

Revelation - Chapter Nineteen

Chapter summary – Chapters 19 and 20 of Revelation blend together these events which bring history to an appropriate conclusion. These events vindicate the saints in history. They put an end to the struggle between good and evil in history. They show the triumph of the church glorious in history. They return Christ to the theater of history where He will manifest Himself, the Lord of history. In the unfolding drama of redemption's plan we have now come to the grand finale of history.¹

Millennial Views:

Three schools of thought have made an impact on the question of the millennium. Postmillennialism teaches that during the church age the triumphs of the gospel will gradually eliminate evil and thus usher in a golden age of history. Postmillennialism says that the church will bring in the kingdom. It believes that the goal of prophecy is a triumph in history, but it does not take seriously the predictions that society will continue to degenerate all during the course of the church age.

Amillennialism denies the existence of a millennium. It believes that things will become worse and worse as we move toward the end of the age, but it provides for no triumph of good over evil in history. According to this view, Christ will come and in a crisis of divine judgment will end history without ever providing for a better world in history.

Premillennialism is the only school of thought which fully appreciates the increasing moral degeneracy of society and the apostasy of religion but at the same time anticipates a reversal of the present order and an eventual divine victory in history. The premillennialist believes that Christ will return to the earth to destroy His enemies and to introduce a society in which spiritual principles will prevail. He looks for a time in history when evil will be largely banished, when sickness and sadness will be conquered, when politics will be pure, and when the problems of ecology, population, and war will all be solved. Premillennialism is the only school of thought which does justice to history.²

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IV. the vision of the Final Days, (Chs. 6-22)

F. THE EVENTS FOLLOWING THE DESTRUCTION OF BABYLON - (19:1-22:5)

1. The celebration over Babylon's destruction and the bride's reception, (19:1-10) - "THE GREATEST HALLELUJAH CHORUS!"

NOTES:

COMMENTARY:

¹ Benson, *Revelation: The Grand Finale of History*, pp. 82
² Benson, *Revelation: The Grand Finale of History*, pp. 82, 83

 **INTERPRETATION:**

- ¹ **After these things** (the ruin of the Roman Prince's and the Antichrist's empire), **I heard a loud voice** (the roar), **of a great** (mega), **multitude in heaven** (possibly both the angels and saints in heaven combined), **saying, "Alleluia,** (Praise the Lord)! (No one can contest now, that true), **Salvation and glory and honor and power belong** (only), **to the Lord our God!**
- ² **"For** (the reason being, God has proven that), **true** (genuine and certain), **and righteous** (pure, exempt of anything evil or shaded), **are His judgments** (pronouncements, decisions) **because He has judged the great harlot** (exactly as He said He would), **who corrupted the earth** (the human race), **with her fornication** (idolatry); **and He has avenged on her** (upon the Roman Prince's and the Antichrist's evil empire), **the blood of His servants** (God's children), **shed by her,** (martyred by the Roman Prince and the Antichrist)."
- ³ **Again they said "Alleluia,** (Praise the Lord)! **Her smoke rises up forever and ever,** (look at the evil empire burn)!"³
- ⁴ **And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures** (surrounding the throne of the universe), **fell down and worshiped God who sat on the throne, saying, "Amen! Alleluia,** (Praise the Lord [cp. Rev. 7:11])!"
- ⁵ **Then a** (solitary), **voice came from the throne, saying** (to continue to), **"Praise our God, all you His servants** (His redeemed), **and those who fear Him** (those who reverence and obey Him), **both small and great,** (those of every class and condition)!"
- ⁶ **And I heard,**(as the celebration continued), **as it were, the voice of a great multitude** (again), **as the sound of many waters** (a great roar), **and as the sound of mighty thunders** (booming out its proclamation), **saying, "Alleluia,** (Praise the Lord)! **For** (the reason being), **the Lord God Omnipotent** (Almighty, all powerful), **reigns,** (and not the Roman Prince and the Antichrist)!

F **APPLICATION:**

God has been reigning on the throne of heaven, but He is now about to conquer the thrones of earth as well as the kingdom of Satan and "the beast." In His sovereignty, He has permitted evil men and evil angels to do their worst...⁴ but now the time has come for God's alone to endure.

When you are facing some trial, focus on God's promises during the time of your trial, and know that down the road—the victory will come.

³ John Benson makes an interesting comment on this verse. He says, "It appears from Isaiah 34:9, 10 that the brimstone and burning pitch will be a vivid and constant reminder throughout the millennial reign that God is a consuming fire and that He visits sinners with terrible consequences." Benson, *Revelation: The Grand Finale of History*, p. 83

⁴ Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, Logos Library System.

2) Rejoicing over the Lamb's wedding, (7-8)

NOTES:

INTERPRETATION:

⁷ “**Let us** (the redeemed of Christ), **be glad and rejoice and give Him glory** (magnify, extol, praise the Lord), **for** (because the Lord has proven Himself sovereign and defeated the devil), **the** (time for the), **marriage of the Lamb** (Jesus Christ), **has come, and His wife** (the New Testament church age believers), **has made herself ready**,” (she makes preparations for the wedding of Christ and herself, having been purged of all her worthless and unrighteous acts, thoughts and attitudes that were burnt up at the judgment seat of Christ [Ecc. 12:13, 14; 1 Cor. 3:11-17; 2 Cor. 5:9-11]).

⁸ **And** (at this time), **to her** (Christ's bride, NT believers), **it was granted** (by Christ), **to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is** (representative of), **the righteous acts of the saints**, (the gold, silver, precious stones that remained after all the wood, hay and stubble was consumed at the judgment seat of Christ. This garment is in honor of how NT believers honored Christ in respect of all that He did for them, [1 Cor. 3:9-17; Rom. 12:1, 2; Eph. 2:10]).

F APPLICATION:

- The bride, of course, is the church (2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:22–33); and Jesus Christ, the Lamb, is the Bridegroom (John 3:29). At a wedding, it is customary to focus attention on the bride; but in this case, it is the *Bridegroom* who receives the honor! “Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to Him.”

“What did the bride wear?” is the usual question asked after a wedding. The Lamb's bride is dressed “in the righteous acts of the saints” (literal translation). When the bride arrived in heaven at the Judgment Seat of Christ, she was not at all beautiful (in fact, she was covered with spots, wrinkles, and blemishes according to Paul in Eph. 5:27); but now she is radiant in her glory. She has “made herself ready” for the public ceremony...

At the Judgment Seat of Christ, her works will be judged and all her spots and blemishes removed. This being completed, the church will be ready to return to earth with her Bridegroom at the close of the Tribulation to reign with Him in glory (see Luke 13:29; Matt. 8:11).⁵

- It is interesting to note some of the differences between the bride of Christ and the prostitute.

The Bride	The prostitute
<input type="checkbox"/> Dressed in white, the color of purity	<input type="checkbox"/> Dressed in purple and scarlet, the color of prominence
<input type="checkbox"/> Abides in the company of God, and the redeemed	<input type="checkbox"/> Abides in the company of demons and unredeemed
<input type="checkbox"/> Purposes to worship God	<input type="checkbox"/> Purposes to be worshiped
<input type="checkbox"/> Celebrated through her service of righteous acts	<input type="checkbox"/> Celebrated through her acquirement of gold & power

⁵Wiersbe, Warren W., *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, Logos Library System.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Is married and faithful □ Is desirable to be around □ Receives a reward in the end □ Enjoys an eternity of intense brilliance, love, joy, peace, contentment, excitement, companionship, adventure, etc.... | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ Is unmarried and lustful □ Is feared and avoided □ Receives judgment in the end □ Enjoys an eternity of intense darkness, abhorrence, suffering, terror, remorse, gloom, loneliness, apathy, etc. |
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3) Thanksgiving for being able to attend the wedding feast, (9)

📖 INTERPRETATION:

⁹ **Then** (after the Christ's bride is washed and adorned), **he said to me, "Write: 'Blessed** (happy), **are those** (guests—OT saints and probably the tribulation saints as well), **who are called** (invited), **to** (attend), **the marriage supper of the Lamb**, (to the church age saints)!⁶ **And he said to me, "These are the**

⁶ 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**. (Walvoord, and Zuck, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, Logos Library System.)

John Benson makes some comments on who he believes these guests are:

- ◆ Christ is the Groom (John 3:29), and the church (the New Testament believers up to the rapture), is the bride, (2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:22-33).
- ◆ John the Baptist is the friend of the Bridegroom, (e.g., best man—[Jn. 3:28, 29])
- ◆ The virgins waiting for the Bridegroom, (Matt. 25:1-11), are the saved Jewish survivors of the tribulation period.
- ◆ The servants waiting for the Bridegroom (Lk. 12:35ff), are the saved Gentile survivors of the tribulation period.
- ◆ The called (Rev. 19:9), are probably the OT saints and the tribulation martyrs. (John Benson, comments he made in his *Daniel & Revelation* class in 1988)

true sayings of God, (these things will come to pass; God is the Almighty; He will conquer over all evil; all of this will happen just as He says).”

4) Understanding as to who gets preeminence, (10)

INTERPRETATION:

¹⁰ **And** (John, was so caught up in the excitement that), **I fell at his** (the angels), **feet to worship him. But he said to me, “See that you do not do that,** (Don’t worship me!) **I am your fellow servant and of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus,** (angels and believers alike are all created to obediently serve the Almighty [Col. 1:13-17]). **Worship God** (alone)! **For the testimony of Jesus** (what He taught, who He is, what He’s done, and what He will yet do), **is the spirit of prophecy,** (is the central theme and truth of the Scriptures, and thus every word of it shall come to pass).”

F APPLICATION:

He (Christ) has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins. He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence. (Colossians 1:13-18)

2. The second coming of Christ, (19:11-16) - "*HERE COMES THE JUDGE!*"

INTERPRETATION:

Christ’s Arrival

¹¹ **Now** (after the bride of Christ makes herself ready for the wedding and the guests are invited), **I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse** (appeared—white representing a victorious champion).

Christ’s Attributes

And He (the champion), **who sat on him was called Faithful and True** (the One who is completely trustworthy, perfectly accurate, and thus always reliable [cp., Rev. 3:14]), **and in righteousness** (uprightness, faultlessly [Rev. 15:3; 16:5, 7; 19:2]), **He** (the Bridegroom, the Lamb, Jesus Christ), **judges** (passes sentence upon men), **and makes war,** (against all evil and evildoers).

¹² **His eyes were like a flame of fire** (symbolizing His penetrating scrutiny or fierce judgment), **and on His head were many crowns**, (indicating His universal reign or all kings and kingdoms, [1 Tim. 6:15]). **He** (also), **had a name written that no one knew except Himself**, (suggesting that Christ is so great that some aspects of Him are past finding out).

Christ's Apparel

¹³ **He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood** (depicting the bloodshed that is about to take place at His coming [v. 15]), **and His name is called The Word of God**, (who is the Creator, light and life of the world! [Jn. 1:1-3]).

Christ's Armies

¹⁴ **And the armies in heaven** (probably both saints and unfallen angels), **clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him** (Christ, their champion leader), **on white horses** (as well).

Christ's Actions

¹⁵ **Now** (Christ has the only weapon that is used against this enemy and), **out of His mouth goes a sharp sword** (symbolizing the power of His spoken Word, [Eph. 6:17; Heb. 4:12]), **that with it He should strike the** (Gentile), **nations**, (meaning that in the same way Christ exercised His Word in creating the world and exercises it in sustaining it [Col. 1:16-18], He will also exercise it to bring the armies of the world to their terrible and swift end [*this signifies the end of the Times of the Gentiles, that began when the Babylonians took Israel into exile*]). **And He Himself** (in person), **will rule them** (the nations thereafter), **with a rod of iron**, (a royal scepter signifying a rigorous rule of absolute government [Psa. 2:7-9; Rev. 2:27]). **He Himself treads** (or crushes the unbelieving nations in), **the winepress of the fierceness and wrath** (the boiling indignation and fury), **of Almighty God.**⁷

Christ's Title

¹⁶ **And** (when Christ subdues the nations of the earth, all will see that), **He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS**, (emphasizing that Christ is the absolute, incontestable sovereign Ruler and Master of all).

