

Revelation 19 - The Second Coming of Christ

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COURSE COMMENTARY

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19:1 - Alleluia!

- **I heard a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven**
The voice (or *phone'*, *noise*) is that of a great multitude which includes the Church, the Tribulation martyrs, and angels.
- **Alleluia!**
This is a transliteration of a Hebrew phrase meaning: *You all praise Jah!* (Ps. 106:48). In its first appearance in the Old Testament, the context, like here, is judgment of the wicked: *Sinners shall be consumed out of the earth, and the wicked shall be no more. Bless Jehovah, O my soul, Hallelujah!* (Ps. 104:35, Darby's Translation).

19:2 - the Harlot judged

- **true and righteous are His judgments**
These same attributes are applied to the Lamb Who rides forth on the white horse. He is said to be *Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges*. God's judgments are accurately assessed (true) and utterly just (righteous).
- **the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication**
"The great harlot" is *the harlot, the great [one]*. This is a unique harlot--the *mother* of harlots (Rev. 17:5). "Corrupt" is *e'theiren* meaning she *ruined, destroyed, seduced, corrupted, and misled*. The earth was corrupted through her fornication with its kings (Rev. 17:1) and inhabitants, over whom she sat (Rev. 17:15).
- **He has avenged on her the blood of His servants**
God's servants include saints, prophets, and apostles--all those who fear and trust him. Throughout history, they have always been a prime target for persecution, but never more so than during the Tribulation. The Harlot was *drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus* (Rev. 17:6). In her *was found the blood of the prophets and saints, and of all who were slain on the earth* (Rev. 18:24). She rode throughout history--on the Beast with seven heads--representing seven sequential empires. God avenged her at the hand of the Beast and his ten kings (Rev. 17:16). See our discussion of [The Great Harlot](#).

19:3 - her smoke rises up

- **her smoke rises up forever and ever**
"Rises up" is *anabai'nei*, present tense, *presently, continually rises*. Like the smoke from the Lake of Fire which describes the torment of the Beast worshipers (Rev. 14:11), it is *continuous* to emphasize the permanence of her destruction. "Forever and ever" is *into the ages of the ages*. The region that was Babylon will be a place of continually burning pitch throughout the Millennial Kingdom (Isa. 34:9).

19:4 - Amen! Alleluia!

- [the twenty-four elders and four living creatures fell down and worshiped](#)
These are the elders and living creatures John first saw in Chapter 4. The elders are most likely representatives of the church. The living creatures are angelic beings of a high order: cherubim. (See the discussion on [Revelation 4](#).) The elders and living creatures are frequently found falling in worship ([Rev. 4:10](#); [5:7-14](#); [7:9-11](#); [Rev. 11:15-16](#)). The participation of the elders and living creatures indicates the great importance attached to the destruction of Babylon by heaven. Her destruction is an important step on the way to establishing the Millennial Kingdom on earth.

19:5-6 - praise our God

- [praise our God all you His servants](#)
The voice is probably that of an angel of high rank, such as one of the living creatures. This is an imperative command: *You all praise!* Those who praise include the martyrs of the Tribulation and all of history. The depth of their persecution empowers the height of their praise!
- [as the sound of many thunderings](#)
Imagine the largest stadium in the world, filled to overflowing with a thundering crowd. Now multiply that by one thousand, ten thousand, even myriad of myriads ([Rev. 5:11](#)). At the signal, they all SHOUT:

Alleluia!

Their praise precedes His victory ([Jdg. 20:18](#)). *Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand* ([Ps. 149:6](#)).

- [the Lord God Omnipotent reigns](#)
"Omnipotent" is *pantokra'tor* : all-powerful, almighty ([Job 42:2](#); [Isa. 40:12-15](#)). *With God all things are possible* ([Mat. 19:26](#)).

19:7 - marriage of the Lamb

- [the marriage of the Lamb has come](#)
The rejoicing is *because* the marriage has come. We believe the bride is the Church, having been previously taken to heaven in the [Rapture of the Church](#). As Eve was united with Adam in marriage, but also of his body ([Gen. 2:21-24](#)), so the Church is baptized into Christ's body by the Holy Spirit ([1Cor. 12:13](#)).

19:7 - Jewish Wedding Analogy

- [The Jewish Wedding Analogy](#)
The scriptures are given in a Jewish context ([Rom. 9:3-5](#)). The marriage of the Lamb is patterned after a Jewish wedding.

Step	Description	Scriptures
Marriage Covenant	The father pays for the bride and establishes the marriage covenant. If the son is old enough, he goes on his own behalf.	Acts 20:28 ; 1Cor. 6:19-20 ; 11:25 ; Eph. 5:25-27
Bridal Chamber	The son returns to his father's house and prepares the bridal chamber.	John 6:62 ; 14:2 ; Acts 1:9-11

Prepared		
Bride Fetched	At a time determined by the father, the groom fetches the bride to bring her to his father's house.	Mat. 24:36 ; John 14:3 ; 1Th. 4:13-18
Bride Cleansed	The bride undergoes ritual cleansing prior to the wedding ceremony.	1Cor. 3:12-15 ; Rev. 19:7-8
Wedding Ceremony	The private wedding ceremony.	Rev. 19:7
Consummation	In the privacy of the bridal chamber the bride and groom consummate the marriage.	Rev. 19:7
Marriage Feast	The celebratory wedding feast which many people attend.	Mat. 22:1-14 ; 25:1-13 ; Luke 12:36

19:7 - Roles in the Wedding Party

- [Marriage roles in the Old Testament](#)

In the *Song of Solomon* and Psalm [45](#), we see mention of supporting roles in the wedding: virgins, companions of the groom, friends. These *attend* the wedding, but they do not get married.

- [Marriage roles in the New Testament](#)

John the Baptist said *He who has the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, who stands and hears him, rejoices greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. Therefore this joy of mine is fulfilled* ([John 3:29](#)). From this, we learn three things: **1)** Christ is a bridegroom; **2)** Christ has a bride (those coming to Him) **3)** John the Baptist is not of the bride, but is the *friend of the bridegroom*.

19:7 - Israel Married to Jehovah

- [Old Testament analogy indicates Israel is the wife of Jehovah](#)

Israel is the unfaithful wife of Jehovah. He has already married her ([Jer. 3:1, 14](#)). She committed adultery so he put her away with a certificate of divorce ([Jer. 3:8](#); [Hos. 2:2](#)). Although she was unfaithful, God promises that he will restore their marriage ([Hos. 2:16, 19-20](#)). Having been a wife, now divorced, and yet to be reunited, she does not qualify as a virgin bride ([Lev. 21:14](#)).

19:7 - Jerusalem Married to God

- [God promises to restore Jerusalem as a bride](#)

God uses the analogy of a groom rejoicing over his bride when describing His restoration of Jerusalem ([Isa. 54:1-15](#); [Isa. 62:1-5](#); [Eze. 16:1-8](#)). It is in this sense that the New Jerusalem is said to be the Lamb's wife ([Rev. 21:2, 9](#)). Although the marriage of the Lamb occurs prior to the Second Coming, these Old Testament promises concerning Jerusalem form the basis for the restoration of the city in the Millennial Kingdom as well as the city being His bride in the eternal state. She will be the ultimate residence of all the saints of every age.

19:7 - Church Betrothed to Christ

- [the bride is the Body of Christ](#)

The wedding analogy is used throughout the New Testament to teach relational truths concerning believers and Christ. Paul told the Corinthian church she was betrothed as a virgin to

Christ (2Cor. 11:2). Paul's extensive and important teaching concerning the *one-flesh* relationship between husbands and wives is *founded upon* the spiritual union between Christ and the Church, His body (Eph. 5:24-30). As Eve is of Adam's body and united to him, so the Church is the *body of Christ* and united with Him by Spirit-baptism (1Cor. 12:13). " On this rock I will build **my church** " (Mat. 16:18).

19:7 - Israel, the Church, the New Jerusalem

- **the bride is the Body of Christ**
 - 1) **Israel** is the bride of Jehovah. Her marriage is in the process of restoration during the Tribulation.
 - 2) **The Church** is in heaven, having been raptured. She is wed to Christ before His return.
 - 3) **Jerusalem** is restored during the Millennial Kingdom--a time of great blessing. Her ultimate restoration is found in the New Jerusalem in the eternal state. As wife of the Lamb, she is the residence of the entire wedding party comprising saints of every age. Then, God and the Lamb will be its temple (Rev. 21:22).

19:7 - made herself ready

- **His wife has made herself ready**
 "Has made herself ready" is *she has prepared herself*. This statement is best understood in the relationship of true Biblical works and faith. True works depend upon faith, but faith is a gift of God. Like Paul, she made herself ready by the power of God working in her (Col. 1:27-29). Her preparation probably includes her judgment at the Judgment Seat (*bema*) of Christ (1Cor. 3:9-15).

19:8 - to her it was granted

- **to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen**
 Jesus taught a parable indicating that wedding garments are required in order to attend the wedding feast (Mat. 22:2-14). The bride obtains her fine linen from the groom (Eph. 5:25-27). Since she wears her garments at the Second Coming, this implies the marriage takes place prior to her return with Christ. The white linen she wears was promised to the overcomers in the church at Sardis (Rev. 3:4). The Laodicean church was told to obtain these garments *from Christ* (Rev. 3:18).
- **the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints**
 "Righteous acts" is *dikaio'mata*, righteous [things]: those of her acts which survived judgment at the Judgment Seat of Christ (1Cor. 3:9-15).

19:9 - the marriage supper

- **blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb**
 They are blessed because attendance at the marriage supper is equivalent with finding entry into the kingdom of God (Luke 14:15). This is one of **seven blessings** given in the book of Revelation. The *sons of the kingdom* are Israel, but they rejected the invitation which then went out to the world. The Roman centurion, a Gentile, found entry to the wedding feast when many Jews did not. (Mat. 8:10-12). At the end of the parable of the wedding feast, Jesus indicated *many are called, but few are chosen* (Mat. 22:14). Those who are chosen are the predestined, the elect of God (Rev. 17:14). Since the bride needs no invitation to her own marriage supper, this invitation is to those saints who are not part of the Church: believers prior to the Day of Pentecost and after the removal of the body of Christ from the earth at the Rapture. They were never baptized

by the Spirit into Christ. The supper occurs during the Millennial Kingdom so that Old Testament saints ([Isa. 26:19](#); [Dan. 12:2](#)) and Tribulation saints ([Rev. 20:4](#)) are resurrected and able to attend.

19:10 - worship God!

- **I fell at his feet to worship him**
John tries to worship the angel, but is reminded that it is God alone Who is to be worshiped ([Ex. 20:3-4](#); [Col. 2:18](#)).
- **the testimony of Jesus**
"Testimony" is *martyri'a* : witness, attestation. The testimony *of Jesus* could mean testimony **provided by** Jesus or testimony **about** Jesus. Although both are true, the context of the book of Revelation (martyrdom and persecution) indicates that testimony *about* Jesus is the reason the saints suffer.
- **is the spirit of prophecy**
Prophecy is empowered by the Holy Spirit ([2S. 23:2](#); [Mat. 22:43](#); [Acts 1:16](#)). The prophets prophesied by the *Spirit of Christ* within them ([1Pe. 1:10-12](#)). No prophecy came by personal motivation, but only as men of God were moved by the Holy Spirit ([2Pe. 1:19](#)).

19:11 - heaven opened

- **He who sat on him was called Faithful and True**
This is the Lamb, riding forth as a glorified man. The overcomer who rode forth at the opening of the first seal also rode a white horse ([Rev. 6:2](#)). He was not the True Overcomer, but an imposter: Antichrist. Now, the True Overcomer rides forth to defeat the false overcomer. Previously, He was called the "faithful witness" ([Rev. 1:5](#)). He alone is a reliable witness to Himself ([John 8:14](#)). He even referred to Himself as "truth" ([John 14:6](#)).
- **in righteousness He judges and makes war**
"He judges and makes war" are both present-tense verbs: *He is judging and making war*. He is actively engaged in these activities *during* His ride. The most extreme slaughter of all history, [The Campaign of Armageddon](#), will be a "just war." His just judgment in overthrowing the Beast and his armies will also characterize His rule during the Millennial Kingdom ([Isa. 9:6-7](#)).

19:12 - many crowns

- **on His head were many crowns**
He no longer wears the crown of thorns ([Mat. 27:29](#)). His many crowns reflect the different aspects of His righteous rule. For example, He will combine both *kingly* and *priestly* rule ([Zec. 6:11-13](#)).
- **He had a name written which no one knew except Himself**
The riddle of His unknown name surfaces many places in Scripture:
 - 1) The proverb writer gives a riddle concerning the name of the Son of God ([Pr. 30:4](#)).
 - 2) God tells Israel to follow the Angel of the Lord and that God's name is in Him ([Ex. 23:21](#)).
 - 2) Jacob wrestles with a man (the Angel of the Lord) and asks His name ([Gen. 32:29](#)).
 - 3) Samson's parents ask the Angel of the Lord concerning His name ([Jdg. 13:6, 18](#)).
 The Angel steadfastly refuses to share His unknown name. This is private information between the Father and the Son and indicates their intimacy is superior to all other relationships.

19:13 - robe dipped in blood

- **robe dipped in blood**

Scripture indicates there will be great slaughter at His coming ([Luke 19:27](#); [Rev. 14:20](#)). This is not *His* blood shed at Calvary at His First Coming. This image is *predictive* of the blood of His enemies which will stain His garments due to the great slaughter when He treads the winepress of the wrath of God ([Isa. 63:3](#)) at His Second Coming.

- **called the Word of God**

A unique title of Jesus used by John the Apostle ([John 1:1, 14](#); [1Jn. 1:1, 5:7](#) [textus receptus]; [Rev. 1:2](#)). This provides further evidence that John the Apostle wrote Revelation. See our discussion concerning [Authorship](#). "The *Logos* or Word is the expression of God's nature in understandable terms, and whether those terms be mercy or judgment they are both equally the message of God. "

19:14 - armies in heaven

- **armies in heaven**

The army is composed of *saints*, a term which includes both angels ([Dan. 8:13](#)) and men ([Ps. 16:3](#); [34:9](#); [Acts 9:13](#)). Joel indicates that God's *mighty ones* will be among them--almost certainly a reference to angels ([Joel 3:11](#)). We also know that believers will be in this company ([Rev. 17:14](#)). Since Old Testament believers are not resurrected until the end of Jacob's time of trouble ([Dan. 12:2](#)) and tribulation saints are not resurrected until they begin their reign in the Millennial Kingdom ([Rev. 20:4](#)), it appears that only the Church--having been resurrected at the Rapture--will ride forth with Christ and the angels.

19:15 - strike the nations

- **out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations**

"Strike" is *pata'xe* : strike down, slay, as inflicting a heavy or fatal blow. The sword represents the *sword of the Spirit*, the word of God ([Eph. 6:17](#)). He will slay them according to God's spoken and written standard--especially the testimony in the ark of the covenant ([Rev. 11:19](#); [15:5](#)). *He shall strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, and with the breath of His lips He shall slay the wicked* ([Isa. 11:4](#) cf. [Isa. 49:2](#)).

- **He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron**

"He Himself will rule" is *He, He shall rule* and emphasizes Christ as the One Whose right it is to rule. After millennia of corrupt rule, the Righteous One, *Shiloh*, "to Him Whose right it is," shall ascend the throne of David on earth. This is the promised rule of the child Who was born by the woman who fled to the wilderness ([Rev. 12:5](#)). His initial rule is *violent*: "they shall be dashed to pieces like the potter's vessel" ([Ps. 2:9](#)). "Rod" is *hra'bdo* : rod, staff, or scepter. Balaam saw this scepter which was to rise from Israel ([Num. 24:17-19](#)). Jacob also prophesied over Judah regarding the scepter ([Gen. 49:10](#)). Nebuchadnezzar's dream records the smashing of earthly kingdoms by Messiah ([Dan. 2:44-45](#)) as does Daniel's night vision ([Dan. 7:13-14, 27](#)).

19:15 - treads the winepress

- **He Himself treads the winepress**

"He Himself" is *He, He is presently treading* which emphasizes that He alone will do the fighting ([Isa. 63:3-5](#)). His feet "as if refined in a furnace" ([Rev. 1:15](#)) foreshadowed the trampling in judgment at His Second Coming.

19:16 - KING OF KINGS

- **KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS**

These expressions are carried over from the Old Testament Hebrew ([Deu. 10:17](#)) which lacked comparative (e.g., *greater*) and superlative (e.g., *greatest*) forms. He is the *supreme King among kings* and the *supreme Lord among lords*.

19:17-18 - gather for the supper

- **gather together for the supper of the great God**

This supper is to be contrasted with the marriage supper ([Rev. 19:9](#)), both of which are hosted by God. Here, God reverses the normal role of sacrifice where *men* sacrifice *animals* to God. Now, *God* sacrifices *men* to *animals*. Jesus indicated that those who were "taken" in judgment at His return would be feasted upon by wild birds ([Mat. 24:27-28](#); [Luke 17:34-37](#) cf. [Job 39:27-30](#)).

19:19 - gathered to make war

- **I saw the beast and the kings of the earth gathered together to make war**

This is the Beast which John saw rise from the sea in [Revelation 13](#). He, his ten kings, and the kings of the earth, were all gathered by unclean spirits to Armageddon ([Rev. 16:13-16](#)). The angel prophesied that they would war against the Lamb and He would overcome them ([Rev. 17:14](#)). These kings of the End are the ones who fail to kiss the Son and wind up fulfilling [Psalm 2](#): *The kings of the earth set themselves and the rulers take counsel together against the LORD and against His Anointed [Messiah], saying, 'Let us break their bonds in pieces and cast away their cords from us.'* ([Ps. 2:2-3](#)). The Second Coming of Christ is God's response: *He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; The Lord shall hold them in derision. Then He shall speak to them in His wrath, And distress them in His deep displeasure* ([Ps. 2:4-5](#)).

- **gathered together to make war against Him**

"Gathered together" is *synegme'na*, perfect tense: having already gathered together. They were gathered by the unclean spirits to Armageddon ([Rev. 16:13-16](#)). They have unwittingly followed Joel's instructions, they have beat their plowshares into swords and their pruning hooks into spears ([Joel 3:9](#)). See our discussion of [The Campaign of Armageddon](#). *My determination is to gather the nations to My assembly of kingdoms, to pour on them My indignation, all My fierce anger; all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of My jealousy* ([Zep. 3:8](#)).

19:20 - captured

- **the beast was captured and with him the False Prophet**

The beast who arose from the sea--the Antichrist ([Rev. 13:1](#)), and the beast from the earth--the False Prophet ([Rev. 13:11](#)), are captured without a battle. "Captured" is *epia'sthe* : to seize, arrest, take into custody.

- **by which he deceived those who received the mark**

The power of the False Prophet can only be exercised in the presence of the Beast so they are found together. The main function of the False Prophet was to point to the Beast using miraculous signs. The signs themselves are probably legitimate miracles, but what they attest to (worship of the Beast) is false. The False Prophet was a tool of Satan, but ultimately serves God ([2Th. 2:9-12](#)).

- **these two were cast alive into the lake of fire**

"These two were cast alive" is: *while living, they were thrown, these two*. The emphasis is on

their unique treatment being cast into the lake *while still alive*. No other unsaved individuals in all history meet their fate. Their armies, once killed, will stand in judgment at the Great White Throne ([Rev. 20:11](#)), but these two will not. This implies their torment is not mitigated by degree. In the process of being cast into the lake, they are killed ([Dan. 7:11](#); [2Th. 2:8](#)). The Lake of Fire does not annihilate its victims--they are still there one thousand years later when Satan joins them ([Rev. 20:10](#)).

19:21 - birds filled with flesh

- [killed with the sword which proceeded from the mouth of Him](#)
Jesus *Himself* treads the winepress ([Isa. 63:3](#); [Rev. 19:15](#)). The *sword* represents the Word of God which sets forth the standard by which they are killed and also prophesied their destruction. The bloodshed at [The Campaign of Armageddon](#) is enormous ([Deu. 32:39](#); [Isa. 34:1-3](#); [Rev. 14:20](#)).

19:21 - sheep and goat judgment

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- [The Sheep and Goat Judgment](#)
Shortly after [The Campaign of Armageddon](#), Jesus takes up the throne of David and all the nations are gathered before him ([Mat. 25:31](#)). These are people who are left alive who were not participants in the armies at Armageddon. They are judged by how they treated Jesus' "brethren" during the Tribulation. The sheep and His brethren enter the Millennial Kingdom ([Mat. 25:34](#)) , whereas the goats are bound for "everlasting punishment" ([Mat. 25:46](#)).

For additional information on this topic, see the [commentary](#).