

Four Great Hallelujahs in Heaven & The Marriage Supper of the Lamb

Revelation 19:1-10

Revelation 19:1-10 - *"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!' ² For true and righteous are His judgments, because He has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication; and He has avenged on her the blood of His servants shed by her." ³ Again they said, 'Alleluia! Her smoke rises up forever and ever!' ⁴ And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sat on the throne, saying, 'Amen! Alleluia!' 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!' 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 thunderings, saying, 'Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns! 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.' 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.*

⁹ Then he said to me, 'Write: 'Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!'' And he said to me, 'These are the true sayings of God.' 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! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.'

Background Notes

In verse 1 we read the phrase, *"After these things..."* "After these things" refers to the events of Revelation 17 and 18 -- the overthrow of "Babylon the Great," that great false religious and anti-God commercial system of the last days. In Revelation 17 religious Babylon was portrayed as a prostitute, with the name written on her forehead, *"MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH"* (Revelation 17:5). Religious Babylon will initially completely control this evil end time system, because she is seen riding the revived Roman Empire "Beast" at the beginning of the chapter. However, at the end of the chapter the Roman Beast will overthrow this false religious system, which includes apostate Christendom, because the Beast will hate her domination. So, the Beast will eliminate religious Babylon.

This event probably occurs at the middle of the future Tribulation Period, because at this point the head of the revived Roman Empire (the individual of 666 notoriety) will deify himself. He will demand worship of himself, and an image of him will be set up in the Tribulation Temple in Jerusalem. He himself will become identified as the Beast, and the False Prophet will direct worship to him. This is the "abomination of desolation" mentioned by Daniel the prophet (Daniel 9), and referred to by our Lord in His Olivet Discourse in Matthew 24.

In Revelation 18 we saw the final fall of the commercial side of end-time Babylon. This will be completed under the seventh Bowl Judgment of Revelation 16, and this, of course, brings us to the end of the Tribulation period. So, the phrase, *"After these things..."* mentioned here in Revelation 19:1, brings us chronologically to the end of the Tribulation period, and to the return of Christ. Right before the return of the Lord, which comes in the second half of this chapter, we have two events that will occur in heaven just prior to the Second Coming of Christ.

Doctrinal Points

1. The Second Coming of Christ will be preceded by loud "Alleluias" in heaven!

The word *"Alleluia"* essentially means "Praise the Lord!" It only occurs four times in the New Testament. Guess where? Right here, in verses 1, 3, 4 and 6. Verse 1: *"Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honor and power belong to the Lord our God!"* Verse 3: *"Again they said, 'Alleluia! Her smoke rises up forever and ever!'"* Verse 4: *"And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sat on the throne, saying, 'Amen! Alleluia!'"* Verse 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 thunderings, saying, 'Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns!'"* There is certainly a lot of praise for the Lord in the New Testament, but here in Revelation 19 we have the only place in the New Testament where the word *"Alleluia"* is actually used.

Notice the different groups who will praise the Lord with *"Alleluia"* in Revelation 19. The first great multitude (v1) likely consists of the martyrs of the Tribulation period, because they will specifically praise the Lord for avenging the blood of His servants who were killed by the evil system of Babylon. Verse 2: *"For true and righteous are His judgments, because He has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication; and He has avenged on her the blood of His servants shed by her."*

Under the fifth Seal Judgment these martyrs were told to wait just a little while longer and their deaths would be avenged. Revelation 6:9-11: *"When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. ¹⁰ And they cried with a loud voice, saying, 'How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?'" ¹¹ Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed."*

In Revelation 19:4, another group giving praise to the Lord will consist of the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures. Back in Revelation 4 we mentioned that we believe the twenty-four elders represent the redeemed saints in heaven, and the four living creatures are angelic beings. Notice that they will praise the Lord because God sits on throne -- God is sovereign and in complete control! Aren't you glad that God is sitting on His throne in heaven?

In verse 6 all of heaven, with a mighty *“Alleluia!”* anticipates the return of the Lord to this earth to reign as King of kings and Lord of lords: *“And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, ‘Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns!’* If you’re a believer, you will be part of this great outburst of praise in heaven! The Second Coming of Christ will be preceded by loud *“Alleluias”* in heaven!

2. The Second Coming of Christ will be preceded by the Marriage Supper of the Lamb in Heaven.

Notice that the fourth *“Alleluia”* (v6) includes praise to the Lord because the Marriage Supper of the Lamb has come.

Verse 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.”*

Who is the bride who has made herself ready? We believe she is the Church – the Church that began at Pentecost and was taken home to heaven before the Tribulation began (as we saw in Revelation 4). The Church is the body and bride of Christ (read Ephesians 5 in this connection).

Notice that the Church does not include all believers of all time (v9). Besides angels, there are other believers who are invited to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. This would include Old Testament saints, as well as the martyred saints of the Tribulation period who do not yet have their resurrected bodies, as do the believers in the Church (see Daniel 12 in this connection). So, the Church consists of believers only, but it does not include believers of all times.

Believers of Old Testament times are not part of the Church. The Church began at Pentecost. In Matthew 16 the Lord Jesus said, *“I will build my church”* – using the future tense. So, the Church didn’t begin until after our Lord’s death and resurrection and ascension -- it began with the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. The Church will leave this earth at the Rapture, when the Lord comes to catch His people away. Believers of the Tribulation period are not part of the Church. The Church will be in heaven during the Tribulation period, as we’ve already seen.

Now what does it mean that the bride has “made herself ready” (v7)? This certainly can’t refer to salvation, because the bride, the Church, is already saved. We believe that the phrase “has made herself ready” refers to the Judgment Seat of Christ, which is only for believers. This event will occur in heaven after the Rapture and before the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. 2 Corinthians 5:10, which is written to the Church, says: *“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.”* Romans 14:10-12, which is also written to the Church says, *“But why do you judge your brother? Or why do you show contempt for your brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ, for it is written: ‘As I live,’ says the LORD, ‘Every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God.’ So then each of us shall give account of himself to God.”*

Revelation 19:8 says, *“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.”* Notice that the word “righteousness” is in the plural. It refers to the righteous acts of

believers. Good deeds of Christian service will be rewarded at the Judgment Seat of Christ in heaven, and they will contribute to the beautiful garment of the bride as she makes herself ready for the Marriage Supper of the Lamb.

1 Corinthians 3 indicates that our righteous acts can be as gold, silver, and precious stones. However, if we're not faithful, our works will be like wood, hay, and straw in a fire -- they will all go up in smoke. Believers, let's not wait until heaven to start making a beautiful wedding garment – it will be too late then! Now is the time for righteous living and righteous actions! The Marriage Supper of the Lamb will precede the Second Coming of Christ.

Practical Application

Let's understand the purpose of prophecy!

Verse 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! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.'"* The angel told John not to worship him because he was also a servant of the Lord. As Hebrews 1:14 says, *"Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for those who will inherit salvation?"*

Notice what else the angel said: *"For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."* That is, the purpose of prophecy is to show that the Lord Jesus Christ is the focal point of history!

So, let's understand the purpose of prophecy. The purpose of prophecy is not just to know the future, or to be captivated by sensational "end-times scenarios"! No, it is to see how all of God's plans for a fallen world center in the glorification of Jesus Christ as the Savior of the world! Let's understand the purpose of prophecy!