

REVELATION

VISIONS OF VICTORY

JOSH FRANKLIN, PHD

Here Comes the Bridegroom!

Revelation 19:1-21 (NKJV) – Bible passage [my explanatory notes]

1) The Rejoicing of Heaven (Rev. 19:1-6)

¹ After these things I heard a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, “Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honor and power belong to the Lord our God! [“Alleluia” combines the Hebrew words “halal” (praise) and “Yah” (Yahweh). It is a shout of praise celebrating God’s righteous victory.]

² For true and righteous are His judgments, because He has judged the great harlot [religious Babylon or “Satan’s church”] who corrupted the earth with her fornication; and He has avenged on her the blood of His servants shed by her.” [God’s justice has avenged His persecuted and martyred.]

³ Again they said, “Alleluia! Her smoke rises up forever and ever!” [The eternally-rising smoke shows that rebellion against God has been permanently destroyed.]

⁴ And the twenty-four elders [God’s redeemed] and the four living creatures [God’s angels] fell down and worshiped God who sat on the throne, saying, “Amen! Alleluia!” [Heaven unites in worship, affirming God’s justice and might.]

⁵ Then a voice came from the throne, saying, “Praise our God, all you His servants and those who fear Him, both small and great!” [This points to no class distinction in heaven - all will worship the Lord.]

⁶ And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunders, saying, “Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns! [This is marking the beginning of Christ’s millennial kingdom. “Omnipotent” expresses how God is in control, using all things to fulfill His ultimate purposes.]

2) The Radiance of the Bride (Rev. 19:7-10)

⁷ Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.” [The marriage symbolizes the Church’s union with Christ, fulfilling God’s plan to be with His people.]

In biblical times a marriage involved two major events, the betrothal and the wedding. These were normally separated by a period of time during which the two individuals were considered husband and wife and as such were under the obligations of faithfulness. The wedding began with a procession to the bride’s house, which was followed by a return to the house of the groom for the marriage feast. By analogy, the church, espoused to Christ by faith, now awaits the parousia when the heavenly groom will come for his bride and return to heaven for the marriage feast that lasts throughout eternity. John is not saying that the eternal festivities have in fact arrived, but is speaking proleptically of that period of blessedness which follows the millennium (fall of Babylon declared in 14:8 but didn’t occur until 17/18).¹

⁸ And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. [The fine linen reflects the good works of believers while they are on earth. James Merritt said, “Living a holy life on earth contributes to the bride’s beauty in eternity.”]

⁹ Then he [an angel – see v.10] said to me, “Write: ‘Blessed are those who are called [invited] to the marriage supper of the Lamb!’” [Those invited include Old Testament saints, tribulation martyrs, and all redeemed believers.] And he said to me, “These are the true sayings of God.” [You can trust this promise from God. He is “true” or “reliable.”]

¹ Robert Mounce, Revelation, The New International Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1997), 347.

¹⁰ And I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, "See that you do not do that! I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! *[Overwhelmed by the angel's message John mistakenly worships the messenger instead of God Alone.]* For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." *[Jesus is the heart of all prophecy. All Scripture ultimately points to Jesus and His redemptive work.]*

3) The **Return** of the King (**Rev. 19:11-16**)

¹¹ Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. *[Christ's second coming is depicted as a visible and victorious event. He is called "Faithful and True" because He keeps His promises and has righteous judgment.]*

¹² His eyes were like a flame of fire *[symbolizing His omniscient, penetrating judgment]*, and on His head were many crowns *["diadems" signifying Christ's ultimate authority over all rulers.]*. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. *[This is an expression symbolizing how His greatness is beyond our full comprehension.]*

¹³ He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood *[This phrase either symbolizes His enemies' defeat or His own sacrificial blood.]*, and His name is called The Word of God *[a name affirming His divinity – see John 1:1, 14].*

¹⁴ And the armies in heaven *[including redeemed believers]*, clothed in fine linen, white and clean *[they are pure because of Christ.]*, followed Him on white horses. *[They watch Christ's victory and do not need to fight.]*

¹⁵ Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations *[The sword from His mouth symbolizes His spoken Word, which judges and defeats the nations.]*. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. *[The "rod of iron" denotes His absolute authority, and the winepress represents His wrath on sinners.]*

¹⁶ And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS

4) The **Ruin** of the Wicked (**Rev. 19:17-21**)

¹⁷ Then I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in the midst of heaven, "Come and gather together for **the supper of the great God,**

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." *[Armageddon, or the total defeat of God's enemies, is gruesome, as birds are called to devour the bodies of those judged by Christ.]*

¹⁹ And I saw the beast *[the Antichrist]*, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army.

²⁰ Then the beast *[the Antichrist]* was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone. *[The beast and the false prophet receive their final judgment, demonstrating the ultimate justice of God.]*

²¹ And the rest *[these are followers of the Antichrist]* were killed with the sword which proceeded from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse. And all the birds were filled with their flesh. *[the spoken Word of God defeats them.]*

Applications for Today:

- 1) **Rejoice in Christ's Ultimate Victory** - Jesus wins the Battle of Armageddon with a single word from His mouth (Revelation 19:15). His power is unmatched, and we are there as spectators, not fighters. As Christians, we are engaging in a "fixed fight," knowing the outcome is secure. Rejoice in being on the winning side and live with confidence in His triumph! (see 1 Corinthians 15:57)
- 2) **Keep Your Focus on the Bridegroom, Not the Bride** - At earthly weddings, the bride is often the center of attention, while the groom may be overlooked. However, at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb, all eyes will be on the Bridegroom—Jesus Christ (Revelation 19:7). In our daily lives, we should follow this example by taking our eyes off of ourselves and focusing on glorifying Jesus. Let your life reflect His greatness, and ensure that everything you do points to Him, not to yourself. (see John 3:30)
- 3) **Respond to the Invitation to the Wedding** - When planning an event, RSVPs help us know who will attend. Similarly, God has sent out a personal invitation to everyone (Rev. 19:9), paid for by the blood of Jesus. **Have you said "Yes, I'm coming?"** Don't delay - respond today by accepting His gift of salvation.