

Session 23 The Bride is ready - The Bridegroom is Regal Revelation 19v7-16

The revelation of the Bride, v7-10.

The final Hallelujah acts as a hinge point. It concludes the outpouring of worship on account of God's righteous judgements on the prostitute who is now forever gone from the scene. **In her place is the Bride**, a magnificent contrast to the corrupt and filthy harlot who has cruelly persecuted and humiliated her.

The true situation is now revealed, from the Heavenly perspective.

The Bride is introduced briefly, v7-8, leaving the details to a later vision, chapter 21, (c.f. the beast, 11:7, and Babylon, 14:8).

The emphasis is on exuberant joy and gladness, and worship of God who has accomplished His great purpose in history.

"Rejoice and be glad and give Him glory."

Joy is associated with weddings. This one is very special and those called on to rejoice are also the Bride herself.

The time has come at last - waiting and suffering are forever past.

The story of the betrothal and wedding is woven through Scripture:

- **Israel was God's wife**, Isaiah 54:5, 49:18, 61:10-11, 62:1-5, Jer. 2:1-3, 31:31-33, Ezek. 16:7-14, Hos. 2:16-20, S of S.
- **The Church**, Mark 2:19-20, John 3:29, Matt. 22: 1-14, 25:1-13, 2Cor. 11:2, Eph. 5:25-27.

God has brought this about and in response the Bride has made herself ready, v7. She is ready for the Messiah (Lamb) to return, by remaining faithful to Him in His absence, 1:9, 2:10, 13, 13:10, 14:12, 17:14, in the face of hostility and persecution, 2:2-3, 19, 3:1, 6:9, 12:11, 17, 13:10, 14:12.

They have been kept by the power of God, 1Pet. 1:5 in holiness, 1Pet. 1:13-23.

Her **clothing** reveals her character, 3:4, 6:11, 7:9, 13, 14, in contrast with the harlot, 17:4. It **represents righteousness, given to her** by God, 7:14, Eph. 2:8-9, Phil. 2:13, and which **she has put on**, Isaiah 61:10, Rom. 13:11-14, Gal. 3:27, 5:22-23 Eph. 2:10, Phil. 2:12, Col. 3:1-10, 1Pet. 1:15-16, 5:5.

White garments also symbolise victory. God's righteous acts have also given her vindication and victory, 19:2, 14.

The invitation to the wedding v9-10

John is commanded to write (this underlines the overwhelming importance of the statement), **"Blessed are those called to the marriage supper of the Lamb"**, v9, c.f. Isaiah 25:6, Matt. 8:11, Luke 14:15, 22:30. This is the ultimate blessing, to be amplified in chapter 21.

We are at one and the same time the bride and the wedding guests, Matt. 22:1-14.

This is the supreme honour; to refuse it is the ultimate insult, resulting in eternal loss.

"These are the true sayings of God" is a kind of "Amen" - a solemn declaration guaranteed by the character of God Himself. Again the importance of the previous statement is emphasised.

John is tempted to worship the angel - the messenger, v10, c.f. 22:8-9, no doubt because of his dazzling appearance, 18:1, 21. The angel was swift to prevent this, **"Don't do it!"**. He knows his place, Heb.1:6-8, - a fellow slave along with John and other believers. Do not be fooled by appearances or charisma. Before God we are all on the same level as creatures.

Worship God!, Luke 4:8. We must not seek any kind of hero worship or celebrity - characteristics of Babylon.

The focus is not on us - people or angels - but the testimony of Jesus, the testimony He brought as the revelation of the Father and for which He suffered, to which the prophets witnessed, and which is the essence of all true prophecy, John 14:25--26, 16:5-9.

What John saw v11-21

- **The victorious Lamb v11-16**

Babylon has received her just judgement and the true bride has been revealed. Now the heavenly Bridegroom appears.

Before the wedding, 21:2, He will destroy the false trinity that has corrupted creation and persecuted His people, the bride, first the two beasts and their immediate followers, 19:19-21, and then the dragon who has deceived and empowered them, 20:1-10.

The Lamb, v7, is displayed as the all conquering King of Kings, v16.

He emerges from an open Heaven, the presence of the Creator God, v11, 16, c.f. Rev. 4. The heavens were opened when He was anointed with the Holy Spirit, Matt. 3:16-17 empowered to fulfil the saving and judging roles of the Messiah, 3:11-12. The Lamb has conquered and redeemed through His obedient suffering, Rev. 1: 5, 5:1-10; now He takes His great power to reign and judge, 11:15. It is the consummation of the process that began at His incarnation.

The scene describes the war in prospect and simultaneously portrays the victory procession - in some respects after the fashion of a victorious Roman general and his army; He rides a white war horse (contrast Zech 9:9, John 12:14), followed by an army dressed in pure white linen, 3:4, and riding white horses, (symbolic of victory).

He has four descriptive names:

- **Faithful and True**, c.f. "The Faithful Witness", 1:5, "The Amen, the Faithful and True Witness", 3:14. He manifested this in His earthly life, Matt. 3:17, 17:5, John 17:4, and now in His role as Judge, 19:2, and the One who reveals the true and faithful words of God, 21:5, 22:6, c.f. 1:1.

As the One who is faithful and true, "in righteousness He judges and makes war".

This is an activity that simultaneously brings deliverance and vindication to His people and just retribution on the enemies of God and His people, 6:9-11, 12:17, 13:7.

He was faithful to His calling as the Father's Apostle and High Priest, Heb. 3:1-2; now He is faithful as the agent of God's justice. In both capacities He expresses the truth about God and the created order, 3:14.

Revelation repeatedly emphasizes that everything that God does is in righteousness.

His eyes are like a flame of fire, 1:14. **The Lamb has seven eyes, the sevenfold Spirit of God**, 5:6, - all seeing, all knowing, 3:18, 23, and ready to take appropriate action, 3:20-23.

On His head are many diadems. These are true, in contrast to the false ones worn by the dragon, 12:3, **and the beast**, 13:1. **He has earned the right to wear the crowns**, 5:9, 12, c.f. 2Tim. 4:8.

As the faithful Son of Man He has been given the authority to judge, John 5:25-30

- **A Name written that no one knew except Himself**, v12b. A similar statement was made about the overcomers, 2:17. There it was a "given name" presumably describing identity, character, or destiny, as was common with biblical names. Jesus has many recorded names, (calculated at about 100), all relating to His identity and various aspects of His work and actions as God manifest in human flesh. We need to remember that He, The Word, is the eternal God. We do not know everything about Him. **He is beyond human understanding and definition**, the One whom Isaiah saw in his vision, Is. 6 c.f. John 12:41, and we cannot penetrate to the heart of the mystery.

Moses asked God for His Name, Ex. 3:13, and was given an enigmatic reply - **the One Who is. Jesus used this Name for Himself**, John 8:58.

Like Jacob we must accept our limits and respect the boundaries, Gen. 32:29-30, c.f. Judges 13:17-22;

His Name is wonderful. It is written in the eternal decrees of God - it is unchangeable and beyond reach.

- **The Word of God**, v13-15a. **"His Name is called"** - this is a very Hebrew form of expression. He is **the eternal Word** and wisdom of God,. He is the **Word by whom all things were made**, John 1:3-4.
He is **the Word made flesh, revealing the Father**, John 1:14, 18, 14:9, 17:6-8, 2Cor. 4:6.

Here He is **the Word of God who is the agent of the purposes of God in judgement.**

He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood - prophetic of victory over His enemies, prefigured in the judgement on Edom, Isaiah 63:1-6, c.f. Rev. 14:17-20.

He leads the armies of Heaven, v14. **He is the LORD of Hosts**, Psalm 46: 7, 11, 84:1, 8, 12, Isaiah - angelic hosts and also His saints, Rev 5: 9-10, 14:4, Zech. 14:5b, Jude v14-15. His saints will meet Him as He comes in glory and follow Him in His triumphant victory over all the powers of evil, 2Thess. 1:6-10, 1Thess. 4:16-17. This is the only "rapture" of which the Bible speaks. The retinue are also clothed in white, clean, fine linen and riding on white horses.

They have responded to His word share in His holiness and His victory, 2:26-27.

His word is like a sword with which He strikes the nations, 1:16, and also unrepentant and corrupt members of the professing visible church, 2:12-16; those who have not responded to the word that reveals motives and brings about change, Heb. 4: 11-13.

His word received is a creative word that brings healing and life; His word is otherwise destructive in judgement and death, c.f. Isaiah 40:6-8.

- **King of Kings and Lord of Lords**, v15b-16.

The Scriptures portray the glory of the Messianic King, Psalm 45:1-9, 110: 1-7, Isaiah 9:6-7, 11:1-10, Dan. 7:13-14, Zech. 14:3-4, 9.

He will rule the nations with a rod of iron, Psalm 2:9, (shepherd them with His club to rescue/protect the sheep). In this Psalm 2 God designates the Messiah as His King, v2, 6, c.f. Psalm 110.

It is the Father's appointment, Rev. 2:27, Acts 4:24-28, Col. 1:15-19, Phil. 2:9-11.

Jesus shares His rule and reign with His people, His bride, Rev. 2:25-27, 3:21, 5:10, c.f. Dan.7:23-27, Matt. 19:27-28, 2Tim. 2:11-13.

He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God, v15b, echoing and expanding on 14:19-20, c.f. Isaiah 63:1-6.