

*We exist to make disciples who delight in God and make Him known
by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

The Return of Jesus
Revelation 19

Keywords: Revelation, End Times, Second Coming, Armageddon, False Prophet, Anti-Christ

PowerPoint Presentation included: None

SermonAudio Blurb: In Revelation 19 the armies of this age are gathered against our Lord. The result is a resounding victory for Jesus, trampling His enemies under His feet. And we now are able to begin to see the glorious end in sight where all things are made new. Enemies are now being banished and our Lord is taking up His scepter and throne.

I. Introduction.

- A. Read Revelation 19.
- B. This is where we pick back up with the chronology of the book.
 - 1. What follows is the working out of the 7th bowl judgment.
 - 2. Chapters 17-18 was a detailed explanation of the presence, work and destruction of Babylon, both as a system of false religion and as a city and dwelling place of the Anti-christ.
- C. The next two chapters are the most contested among exegetes which is unfortunate. Too often harsh and unhelpful statements are made creating division where division is not good or right.
 - 1. I have no plans to deal in-depth with these controversies though I will make passing comments.
 - 2. If you have a question regarding these chapters it would be a great opportunity for you to post a question via our app.
 - 3. Remember once again that there are certain things related to the end times that all Christians are to agree about.
 - a. Jesus is going to bodily return.
 - b. We will all be bodily resurrected
 - c. There will be a final judgment of all humanity.
 - d. There is a literal heaven and hell.

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D. Outline:

- 1.
2. There are two women in vss 1-10 which require your attention as well.
 - a. The harlot and the wife/bride.
 - b. One is destroyed and one is prepared in purity.
 - c. The end of the harlot's reign signals the time for the bride's eternal enjoyment of the same.
 - d. What a gorgeous image for my own eyes as a father of daughters.
3. Outline:
 - a. The Hallelujah Choruses (19:1-6).
 - b. The Announcement of the Marriage Supper of the Lamb (19:7-10).
 - c. The Announcement of the Advent of Christ (19:11-16).
 - d. The Announcement of Armageddon (19:17-21).

II. The Hallelujah Choruses (19:1-6)

- A. The term hallelujah is simply a transliteration of the Greek word and the Hebrew. It means praise YHWH.
 1. They are the response to the angel's call for heaven to rejoice (cf. 18:20). This ties the chapter back into the final points of ch 18.
 2. The four songs in 1-5 look backward to the judgment on Babylon.
 3. The song in 6-8 is future looking to the marriage of the Lamb.
- B. What do you think when you consider the word 'hallelujah?'
 1. Usually we think of it when something fun, pleasant or beneficial happens to us.
 2. We hear of someone receiving news that the cancer is gone from their body and we say it. And it is not wrong to do so, but it is not the way we see it used normally in the Scripture.

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3. It is actually a technical word and is often used in connection with God punishing the wicked. And so too here.
4. I think it is something worth you thinking about over this week or so. It is something I hope the Community Groups will discuss. Why is it that we tend to say “praise the Lord” when we consider good things we receive but not when we contemplate hell, judgment and wrath?

C. Vs 2

1. Here we see the first of two symbolic women in this chapter. We are very familiar with this one as she was the focus of all of chapter 17.
 - a. Note the basis of the joy in vs 2— God has judged the harlot and avenged the blood of the saints.
 - b. Again we are able to see how a Christian can bless one who persecutes him. Because unless that person later repents and follows Jesus Christ they shall receive the fulness of God’s avenging wrath.
 - c. And this is something we should anticipate and treasure in our hearts. Few things suck joy and purpose from a person than being mistreated and thinking that there will never be recompense or relief.
2. But also take note of what is the basis for His vengeance.
 - a. His judgments are true and righteous.
 - b. Really this is the reason for the praise. The phrase “his judgments are true and righteous” explain how his judgments are made.
 - c. The point is that when God judges there is no partiality, pity or personal agenda. Even more important, there is not a bit of falsehood in it.
 - d. They are fully in accord to the facts. And they are just in how they are implemented. He is not like man where He is moved back and forth by selfish motives and bribes.
 - e. Let us fear and let us find our hope in the gospel.
 - f. This is how the Apostle Peter speaks of God’s judgment: “For it is time for judgment to begin with the household of God; and

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if it begins with us first, what will be the outcome for those who do not obey the gospel of God? And if it is with difficulty that the righteous is saved, what will become of the godless man and the sinner? Therefore, let those also who suffer according to the will of God entrust their souls to a faithful Creator in doing what is right” (1 Peter 4:17-19).

- D. A glimpse into a heavenly worship service (3-10).
1. Again, we see the joyous expression of praise. Hallelujah!
 2. Why? Because God has fully judged this system and place of great wickedness.
 3. What you read here is something like an antiphonal worship event.
 - a. One side is calling out the judgment of God.
 - b. The other side is then affirming it with a solid “Amen” and responding with praise.
 4. Vs 5 brings the call to praise but notice why they are called to give praise in vss 6-7
 - a. In vs 6 it is because the Lord reigns. This is not a general statement here of God’s reign. It is a statement in light of the judgment of Babylon.
 - b. In vs 7 it is because a marriage is about to take place and the bride has made herself ready.
 5. Who is the Bride?
 - a. Various views on this. Some say it is Israel and others will say it is all believers across time.
 - b. However the third option is best here. It is the New Testament Church. The bible speaks of the Church as the bride of Christ and this is what is described here.
 - c. Some details to note:
 - (1) In vs 7 it speaks of the marriage of the Lamb. This can only be Jesus Christ.

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- (2) Also in vs 7 it speaks of Christ's bride being ready.
 - (a) Notice how the Church prepares for this day? It is not a passive stance but one that is active and focused. She made herself ready.
 - (b) Vs 8 tells us this is done through righteous deeds. This is seen in many passages in the New Testament which speak of Church growing in a faithful life and conduct.
 - (c) "Beloved, now we are children of God, and it has not appeared as yet what we shall be. We know that, when He appears, we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him just as He is. And everyone who has this hope fixed on Him purifies himself, just as He is pure" (1 John 3:2-3).
 - (d) Though we do this in individual ways we never do this alone. It is a group/corporate work where we labor to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord.
 - (3) In vs 9 we hear then of a separate group invited to the marriage supper. This is not speaking of the Church, for it is the bride. It is speaking to the other believers prior to the Church and also after the Church.
- E. John's response (vs 10).
- 1. Overwhelmed by this message. Everything he has been witnessing has been primarily horrible, though hopeful. Now the announcement has been made.
 - 2. The message is given with such certainty that John is overwhelmed and falls down to worship. All that he has suffered for and all that he has taught and reminded the church is finally seen.
 - 3. Note the response:
 - a. No matter how well intentioned, it is wrong and the angel immediately corrects it, in fact forbids it.

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- b. Why?
 - (1) Because the messenger is just that, a messenger, or servant.
 - (2) This is the point of this whole section—worship God!
 - (3) It is God’s message so the mind and emotions are to be directed toward God.
 - (4) Listen, we live right now in the seductive lies of Babylon. What is the antidote?
 - (a) It won’t be rituals.
 - (b) It won’t be obedience.
 - (c) It won’t be theology.
 - (d) It won’t be experiences.
 - (e) It will be a heart and body given to worshiping God.
 - (f) This is not saying that these other things don’t matter. They do. But they are not the end or goal. They are to move us to proper, true worship of God as God.
 - (g) When the church gathers together on Sunday, in what way are they rebelling?
 - i) On Sundays the church gathers in rebellion against the lies of this world. We reassert together that God alone is worthy of our time, our money and our praise.
 - ii) We are to be unabashedly raising our fist before Satan, declaring him and his lies as destroyed through Christ.
 - (h) We corporately and individually choose to worship God or other things everyday. As we are

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commanded, whatever we do, whether we eat or
drink, do all to the glory of God.

(i) Choose to worship God.

c. Notice the difference between the holy angel and the beast, who
welcomes worship.

(1) One is worthy as a servant.

(2) And one is worthy of God's eternal wrath.

III. The Announcement of the Advent of Christ (19:11-16).

A. Having just tried to worship the angel, John is now given a vision of whom he
is to worship.

B. The image is one of a man of war, which fits well with the Old Testament
prophets.

Then the LORD will go forth and fight against those nations, as when He fights on a day of
battle. 4 And in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which is in front of
Jerusalem on the east; and the Mount of Olives will be split in its middle from east to west
by a very large valley, so that half of the mountain will move toward the north and the other
half toward the south. (Zechariah 14:3-4).

C. What is happening here is the climax of what the New Testament points to as
every believer's hope.

1. Matthew 13:41-42 speaks of the return of Jesus Christ to judge all
wickedness and cast all who are sinners into hell.

2. Romans 2:5 reminds us that those who refuse to turn from sin to faith
and obedience to Christ are merely storing up God's wrath which will
be revealed at Jesus' coming.

3. It also ties back to Revelation 1:7.

4. He is "faithful and true."

a. Faithful speaks to the fact that He keeps His promises.

(1) They are not something He will fail to accomplish.

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- (2) He promises that he is coming again. He promises He will save His people from their sin. He promises to make all things new.
- (3) And here He is.
 - b. True speaks to the fact that truth is bound up in Him. And as judge He will do it in accordance to truth. No one will be able to make a case that they were treated wrongly.
- 5. Note what He has come to do.
 - a. Judge and wage war
 - b. Consider the contrast between now and when Jesus first came, full of grace and truth.
 - c. Parents make sure you teach your children the biblical revelation of Jesus.
- D. The description of His return (11-16).
 - 1. This is filled with symbolic imagery that require only a little explanation.
 - 2. The white horse is likely to symbolize purity and victory. In Jesus' first coming He entered Jerusalem on a donkey. Now He returns on this mighty horse.
 - 3. He has flaming eyes which pictures the power of His gaze that misses nothing and is not deceived in any way. It anticipates the coming judgment.
 - 4. The many diadems or crowns speaks to the idea that He is the King of kings. The kingdom of this age is now passing away in a moment and the true King is present.
 - 5. He has a name that no one knows but Him.
 - a. Some try to make this name be the Church but it requires a lot of reworking of some Old Testament passages to do this. It is simply another name that is His to know and for us to not know at this time.

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- b. It is good to understand that in the Old Testament to know one's name is to have control to some degree over him. And this is likely the point. It is not that He merely wishes to withhold the name; rather, it is a way to show His sovereignty. He will only reveal Himself to whom He wishes.
- 6. In vs 13 we see His robe covered with blood. Whose?
 - a. His blood, from the Cross.
 - b. The blood of the saints who have suffered for His name.
 - c. The blood of His enemies.
 - d. This last one is probably what is in view due to the close connection (note vs 15) with Isaiah 63:2-6

"Why is Your apparel red, And Your garments like the one who treads in the wine press? I have trodden the wine trough alone, And from the peoples there was no man with Me. I also trod them in My anger, And trampled them in My wrath; And their lifeblood is sprinkled on My garments, And I stained all My raiment. For the day of vengeance was in My heart, And My year of redemption has come. And I looked, and there was no one to help, And I was astonished and there was no one to uphold; So My own arm brought salvation to Me; And My wrath upheld Me. And I trod down the peoples in My anger, And made them drunk in My wrath, And I poured out their lifeblood on the earth."

- 7. He is the Word of God.
 - a. This connects us all the way back to the beginning. Or how John wrote it in John 1:1, "In the beginning . . ."
 - b. It speaks of the reality that Jesus is the one who executes and reveals God's purposes and judgments.
- E. The armies with Jesus. Who are they?
 - 1. Some see them as angels. This is because passages like Matthew 13:41 make it clear that the angels will be present in overcoming Christ's enemies (see also 2 Thessalonians 1:7).
 - 2. Others as believers. In 17:14 shows that believers shall be there at His revelation. Colossians 3:4 also tells us that when Jesus returns we will

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be changed and revealed in glory as well. Not to mention, the description of their clothing fits this view as well (cf. Vs 8).

3. The answer is actually both. The revealing of Jesus Christ at this point in time is simply a stunning, awe-inspiring event. He comes to judge and to establish His kingdom.
 - a. His holy angels who had to sit quietly by as they watched Him beaten, nailed to a cross and killed are now by His side in all their power and glory.
 - b. But alongside shall be the Church.
 - (1) This is where I believe what is commonly called the rapture will occur. Simply means the catching up by Christ of all who are believers. Whether you like that term or not, every orthodox believer is going to affirm it.
 - (2) There are many passages that speak to it but 1 Corinthians 15:51-52 is one worth hearing:

“Behold, I tell you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed.”

IV. The Announcement of Armageddon (19:17-21).

- A. The call for the birds to come to a feast.
 1. Matthew 24:27-28 speaks to this sobering event. As certain as the coming and going of lightening, so is the reality that vultures shall be present in this day of slaughter.
 2. Consider the picture and try to grasp the horror of that day for His enemies.
- B. John is given this incredible view of the massive army arrayed before the Lord (19).
 1. The beast/Antichrist is in the lead with the kings behind him and then the armies.

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2. And their purpose is made clear. It is war. Babylon is in ruins. The economy of the world is destroyed. Here, then, is the last ditch effort to try to regain the power they had.
- C. But what happens is almost anti-climatic that it is embarrassing to witness (20-21).
1. No details are given. No mighty clash of mighty men.
 2. Instead the Antichrist and False Prophet are seized and thrown in alive to the lake of fire.
 - a. Here is where we see the comparison of the incredible strength of the Antichrist as described in earlier chapters contrasted with the infinite sovereign power of the true Christ.
 - b. This is not the abyss. It is not hades, which is where unbelievers are temporarily held until hell/lake of fire is “open for business.”
 - c. It is also known as “hell” or “Gehenna” elsewhere in the bible.
 - d. And for you who do not believe that the Antichrist or False Prophet are actual persons please consider that they are cast into this place “alive.”
 - (1) Many who reject that we should interpret these figures as literal will say that they represent the Roman empire and the imperial cult of John’s day.
 - (2) But how can those entities be case into a literal place, hell, alive when they are ideas not people?
 3. And then Jesus Christ turns His attention to the massive army and through His speech alone apparently.
 - a. Again this is the grand humiliation of every arrogant person who raises their voice against Him. The vastness of this army is daunting to anyone who would witness it.
 - b. But with simply the power of His mouth, they are destroyed, slaughtered and the birds begin their feast.

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V. Conclusion.

- A. What are we to make of this?
- B. For the non-Christian.
 - 1. I can only say once again that whatever you think you will do on that day you are confronted with the person and reality of Jesus Christ it will not be a time of joy but of mourning.
 - 2. You and your life hangs but by a thread held there by God's patience and purpose. And when He is done, you are done.
 - 3. 17 lives were destroyed in that school shooting the other day. I am confident that not one of them went to school with the thought that their life would end in a few hours. But it did. Eternity is their reality now.
- C. For the Christian.
 - 1. The bible says that the doctrine of last things are to bring comfort.
 - 2. "For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus" (Titus 2:11-13).
 - 3. "For our citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly wait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ; who will transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself" (Philippians 3:20-21).
 - 4. Therefore, let us

VI. Benediction/Doxology.

Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing! ...To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and might forever and ever!

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Small Group Questions

- Why is it that we tend to say “praise the Lord” when we consider good things we receive but not when we contemplate hell, judgment and wrath? Think about this and try to come up with various ideas on it.
- How does what we are learning in these last few sermons help us understand passages like Matthew 6. Read it slowly and as it is read make comments on how the return of Jesus Christ and the destruction of the wicked intersect with this chapter.