

**Real Reality
Now That Babylon Has Fallen
Revelation 19:1 – 10**

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We ended chapter 18 with laments and woes over the destruction of the world capital, Babylon. But the laments and woes were all self-centered and reflected loss not of the city, but of financial gain for those who were mourning the loss. This was the mourning of the earth dwellers, those who have placed their trust in the things of the world.

For the citizen of heaven though, there is a different reaction.

Revelation 18:20–24

“Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you saints and apostles and prophets, because God has pronounced judgment for you against her.” Then a strong angel took up a stone like a great millstone and threw it into the sea, saying, “So will Babylon, the great city, be thrown down with violence, and will not be found any longer. And the sound of harpists and musicians and flute-players and trumpeters will not be heard in you any longer; and no craftsman of any craft will be found in you any longer; and the sound of a mill will not be heard in you any longer; and the light of a lamp will not shine in you any longer; and the voice of the bridegroom and bride will not be heard in you any longer; for your merchants were the great men of the earth, because all the nations were deceived by your sorcery. And in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints and of all who have been slain on the earth.” (NASB95)

Revelation 19:1–6

After these things I heard something like a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, “Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God; BECAUSE HIS JUDGMENTS ARE TRUE AND RIGHTEOUS; for He has judged the great harlot who was corrupting the earth with her immorality, and HE HAS AVENGED THE BLOOD OF HIS BOND-SERVANTS ON HER.” And a second time they said, “Hallelujah! HER SMOKE RISES UP FOREVER AND EVER.” And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sits on the throne saying, “Amen. Hallelujah!” And a voice came from the throne, saying, “Give praise to our God, all you His bond-servants, you who fear Him, the small and the great.” Then I heard something like the voice of a great multitude and like the

sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, saying, “Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns.” (NASB95)

Cue Handel and the choir as we have truly arrived at the Hallelujah Chorus. For the new testament, this is also a first, it is the first time in the text of the new testament we see the word “Hallelujah.”

This is actually an old testament term. “It is derived from two Hebrew words (hālāl and ah), and means “Praise Yahweh.”” (Mounce 1997, 341)

A transliteration of the Hebrew, הללויהָ halēlû-yāh], a command: You all praise Jah! (e.g., Ps. 106:48). The first occurrence of the word Hallelujah in the OT corresponds with the context of its usage here: “Sinners shall be consumed out of the earth, and the wicked shall be no more. Bless Jehovah, O my soul. Hallelujah!” Psalm 104:35 (Garland 2006, Re 19:1)

Psalm 104:35

“Let sinners be consumed from the earth And let the wicked be no more. Bless the LORD, O my soul. Praise the LORD!(Hallelujah)” (NASB95)

In our translation of the old testament, Hallelujah is translated, many times, to” Praise the Lord.” Psalms 106, 111-113, 117, 135, 146-150 are a few examples from the Hallel psalms.

The term being used is one that a Jew would be familiar with, and once again this points us to a simple fact that the bulk of Revelation is God dealing with the Jews. The Church is in heaven as we saw in chapter 4, and we will also see that here in chapter 19.

In fact, it is the church triumphant we hear at the beginning of this chapter. Chapter 19 begins with praise and ends with the opening of hell and the delivery of it’s first two permanent residents.

More about Hallelujah, “It also had a special place in the cultic life of Israel, expressing jubilant joy, and like “Hosanna” in Mark 11:9–10 and parallels, it had become a cry of joy in the Lord in the Jewish world.”

Grant R. Osborne, Revelation, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002), 664.

John lets us know that what he now reports to us comes after the quite visible destruction of Babylon. He tells us he hears the” loud voice of a great multitude.”

The last time we heard from a great multitude in this book was back in Revelation 7:9

Revelation 7:9–12

After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could count, from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, and palm branches were in their hands; and they cry out with a loud voice, saying, “Salvation to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb.” And all the angels were standing around the throne and around the elders and the four living creatures; and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying, “Amen, blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honor and power and might, be to our God forever and ever. Amen.” (NASB95)

Those who are seen praising the Lord in Revelation 7 are those who are saved during the entire time period encompassed by the Tribulation and the Great Tribulation, as well as the period after the rapture and leading up to the Tribulation.

That group was called a great multitude, now, at the end of the Great Tribulation, they are there, gathered around the throne, where some were seen with the 5th seal in Revelation 6:9-11, but now the number is much larger, and they are joined by the church.

Talk about a revival, during the Tribulation period, millions will be saved, so many John cannot count them. But they come from everywhere, and John can tell that in chapter 7 in that he said “from every nation and all tribes and peoples and tongues...”

The fact that they are no longer beneath the altar but standing before the throne waving palm branches (perhaps the antitype of the first “Palm Sunday”), indicates that John’s vision in this case was of the still future time when all the martyred saints, to the very end of the tribulation period, had been gathered together at the throne.

Henry M. Morris, *The Revelation Record: A Scientific and Devotional Commentary on the Prophetic Book of the End Times* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale, 1983), 133.

The ministry of the 144,000 as well as the two witnesses in Revelation 11 results, by the end of the Tribulation and the Great Tribulation, in millions being saved. These are not the church, but these are those who come to Christ during the entire period and have paid a price for that faith. They are not called the Church, or any part of it. The Church—the Ecclesia—in its proper New Testament acceptance, ends its earthly course with what was represented by “the seven churches,” and is never heard of again in all the Apocalypse, after the third chapter, except as it appears in the Elders and Living ones in glory.

J. A. Seiss, *The Apocalypse: A Series of Special Lectures on the Revelation of Jesus Christ with Revised Text*, Eighth Edition, vol. 1 (New York: Charles C. Cook, 1901), 435–436.

The progression of those who have died as a result of persecution from this time period, under the altar just prior to the beginning of the tribulation to standing before the throne in the chapter 7 when we get a view of what we are now hearing. Chapter 7 was looking forward to the events that John is now discussing in chapter 19 as happening for him in real time.

It is that great multitude John is referring to, they have witnessed the final destruction of the city that had so much blood on its hands, as stated in Revelation 18:24, their blood. The end has begun, and praise is the order of the day. Why praise? Verse 2

Revelation 19:2

“BECAUSE HIS JUDGMENTS ARE TRUE AND RIGHTEOUS; for He has judged the great harlot who was corrupting the earth with her immorality, and HE HAS AVENGED THE BLOOD OF HIS BOND-SERVANTS ON HER.” (NASB95)

Psalms 19:9–10

“The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring forever; The judgments of the LORD are true; they are righteous altogether. They are more desirable than gold, yes, than much fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb.” (NASB95)

Psalms 119:137

“Righteous are You, O LORD, And upright are Your judgments.” (NASB95)

When we consider the great upheaval and destruction which is the Tribulation, how quick we are to question God’s righteous punishment of sin! As the text reminds us time and time again, the severity of the judgments described in the book of Revelation are not evidence of God’s unfairness. Rather, their severity is a testimony to His righteousness—for only He knows the full breadth and depth of the sin which He now judges.

Anthony C. Garland, *A Testimony of Jesus Christ: A Commentary on the Book of Revelation* (Galaxie Software, 2006), Re 19:2.

Reason number one for ascribing salvation, glory and power to our God, the reason to praise Him – His judgements are true and righteous.

The world system embodied by Babylon, the deeds of this city demand the punishment being exacted upon it and those who live there participating in all of the atrocities being committed by it.

There is a second reason here in verse 2 as well – “...for He has judged the great harlot who was corrupting the earth with her immorality...”

The legal basis of the judgment is that she ἐφθείρεν τὴν γῆν ἐν τῇ πορνείᾳ αὐτῆς (ephtheiren tēn gēn en tē porneia autēs, corrupted the earth by her immorality).

Grant R. Osborne, Revelation, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002), 664.

This is interesting because when we read about the judgment of the great harlot, representing the apostate church which went into the Tribulation, it says that the kings of the earth and the Antichrist destroyed the harlot. Yet here we are told that it was God who judged it. You see, God uses different instruments, and He will even use the Devil to accomplish His purpose. Those in heaven are saying, “True and righteous are his judgments,” because the apostate church deserved to be destroyed; it had made martyrs of many of God’s children.

J. Vernon McGee, Thru the Bible Commentary, electronic ed., vol. 5 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997), 1046.

Probably both aspects of Babylonianism are in view here, religious and commercial. The essence of the harlot’s guilt lies in her corrupting the earth with her immoralities (cf. 14:8; 17:2; 18:3). By destroying Babylon God will avenge the blood of believers who died as a result of its influences (cf. 18:24; Deut. 32:42–43; 2 Kings 9:7).

Tom Constable, Tom Constable’s Expository Notes on the Bible (Galaxie Software, 2003), Re 19:2.

“...HE HAS AVENGED THE BLOOD OF HIS BOND-SERVANTS ON HER.”

Revelation 19:3

“And a second time they said, “Hallelujah! HER SMOKE RISES UP FOREVER AND EVER.”” (NASB95)

The multitude that John heard kicking off this praise fest, continues to worship even louder and exclaiming Hallelujah again as they see the smoke of the destruction of Babylon rise.

Remember what was said of those who worshipped the beast and took his mark?

Revelation 14:9–11

Then another angel, a third one, followed them, saying with a loud voice, “If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, he also will drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is mixed in full strength in the cup of His anger; and he will be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever; they have no rest day and night, those who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.” (NASB95)

...the statement also applies to Babylon’s inhabitants. When these, along with other unsaved souls, are resurrected for the last judgment, they will be cast into the lake of fire, there to burn forever.

Henry M. Morris, The Revelation Record: A Scientific and Devotional Commentary on the Prophetic Book of the End Times (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale, 1983), 380.

2 Thessalonians 1:6–8

“For after all it is only just for God to repay with affliction those who afflict you, and to give relief to you who are afflicted and to us as well when the Lord Jesus will be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels in flaming fire, dealing out retribution to those who do not know God and to those who do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus.” (NASB95)

Revelation 19:4

“And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sits on the throne saying, “Amen. Hallelujah!”” (NASB95)

The 24 elders are representative of the church. The church, which is now part of God’s Divine Council, joins in the worship as do the four living creatures, signifying all those faithful divine beings. With this verse, we see agreement with the worship and the conditions for the worship as stated by the multitude of those who are worshipping before the throne.

The fact that the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures (“beasts”) are introduced as worshipping God in a separate way from the great multitude seems to confirm the earlier suggestion that the great multitude are the martyred dead of the great tribulation who suffered immediately from the wickedness of Babylon in its form just prior to the second coming of Christ.

John F. Walvoord, *The Revelation of Jesus Christ* (Galaxie Software, 2008), 269.

Their refrain is not a second hymn but a solemn affirmation of the previous hymn, meaning, “So be it, praise Yahweh.” The “amen, hallelujah” is taken from Psalm 106:48, where it follows a prayer for deliverance from the nations. Here that deliverance has already occurred, and this is thanksgiving for God’s mighty act.

Grant R. Osborne, *Revelation: Verse by Verse*, Osborne New Testament Commentaries (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016), 308.

Revelation 19:5–6

“And a voice came from the throne, saying, “Give praise to our God, all you His bond-servants, you who fear Him, the small and the great.” Then I heard something like the voice of a great multitude and like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, saying, “Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns.” (NASB95)

Whose voice comes from the throne? Is it God? Is it Jesus? Or could it be the worship leader in heaven, the one who has replaced Lucifer in that role. The text does not identify whose voice this is. I am going to go with the worship leader of all the universe.

The throne is the direction from which the voice came, but not necessarily the source of the voice. Positive identification of this voice is impossible from the available information, but this is not the first time such a difficulty has arisen (cf. 1:10; 10:4, 8; 14:2). It is impossible to rule one way or the other on the suggestion that it is one of the four living beings (cf. Beckwith, Kiddle).

Whatever its source, the voice is authoritative, however, as it commands ἀνεῖτε τῷ θεῷ ἡμῶν (aineite tō, theō hēmōn, “praise our God”). The present imperative ἀνεῖτε (aineite, “praise”) implies a response of continuous praise. The command alludes specifically to Ps. 135:1, 20 and refers generally to another of the Hallel psalms, Ps. 113:1 (Johnson). Allusions to these psalms demonstrate that the vindication for which the psalmists cried out so often has now occurred (Kiddle).

Robert L. Thomas, *Revelation 8-22: An Exegetical Commentary* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 1995), 361–362.

The call is for all the bond servants of Jesus Christ, the church, all ready represented by the 24 elders, but now further called upon to give worship and praise to our God.

The redeemed believers in heaven are described as God’s bond-servants (verse 2; cf. 1:1; 2:20). The all-inclusive phrase “the small and the great” transcends all human categories to embrace everyone. All the redeemed are called to praise God.

John MacArthur, *Because the Time Is near: John MacArthur Explains the Book of Revelation* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2007), 284.

The resulting sound, per John, is deafening. The finale of the hallelujah chorus has now been reached with the fourth hallelujah.

Hallelujah does not show up at all in the new testament until we get to chapter 19 and then, there it is four times in rapid succession.

One other thing to note about the call to worship, it was not just directed at those who are in heaven, but to those everywhere.

A great crowd in 19:1 included those in heaven, but now the group seems to include those on earth, since the call to praise in the previous verse included earthly worshippers.

Craig R. Koester, Revelation: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary, ed. John J. Collins, vol. 38A, Anchor Yale Bible (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2014), 728.

In the midst of the praise and worship taking place as a direct result of the beginning of the end for the earth dwellers, we see another item of importance for all of us in the church...the Marriage of the Lamb.

Revelation 19:7

“Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready.” (NASB95)

Being 21st century believers, and predominately gentiles as well, we need to do some additional research in order to “get it.” To fully understand what is going on, we need to understand the dynamics of the Jewish wedding system of this period.

There are six distinct steps in the process for a Jewish wedding

Step One

The first step is that of the arrangement for the wedding and arrangements for the dowry. “In the arrangement, the father of the groom makes the arrangement with the father of the bride and pays the father of the bride the bride price.”

Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, The Messianic Bible Study Collection, vol. 113 (Tustin, CA: Ariel Ministries, 1983), 3.

An example of this is provided for us in the scriptures in Genesis 24. There we see an unnamed servant sent out to find, woo and arrange and present the bride for Isaac.

Genesis 24:47–53

“Then I asked her, and said, ‘Whose daughter are you?’ And she said, ‘The daughter of Bethuel, Nahor’s son, whom Milcah bore to him’; and I put the ring on her nose, and the bracelets on her wrists. And I bowed low and worshiped the LORD, and blessed the LORD, the God of my master Abraham, who had guided me in the right way to take the daughter of my master’s kinsman for his son. So now if you are going to deal kindly and truly with my master, tell me; and if not, let me know, that I may turn to the right hand or the left.” Then Laban and Bethuel replied, “The matter comes from the LORD; so we cannot speak to you bad or good. Here is Rebekah before you, take her and go, and let her be the wife of your master’s son, as the LORD has spoken.” When Abraham’s servant heard their words, he bowed himself to the ground before the LORD. The servant brought out articles of silver and articles of gold, and garments, and gave them to Rebekah; he also gave precious things to her brother and to her mother.” (NASB95)

God Himself has made the arrangements and paid the bride price. The Holy Spirit is busy bringing those who would respond to Him. But God paid the price up front for this to take place. He did so with the blood of Jesus.

Ephesians 5:25

“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her,” (NASB95)

Step Two

The second step in the Jewish wedding process is the preparation. This is the period also known as the betrothal. “It lasts for at least a year but could also last for many years, especially if the arrangement was made when the bride and groom were only children. This is the period of time when the bride is being trained and prepared to take on the role of a wife. This is the period of time when she is observed for her purity.”

Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *The Messianic Bible Study Collection*, vol. 113 (Tustin, CA: Ariel Ministries, 1983), 4.

The purity is proven out by at least nine months of waiting to ensure the bride is a virgin. We see this with Joseph and Mary.

Matthew 1:18–21

“Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: when His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit. And Joseph her husband, being a righteous man and not wanting to disgrace her, planned to send her away secretly. But when he had considered this, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for the Child who has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. “She will bear a Son; and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins.”” (NASB95)

2 Corinthians 11:2

“For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for I betrothed you to one husband, so that to Christ I might present you as a pure virgin.” (NASB95)

For us as believers, that means becoming more like Jesus, to be pure or sanctified.

Ephesians 5:26–27

“so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless.” (NASB95)

The final cleansing for us will take place after we have been taken home to be with the Lord, purified and given glorified bodies.

As a legal matter though, we are betrothed the payment has been made, and a token of the upcoming fulfillment, we would call it an earnest payment, has also been made.

By doing so, each one of us, the moment we become believers, receive the Holy Spirit to dwell in us. By doing this, Christ makes each of us sacred space. The same Spirit that was in the pillar of light, is in each of us. We are indeed, if we are in Christ, light.

Ephesians 1:13–14

“In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God’s own possession, to the praise of His glory.” (NASB95)

God the Spirit is the earnest of this day in the hearts of his saints. God the Son sees this great day as the day of his joy and satisfaction. The angels of heaven and the glorified spirits of the redeemed anxiously await this great day.

Donald S. Fortner, *Discovering Christ in Revelation* (Darlington, England: Evangelical Press, 2002), 339.

1 Corinthians 15:50–57

“Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. Behold, I tell you a mystery; we will not all sleep, but we will 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 will be changed. For this perishable must put on the imperishable, and this mortal must put on immortality. But when this perishable will have put on the imperishable, and this mortal will have put on immortality, then will come about the saying that is written, “DEATH IS SWALLOWED UP in victory. “O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR VICTORY? O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR STING?” The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (NASB95)

Step Three

The third step is getting the bride. I was able to witness this when I was in Kuwait. Yes, it is still practiced today in some cultures. No camels though from what I saw, a suburban worked though. We see an example of that in Matthew 25:1-13.

As believers in Jesus Christ, we are waiting for the moment when Jesus comes to get us. He did promise that He would.

John 14:2–3

“In My Father’s house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you. If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.” (NASB95)

1 Thessalonians 4:13–18

“But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, so that you will not grieve as do the rest who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who have fallen asleep in Jesus. For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord, will not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive and remain will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words.” (NASB95)

Step Four

The fourth step, taking place after the bride has been fetched, is the ceremony. This would normally take place in the home of the groom.

Only a few, usually the immediate family and two witnesses, were invited to come in and observe the wedding ceremony.

Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *The Messianic Bible Study Collection*, vol. 113 (Tustin, CA: Ariel Ministries, 1983), 6.

This is where we have arrived in Revelation 19:7. The ceremony that takes place will happen in heaven, just before the Second Coming of Jesus Christ. There are two more steps to discuss

Step Five

The fifth step is the marriage feast. Lots of people are invited to this as we saw with Jesus and His participation in a marriage feast in John 2. Invitations are sent to this feast so that those who are invited know they need to be there.

John 2:1–2

“On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there; and both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding.” (NASB95)

Revelation 19:9 refers to the invitations for the marriage supper of the Lamb.

Isaiah 25:6

“The LORD of hosts will prepare a lavish banquet for all peoples on this mountain; A banquet of aged wine, choice pieces with marrow, And refined, aged wine.” (NASB95)

The invitation list

- Old testament saints (Daniel 12:2) or as John the Baptist characterized it, “the friend of the bridegroom. The friends of the bridegroom are the Old Testament saints, and they will be the “many more” invited to the wedding feast.”
Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *The Messianic Bible Study Collection*, vol. 113 (Tustin, CA: Ariel Ministries, 1983), 7.
- Tribulation saints
- Israel

Step Six

The groom provides a suitable home for the bride, he is to work on this during the preparation step. Jesus said He was going to prepare a place for us and that He would come back to get us in John 14.

Revelation 21:9–10

“Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues came and spoke with me, saying, “Come here, I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb.” And he carried me away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me the holy city, Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God,” (NASB95)

Here in Revelation 19:7, we have arrived at step four, the marriage ceremony.

Revelation 19:7

“Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready.” (NASB95)

The Holy Spirit, as we saw previously, is the earnest payment for this day. We know that Jesus will do what He promises because He sent the Spirit to us and we are indwelt by the Spirit.

Revelation 19:8

“It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.” (NASB95)

Having been presented glorified and spotless before God’s throne, the church is able to “clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean.” Fine linen was expensive and beautiful cloth, like that worn by Joseph (Genesis 41:42).

John MacArthur, *Because the Time Is near: John MacArthur Explains the Book of Revelation* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2007), 285–286.

There is more to this though than just clothing to wear.

Bright - λαμπρὸν (lampron) - pertaining to radiating light, bright of heavenly bodies; being free of anything that impedes clear perception, clear, transparent; having a glistening quality; of garments, especially white ones: bright, shining.

William Arndt, Frederick W. Danker, and Walter Bauer, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000), 585.

Having been glorified, our bodies were made to dwell in the heavenly realms, just like Jesus' body, and as we have seen in the scriptures, light speaks of divine presence.

Philippians 3:20–21

“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.” (NASB95)

Matthew 13:34

“Then THE RIGHTEOUS WILL SHINE FORTH AS THE SUN in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears, let him hear.” (NASB95)

Daniel 12:2–3

“Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt. Those who have insight will shine brightly like the brightness of the expanse of heaven, and those who lead the many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever.” (NASB95)

We are with Jesus at this point, have been for at least 7 years or more. We have, as Paul says, put on immortality.

The point of the celestial analogy is apparently that a believer's body will be like that of Jesus, since Jesus' appearance at the transfiguration is described in similar terms: “His face shone like the sun, and his clothing became bright as the light” (Matt 17:2). Second Temple Jewish sources describe the same idea with respect to the resurrected righteous.

Ultimately, this sort of celestial language is trying to telegraph a simple but indescribably profound idea. In the eternal afterlife with God, believers will have the same sort of body that Jesus had after the resurrection. We will identify with the risen Jesus bodily as we identify with the Spirit currently: “He who is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him” (1 Cor 6:17 ESV).⁶

Michael S. Heiser, *The Unseen Realm: Recovering the Supernatural Worldview of the Bible*, First Edition (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2015), 379.

Matthew 17:1–3

“Six days later Jesus took with Him Peter and James and John his brother, and led them up on a high mountain by themselves. And He was transfigured before them; and His face shone like the sun, and His garments became as white as light. And behold, Moses and Elijah appeared to them, talking with Him.” (NASB95)

Shiny indeed

Revelation 19:9

Then he said to me, “Write, ‘Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.’” And he said to me, “These are true words of God.” (NASB95)

So who is this talking to John? Back to chapter 17:1

Revelation 17:1

Then one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls came and spoke with me, saying, "Come here, I will show you the judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters," (NASB95)

This speaker is one of the angels of the seven last plagues who initiated his role as John's guide in 17:1.

The material between 17:1 and this point is attributable to the same angelic mediator.

Robert L. Thomas, *Revelation 8-22: An Exegetical Commentary* (Chicago: Moody Publishers, 1995), 371.

This angel provides the fourth blessing of the book to us.

1. Revelation 1:3 – blessing for those who read and hear the words of the prophecy
2. Revelation 14:13 – blessing for those who die in the Lord in the Great Tribulation
3. Revelation 16:15 – blessing for the one watching for His coming
4. Now – a blessing for those who have been invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb. This is step five of the Jewish wedding process and remember the invite list?

The invitation list

- Old testament saints (Daniel 12:2) or as John the Baptist characterized it, "the friend of the bridegroom. The friends of the bridegroom are the Old Testament saints, and they will be the "many more" invited to the wedding feast."
Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *The Messianic Bible Study Collection*, vol. 113 (Tustin, CA: Ariel Ministries, 1983), 7.
- Tribulation saints
- Israel

Luke 13:29

"And they will come from east and west and from north and south, and will recline at the table in the kingdom of God." (NASB95)

The angel puts God's seal on this scene: "These are the true words of God."

J. Vernon McGee, *Thru the Bible Commentary*, electronic ed., vol. 5 (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1997), 1048.

Revelation 19:10

Then I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, "Do not do that; I am a fellow servant of yours and your brethren who hold the testimony of Jesus; worship God. For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." (NASB95)

John has seen and heard a lot. "The wonder of this revelation and the certainty of its fulfillment seem to have overwhelmed John. He fell down to worship the angel because the angel had revealed these things to him (cf. 1:17; Acts 10:25). This was not proper, as the angel explained (cf. 22:9). Human beings should never worship angels (Col. 2:18)."

Tom Constable, *Tom Constable's Expository Notes on the Bible* (Galaxie Software, 2003), Re 19:10.

Unlike Satan, who desires worship, this angel, who is faithful and serving, not only declines it but also corrects John letting him know that he too is nothing more than a servant of God.

"I too, as an angel and messenger of God, hold to the testimony of Jesus, to be a witness for him and to testify about him. And you, as an apostle, having the spirit of prophecy, have the same testimony to give. Therefore we are brothers and fellow servants."

J. I. Packer, "Introduction," in *Revelation*, ed. Alister McGrath, *Crossway Classic Commentaries* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 1999), 162.

In the scriptures, whenever someone fell at Jesus feet and worshipped Him, He received the worship because He is God. Thanks to John, we know that we are not to worship angels, or anything else for that matter, we are to worship God.

His deity there was no question, but that God would become man was hard to believe and would need the faithful and consistent testimony of both holy angels and godly men. It is this testimony that is opposed by the rebel angels, the demonic spirits, and it was for this “witness of Jesus” (witness is the same Greek word as testimony) that the tribulation saints had been beheaded (Revelation 20:4). It was the spirit of opposition to this inestimable significant truth of the incarnation (the Word made flesh, as per John 1:14) that John in his epistle had already recognized as the spirit of Antichrist (1 John 4:3), and now he had seen Antichrist himself seeking to destroy all who maintained the testimony of Jesus Christ (Revelation 12:17). The “testimony of Jesus” is the spirit of true prophecy. It contradicts the testimony of false prophets.

Henry M. Morris, *The Revelation Record: A Scientific and Devotional Commentary on the Prophetic Book of the End Times* (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale, 1983), 390.

Next week, the second coming of Jesus Christ