved linguistic techniques have significantly reduced the drudgery of language study.

Even with all of the modern inventions of our day, the one thing we need the most to make the Gospel known is a move of the Spirit of God. In 1727, there was a revival in a small colony at a place named Herrnhut in Germany. Count Nikolaus Zinzendorf founded the colony. There were only three hundred members, and yet, when the Count died, on a day when foreign missionaries were almost unheard of, the Moravian church sent out 296 missionaries to all of Europe, North and South America, Africa, Greenland, and the West Indies. In twenty years, they sent out more missionaries than the evangelical churches had sent out in two centuries up to that time. For one hundred years, the Moravian church conducted an unbroken chain of prayer, day and night.<sup>2</sup>

What an excellent example of a body of people watching and waiting for the Lord, busy with kingdom priorities. They, indeed, were like the wise virgins who were waiting for the Bridegroom. I believe that true Revival is God-initiated and God-breathed, but we can undoubtedly sow the seeds and make the ground ready for God to move in power. Let us be like the wise virgins who anticipated the coming of their Bridegroom and had their lamps filled with oil.

Prayer: We thank You, Father, that in Your greatness, You love each of us and call us by name. We will not wait to shout "Hallelujah!" for You have already conquered sin and death! We acknowledge You as our King. Please help us and strengthen us so that we may send out your great invitation to the supper of the Lamb while the door is still open. Amen!

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid