

Lesson Twenty Two

The Coming of Christ (19:1-21)

The previous chapter described the fall of Babylon, the capital of the Beast's empire. The first six verses of chapter 19 pictures thanksgiving for God's judgment on the harlot. The following verses and the remainder of Revelation describe the events of the consummation.

Rejoicing in Heaven (19:1-6)

19:1. The unnamed heavenly multitude erupts in a fourfold "Hallelujah" praise. The singers are most likely angels (cp. 5:11). Hallelujah means "Praise Jehovah." Praise is offered to God for His salvation, glory and power.

19:2. The Great Harlot is judged. God has been just in His judgment and has repaid Babylon for her sins. God has answered the prayers of martyrs (6:10) and persecuted saints (8:4).

19:3. Babylon was destroyed by fire through the acts of the Beast and the 10 nation confederacy (17:16), and through the judgments of God (18:8). The smoke of God's judgment is eternal; it "rises up forever and ever."

19:4. The 24 elders and four living creatures join this song of praise to God.

19:5. An unidentified voice from the throne bids all rightful people on earth to join in the heavenly praise.

19:6. The singing of the great multitude sounds like waterfalls and a thunderstorm. The judgment against the Harlot is the first action that prepares for God's reign on the earth.

The Marriage of the Lamb and the Coming of Christ (19:7-16)

The coming of Christ and the gathering of His followers has already been announced (11:15; 14:14). Jesus spoke of His coming and a marriage banquet (Matthew 22:1-14; 25:1-13). It is natural and consistent with scripture to place the Marriage Banquet with the Coming of Christ. Christ's coming occurs following the fall of the Great Harlot.

Announcing the Marriage of the Lamb (19:7-10)

19:7a. Christians, or the church, is the bride of Christ (Ephesians 5:25).

19:7b-8. Christ prepares saints through His work of salvation and Believers respond by living in His cleansing (Ephesians 5:25; I John 2:2-3; II Corinthians 7:1). The bride puts on the wedding garment that has been “given to her” and made pure by the blood of Christ. The bride wears the robe of “righteous acts” by her perseverance and keeping God’s commandments (14:12).

19:9. An angel announces a blessing on those who are invited to the Marriage Banquet. Christians are both the bride and invited guests (Matthew 25:1-13). Believers are both invited guests (Matthew 22:1-14) and the bride. The phrase, “These are the true words of God” is to assure Believers who anticipate the fulfillment of this great event.

19:10. John is so overwhelmed with the announcement of the angel that he begins to worship the messenger. John is quickly rebuked. The angel describes himself as a servant just like John and other faithful saints. Jesus alone is the giver of prophecy (cp. Chapter 5).

The Coming of Christ (19:11-19)

The Marriage of the Lamb is directly connected to the coming of Jesus. The NT pictures Jesus coming as a victorious warrior king.

19:11-13. Once more John sees heaven open (4:1; 11:19; 15:5). John sees a white horse. White is symbolic of purity and victory, and is always used of that which comes from God. “His name is called, The Word of God” (John 1:1, 14). Jesus was previously identified as Faithful and True (3:14). Jesus can be trusted to return and bring history to consummation. Jesus will bring judgment and conclude the final war on earth. Jesus was earlier described with eyes like a burning fire (1:14). Jesus returns with diadem crowns. He is the King of kings and Lord of lords (17:14). Jesus’ additional unknown name suggests the incomprehensible nature of Christ. Jesus wears a robe dipped in blood. This is not His blood but the blood of His enemies that results from battle.

19:14. Accompanying Jesus is a heavenly army arrayed in white apparel. This heavenly army could be a host of angels (Matthew 25:31; II Thessalonians 1:7) or saints (I Thessalonians 3:13; II Thessalonians 1:10) who have gone to heaven and return with Jesus. John previously heard Jesus describe saints in a similar way (Revelation 3:4-5a). The fact that they ride white horses and share in Christ’s victory may suggest John particularly envisioned saints rather than angels. However, both groups accompany Jesus at His return.

19:15. Jesus alone destroys His enemies. He does so with one weapon – the sword of His word. Ruling with a “rod of iron” suggests the strength, might, and complete rule of Christ at His coming.

9:16. John once more references the name of Jesus as King of kings and Lord of lords (17:14). His name flows from His robe to cover His thigh. He is the sovereign Lord.

The Conclusion of the Battle of Armageddon (19:17-21)

The battle of Armageddon was initiated in the sixth trumpet Judgment (9:13-21). This same battle escalates in the sixth bowl judgment (16:12-16). This passage describes the conclusion of this great and final battle on earth before Jesus returns.

19:17. John sees an angel standing in the sun so all the birds of the air could see him and gather for a great supper. This supper stands in contrast to the Marriage Supper of the Lamb (19:7-10).

19:18. The majority of nations, kings, and citizens of the world follow the Beast. They will be destroyed in total, with no exceptions (cp. Ezekiel 39:18-20).

19:19. The two sides of the battle is clearly delineated. The Beast leads the kings of the earth. The returning Christ and His army (19:14) join the battle located at Armageddon.

19:20. The defeat of the Beast and the false prophet stand at center stage. They are thrown into the lake of fire.

19:21. The remainder of people on earth are killed with the sword of Jesus' word. All the kings of the earth and people who follow the Beast are destroyed. They die and go to Hades or hell. Following the Millennium, they and Satan join the Beast and False Prophet in the lake of fire (20:13-15).