

WORSHIP SERVICE - 3.13.2022

THE MARRIAGE SUPPER OF THE LAMB

I. INTRODUCTION

MAIN POINT: God is to be praised for his judgments as they uniquely reveal his glory and deliver his people to the ultimate expression of their salvation.

Revelation 19:1-10

After this I heard what seemed to be the loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, crying out,

“Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God,

2 for his judgments are true and just; for he has judged the great prostitute who corrupted the earth with her immorality, and has avenged on her the blood of his servants.”

3 Once more they cried out, “Hallelujah! The smoke from her goes up forever and ever.”

4 And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who was seated on the throne, saying, “Amen. Hallelujah!”

5 And from the throne came a voice saying, “Praise our God, all you his servants, you who fear him, small and great.”

6 Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude, like the roar of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, crying out, “Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns.

7 Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready;

8 it was granted her to clothe herself with fine linen, bright and pure”—for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints.

9 And the angel said to me, “Write this: 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.”

10 Then I fell down at his feet to worship him, but he said to me, “You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brothers who hold to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God.” For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

II. HALLELUJAH: GOD SAVES THROUGH JUDGMENT

- V1 John hears the loud voice of a great multitude. This great multitude is responding to the judgment of Babylon and are now rejoicing as Babylon the great has fallen!
- This is the great multitude we first saw in ch 7, the innumerable multitude from every nation, tribe, peoples, and languages that was standing before the throne and before the Lamb (7:9). This is a picture of the church triumphant. The redeemed. This is a picture of the church worshipping!

FIRST HALLELUJAH!

- John hears this multitude of saints in heaven exclaim, “Hallelujah!”
- Hallelujah is the Hebrew word translated, Praise the Lord.
- ‘Hallal’ means praise, ‘Jah,’ for Yahweh. Praise Yahweh! Praise the Lord!
- When this word appears in the Psalms, you will almost always see it in the context of praising the Lord in a corporate congregational setting.
- **Psalm 149:1** Praise the Lord! Sing to the Lord a new song, his praise in the assembly of the godly!
- It is an exclamation with an implied command, Praise the Lord!
- Praise is demanded because God as Sovereign is worthy of praise. It is what every man, woman, and child owes to the Creator.

- What are they praising God for?
- “Salvation and glory and power belong to our God, for his judgments are true and just.”
- God’s judgments put on display his salvation, glory and power.
- His judgments are a manifestation of his righteousness, holiness, and justice.

- **Three great themes of worship in the heavenly scenes**
- **1. God as Creator: Rev. 4:11** “Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.”
- **2. God as Savior: Rev. 7:10** “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!” Sevenfold-doxology of the Lamb, (5:12) Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!”
- **3. God as Judge: Rev. 11:18** “The nations raged, but your wrath came, and the time for the dead to be judged, and for rewarding your servants, the prophets and saints, and those who fear your name, both small and great, and for destroying the destroyers of the earth.”
- We can worship God for his work of creation and his work of salvation, but praising him for his work of judgment, that feels a bit strange to us.
- But the theme of God executing his judgment is one of the great themes of the worship of heaven, and it should be ours as well.
- Judgment is a manifestation of the holy character of God.
- God’s glory is put on display in his acts of judgment and we are commanded to rejoice and praise God for that!

- Specifically they are praising God for his act of judgment against the great whore that defiled the earth with her sexual immorality—Babylon!
- God has also avenged his servants whose blood was shed by her hands.
- God has kept his word concerning avenging his martyred and persecuted saints.

- **Rev. 6:10** the cry of the souls under the martyr, They cried out with a loud voice, “O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?”
- God’s judgments are a demonstration of his faithfulness in keeping his covenant promises to his people.
- It is proper and right for us to praise God for executing his judgment.

SECOND HALLELUJAH!

- V3 we hear “Hallelujah!” echoed once more.
- This time praising God that Babylon’s judgment is final and unending. “The smoke from her goes up forever and ever.”
- Babylon is utterly destroyed. (Rev. 18:20)
- We have been tracking the trajectory of two women in Revelation: one is a whore, the world, and the other a bride, the Church.
- They both face radically different destinies.
- Babylon’s punishment will never end because of the infinite majesty and holiness of God against whom she sinned.
- God is just! God is Judge! Praise him for that!

THIRD HALLELUJAH!

- The third Hallelujah is exclaimed by those heavenly beings closest to the throne.
- The twenty-four elders who represent all the redeemed saints from both the Old and New Covenant, and the four living creatures representing the entirety of the created order, they agree with the proclamation of the multitude in heaven by giving a hearty ‘Amen.’ And then they add a Hallelujah of their own.
- They fell down and worshiped God who was seated on the throne.
- Rev. 4:8,10 The four living creatures are said to never cease worshiping day and night declaring God’s thrice holiness and when they do, the twenty-four elders fall down before the throne and worship him who lives forever and ever.
- The worship of heaven is never ending and we need not ever fear exhausting reasons for praising God.
- V5 From the throne comes a voice saying, "Praise God all you his servants, you who fear him, small and great."
- Heaven calls for more worship!
- "Praise him you who are his servants," that is all of the redeemed, from the least to the greatest, no matter what their position was in their previous earthly lives, all are called to praise God for his triumph over Babylon and her destruction.
- “You who fear him,” Fear of God will keep you from fearing Babylon, fearing her temptations and her threats.
- When we see injustice in the world, when we see the wicked flourish and the righteous punished, persecuted, and killed for their testimony of Jesus, be encouraged.
- Trust God to act in justice to execute judgment upon the wicked.
- Praise him for that. Praise him for his judgments.

III. HALLELUJAH: THE LAMB TAKES HIS BRIDE

- V6 In response to the call for more worship from the throne, John hears the loud voice of the great multitude sounding like the roar of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder.

FOURTH HALLELUJAH!

- Now we have the fourth and final Hallelujah!
- And there is a shift in the theme from God's salvation and deliverance of his people by judging the great prostitute Babylon, to directing praise to God for his glorious reign and for the marriage the Lamb.
- Heaven praises God precisely because he is God the Almighty and he reigns.
- Now he reigns. The world is finally ruled as it should be.
- The full and final reign of God will be ushered in when all of his enemies are under his feet. (1Cor. 15:25)
- And that occasion is what initiates another great event inscribed on God's calendar from before the foundation of the world.

THE MARRIAGE OF THE LAMB

- The great multitude shouts "let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come..."
- Heaven is rejoicing because the wedding day has come!
- Why are the redeemed saints rejoicing? Because the long awaited marriage union between Christ and His bride is finally taking place.
- It's wedding day in heaven!

- Throughout Scripture, God declares himself to be the husband of his people.
- **Isaiah 54:5** For your Maker is your husband, the Lord of hosts is his name; and the Holy One of Israel is your Redeemer, the God of the whole earth he is called.
- Hosea ch2 describes in beautiful detail the new covenant between Yahweh and his people and likens into a wedding.
- **Hosea 2:16a,19-20** "And in that day, declares the Lord, you will call me 'My Husband,' 9 And I will betroth you to me forever. I will betroth you to me in righteousness and in justice, in steadfast love and in mercy. 20 I will betroth you to me in faithfulness. And you shall know the Lord.
- This is why breaking the covenant God made with his people was considered adultery. God was married to his people. He was a faithful husband to them when they were unfaithful to him.
- Jesus told parables about what the kingdom of heaven was like. In Matthew 22 he likened it to a wedding feast (Matt. 22:1-14).
- Jesus referred to himself as the bridegroom (Matt. 9:14,15).
- The parable of the ten virgins was told so that his disciples would be ready for his coming as a bridegroom (Matt. 25:1-13)
- Paul reveals that the greater reality behind the meaning of marriage is that it is a picture of Christ and the church, who is the bride of Christ. (Eph. 5:30-32)
- Our earthly marriages are to be permanent because they are to be a picture of the indissoluble and perfect union of Christ and his Church.

- V7 for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready
- There were two important steps in ancient Jewish marriage.
- First step-Betrothal
- Second step- The procession and wedding feast.
- The Bible compares the relationship between a bridegroom and his bride to that of the relationship between God and his people, between Christ and his Church.
- The Church is betrothed to Jesus. (2 Cor. 11:2)
- Right now, we are in this interval period between our betrothal to Christ and his coming back for us to take us to the home he has prepared for us and to the great feast that awaits us. (John 14:2-3)

- Until then, he has given us the Spirit as a pledge that guarantees that we will arrive at our wedding day.
- At the end of the age, the Lord will return for his Bride, accompanied by the angels of heaven, and the wedding feast will begin.
- Redeemer and Redeemed as one in perfect union and intimacy and fellowship for all eternity.
- This is why God is to be praised for his judgment upon his enemies because his judgment is what delivers us to this ultimate expression of our salvation.
- All of those who would threaten that intimacy between Christ and his Bride have been judged and destroyed.
- Because of that, God's people will enter into the eternal relationship of deepest and fullest intimacy and joy for all of eternity!

GETTING READY FOR THE WEDDING

- So what are we, the Church, to be doing during this interval period?
- V7 and his Bride has made herself ready
- We are to make ourselves ready in anticipation of the wedding day.
- How do we do that?
- v8 it was granted her to clothe herself with fine linen, bright and pure.
- There are **two theological realities** presented to us.
- Something is done FOR the Bride and something is done BY the bride.
- **FOR THE BRIDE “it was granted her”**
- **Isaiah 61:10** I will greatly rejoice in the Lord; my soul shall exult in my God, for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation; he has covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decks himself like a priest with a beautiful headdress, and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.
- The **bride is made beautiful as an act of grace.**
- **Ephesians 5:25-27** Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, 26 that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, 27 so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish.
- Christ redeems His bride and beautifies his bride.
- When we see the Bride, the wife of the Lamb, in ch21, she is depicted as a radiant city coming down out of heaven, having the glory of God, radiating like a most rare jewel. (Rev. 21:9-11)
- Christ makes us completely fit for heaven and prepares us for the wedding day.
- Salvation from beginning to end is ALL OF GRACE!
- **BY THE BRIDE “to clothe herself”**
- We see also that the Bride is to make herself ready by clothing herself. So she is also to do something to make herself fit for heaven.
- The bride is to make herself beautiful in preparation for the wedding.
- The fine linen she wears, her wedding dress, is said to be the righteous deeds of the saints.
- The deeds in view here are her faithful testimony of Jesus and witness of him, v10. It is the faithful proclamation of Christ which is the spirit of prophecy. All true prophecy is concerning Christ and points to Christ.
- The bride is to maintain her faithfulness and allegiance to her husband which is Christ.
- That is the most beautiful aspect of the Bride of Christ—her fidelity to Christ.
- So are we saved by grace or are we saved by works? YES

- As long as we understand that the works that make us fit for heaven are, in every single way, a consequence of and a result of, God's grace.
- Grace is granted to us to perform the righteous deeds by which we make ourselves ready for the wedding day.
- **Ephesians 2:8-9** For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, 9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast.
- **Ephesians 2:10** For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.
- We cannot forget we are saved by grace unto good works. Works are bound to grace.
- So we have this dual aspect here WE ARE SAVED BY GRACE AND WE ARE SAVED BY WORKS FUELED BY GRACE.
- The church is to make herself ready but even the ability to get ready is a gift of grace from God.
- We are to remain faithful to God and not compromise our allegiance to him, but it is God who gives us the ability to remain faithful to him.
- **Philippians 2:12b-13** work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, 13 for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.
- We work and God works in us so that we have not only the desire to work, but the ability to work for his good pleasure.
- You clothe yourself and God will grant it to you to clothe yourself.
- One commentator wrote, "Throughout Christian history, every holy attitude and good deeds prompted by God's grace have been woven into the tapestry of the bride's attire."

THE INVITATION

- V9 the angel says to John, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb."
- The word translated as invited is the Greek word, 'kaleo', which means called.
- We are both the bride and the invited guests.
- Our RSVP for this wedding is that we must be clothed in the proper wedding attire.
- Parable of the wedding feast. Jesus said many are called but few are chosen. (Matt. 22:11-14)
- Have you been called to this wedding?
- This is not the only feast on the last day.
- There are two great feasts. There is the marriage supper of the Lamb. But there is another.
- **Rev. 19:17-18** Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and with a loud voice he called to all the birds that fly directly overhead, "Come, gather for the great supper of God, 18 to eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and their riders, and the flesh of all men, both free and slave, both small and great."
- You will feast with the Lamb or you will be feasted upon by the wrath of God.
- The angels said to John, "These are the true words of God."
- How can I know if I am invited and called to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb?
- Are you wearing wedding garments?
- Have you been clothed in the righteousness of Jesus Christ that is granted to all those who believe in him and trust in his name?
- Is it evident in the way you live? Are you making yourself ready?
- You don't want to miss heaven's wedding feast, an unending celebration of Christ and His Bride!

- Blessed are you who have been invited and called to the marriage supper of the Lamb.