

40. The Announcement of the Second Coming of Christ

In our last topic, we saw that we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to explain why heaven will rejoice when God destroys religious and commercial Babylon because they have shed the blood of the prophets and the saints. In this topic, we will see that this rejoicing will continue in heaven.

Revelation 19:1-5 says, “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! 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.’ Again they said, ‘Alleluia! Her smoke rises up forever and ever!’ And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sat on the throne, saying, ‘Amen! Alleluia!’ Then a voice came from the throne, saying, ‘Praise our God, all you His servants and those who fear Him, both small and great!’” The word translated “Alleluia” is used four times in the New Testament, and all four uses are in this chapter. The word means *Praise the Lord or Hallelujah*. This great multitude in heaven is probably the angels, because the church and the four living creatures will fall down in worship in response to their message.

We see several reasons that this praise and glory belong to God. First, the judgments of God are true and righteous. Second, God has judged the antichrist and his entire religious and political system that corrupted the entire earth with idolatrous and immoral worship. Third, God has avenged the blood of the saints that was shed by the antichrist and his followers. Fourth, God has judged the whole idolatrous system of the world, and that judgment is eternal. Revelation 20:14-15 says, “Then Death and Hades were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.” Then, Revelation 21:8 adds, “But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.” This praise in heaven also looks forward to that eternal judgment.

We see that the twenty-four elders will fall down in worship to God. We saw, in Revelation 4:4, 7-8, that the elders are the church as it worships before God. The church will be joined by the four living creatures in that worship. We saw, in Revelation 4:8, that these four living creatures are either cherubim or seraphim, which are angels that are described in Ezekiel and Isaiah. Here, we see that they will fall down with the church and worship God and express their praise to the Lord by saying “Amen! Alleluia!” When people say “amen” it means *let it be so!* We already saw that Alleluia means *Praise the Lord!* As the saints and living creatures express their worship, a voice will come from the throne saying, “Praise our God, all you His servants and those who fear Him, both small and great!” We are reminded that all who fear God have the privilege of giving praise to the Lord. It does not matter whether we are small or great, because we will all have this privilege, because we are His servants.

Revelation 19:6-8 says, “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! 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.’ 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.” Here, we see that the great multitude will again rejoice. The sound of this great rejoicing is compared to two things. First, it is compared to the sound of many waters. When you have a large waterfall in a river with much water coming over the falls the sound is so loud, you cannot even hear the shout of a person nearby. Second, the sound is compared to mighty thunderings. Again, this is a sound that is so loud, you can hear nothing else.

This great multitude will be rejoicing for two reasons. First, they will be rejoicing because of the fact that the Lord reigns. “Lord” speaks of the fact that He is the One to whom all things belong. All things belong to the Lord, because He is the Creator of all things. “God” speaks of the One who is the true and living God and is also used to speak of the Trinity. Genesis 1:26 says, “Then God said, ‘Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth.’” Notice that in the very first chapter of the Bible, God uses the plural to speak of Himself. “Let Us make man in Our image.” “Omnipotent” means that *God is the One who has all power and is the ruler of all things*. He is the Almighty One.

Second, the great multitude will be rejoicing because the marriage supper of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready. During the time of Christ, A Jewish wedding had three parts. The betrothal was often arranged by the parents when the future husband and wife were children. Ephesians 1:3-4 says, “Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ, just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love.” We see that these verses are particularly talking about the church, because Ephesians 1:13-14 says, “In Him you also *trusted*, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.” All members of “the church” were chosen before the foundation of the world.

The second part of the wedding occurred when the future husband went to get his bride, and she was presented to him. It also included several days of celebration following the wedding ceremony. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 says, “But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep 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 by no means precede those who are asleep. For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first. Then we who are alive *and* remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words.” The church is taken to heaven at the Rapture.

The third part of the wedding ceremony was the wedding supper, which completed the wedding

ceremony. In 2 Corinthians 11:2, we read that the church is betrothed to Christ as a chaste virgin. In Ephesians 5:23-32, we see that the church is presented as the bride of Christ. Now, here in Revelation 19:7-8, we see that “the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.” We also see that the wife is clothed in fine linen, which is the righteous acts of the saints. As a result, these verses complete the wedding ceremony and the church is now called the wife of Christ, instead of the bride of Christ. We go on to read, in Revelation 19:9-10, “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.’ 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.’”

We see that all those who are called to this marriage supper of the Lamb receive a very special blessing, even though they are not a part of the bride which is the church. All of the Old Testament saints are a part of those who are called to the marriage supper. The church was not revealed until Matthew 16:18, when Christ told Peter and the other disciples, “And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.” Here, we see that the church was still future. It began on the Day of Pentecost, in Acts 2:1, so all Old Testament saints will be called to the wedding supper. We see that the church will be complete when it is taken to heaven at the Rapture, as the church is not mentioned after Revelation 3. As a result, all tribulation saints will be included in those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb.

The angel then told John, “These are the true sayings of God.” We see that John immediately fell at the feet of the angel to worship him. Immediately, the angel told John not to worship him. Instead, the angel said that he was just a fellow servant with John. Colossians 2:18-19 says, “Let no one cheat you of your reward, taking delight in *false* humility and worship of angels, intruding into those things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, and not holding fast to the Head, from whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase *that is* from God.” We are told not to worship angels but to focus on the One who is the Head, Christ. This is a reminder that all worship belongs to the Lord. In fact, this is the message of both the Old and the New Testaments. In the Old Testament, we see that the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. In the New Testament, we are all brethren who have the testimony of Jesus. In addition, we see that all angels have this same message whenever they speak in either the Old or New Testaments. In the same way, we want to help our physical and spiritual children learn to share the message that Jesus is Lord. We want to help them learn to “Worship God!” We also want to help them learn to teach others to “Worship God!” May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain these things to others.