⁷ This is the second coming of Christ when He descends upon the Mount of Olives to take back the rule of the earth, (Acts 1:9-11). It is not the rapture of the church when Christ returns in the clouds to catch up His bride in the air, (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18). The church or bride of Christ, is already with Christ and has made herself ready for the marriage supper. She comes with Christ from heaven to the earth. Those that are left upon the earth after Christ's return are the saints that will survive the tribulation and enter the millennium of Christ's earthly reign.

3. The gathering of the nations to Armageddon, (19:17, 18) -
"HERE COMES THE JUDGMENT!"

NOTES:

 INTERPRETATION:

The Banquet of the Judged

- ¹⁷ **Then I saw an angel standing in the** (brilliance of the), **sun;** **and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the** (flesh eating), **birds that fly in the midst of heaven** (in the sky), **“Come and gather together for the supper of the great God,** (not the marriage supper of the Lamb, but the supper of judgment and carnage that God will supply),
- ¹⁸ **“that you may eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them, and the flesh of all people, free and slave, both small and great,”** (the small and the great alike).

F APPLICATION:

God’s judgment is only a respecter of the integrity of a person, not the position of a person. Whether you are small or great, you have no need to worry about God’s judgment if you are walking according to the integrity of God’s Word. If you are not, you have everything to worry about.

4. The battle of Armageddon, (19:17, 18)

 INTERPRETATION:

The Banishment of the Judged

- ¹⁹ **And** (in the midst of the carnage), **I saw the beast** (the beast of the sea, the Roman Prince as he exercises the political and military power [Rev. 13:1-10]), **the kings of the earth** (the Roman Princes allies), **and their armies, gathered together** (at Megiddo [Rev. 16:16]), **to make war against Him** (Christ), **who sat on the horse and against His army,** (the saints and probably the unfallen angels as well [Rev. 14:14-20]).
- ²⁰ **Then the beast** (the Roman Prince), **was captured** (taken into custody by God), **and with him the false prophet** (the Jewish Antichrist [Rev. 13:11-18]), **who worked signs** (supernatural works), **in his presence, by which he deceived** (seduced and led astray), **those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image** (Rev. 13:12, 13). **These two** (who will be captured alive in the battle), **were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone,** (into eternal damnation and affliction).

²¹ **And** (after this), **the rest** (of the unbelievers), **were killed with the sword** (the power and authority of the words), **which proceeded from the mouth of Him** (Jesus Christ), **who sat on the horse**, (when He returned to claim the title to the earth back [Rev. 5:5-7]). **And** (as the angel had promised), **all the birds were filled with their flesh**, (at the feast God had prepared for them).⁸

⁸ In obedience to an angelic summons, the flesh-eating birds will gather to gorge themselves on the carcasses of rebels against Christ (verses 17,18)... The "supper" will be especially "great" because at this time the Roman prince with all of his European armies will have assembled near Megiddo (verse 19). In addition, the kings of the earth (the Oriental kings) will have arrived on the scene with all of their armies-presumably after they have destroyed Babylon. East will meet West in a final showdown to see who will rule the planet. The sign of the coming of the Son of man will convince the hostile armies to bury their differences and combine their forces in opposition against the invaders from space. Their endeavors will be futile.

The Roman prince will become the first victim of Christ's rage (verse 20). With the leader gone, the armies will be thrown into mass confusion. Next on the list of casualties is the false prophet (the antichrist). But neither of these demon-possessed men will meet their end by being slain. Christ will cast them alive into everlasting Hell. They will become the very first occupants of the Lake of Fire. The surviving kings and their armies will then come to sudden death before the withering blast of Christ's wrath (verse 21).

Benson, *Revelation: The Grand Finale of History*, p. 85

 **INTERPRETATION:**

 **COMMENTARY:**

F APPLICATION: