

God Redeems “the Holy City”

Part 1: Halleluia and the Seven Visions of the End
Revelation 19:1-20:15



Revelation 19

¹ After this I heard what sounded like the roar of a great multitude in heaven shouting:

“Hallelujah!
Salvation and glory and power belong to our God,
² for true and just are his judgments.
He has condemned the great prostitute
who corrupted the earth by her adulteries.
He has avenged on her the blood of his servants.”

³ And again they shouted:

“Hallelujah!
The smoke from her goes up for ever and ever.”

⁴ The twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God, who was seated on the throne. And they cried:

“Amen, Hallelujah!”

⁵ Then a voice came from the throne, saying:

“Praise our God,
all you his servants,
you who fear him,
both great and small!”

The Great Hallelujah -- Praise God's Victory

- Hallelujah—“Praise the Lord”
- Great Multitude (cf. great multitude 7:9-10, twenty four elders 4:4-8)
- “Salvation to our God”
 - Not- Gloating but the celebration of the correction of injustice.
 - Vindication (cf. Romans 12:14-21)
 - Smoke vs. Incense (5:8, 8:3-4)
 - Invitation to Praise (v. 5; cf. 5:11-14; 8:3-5)¹

¹ But the most obvious fact about praise-whether of God or any thing-strangely escaped me. I thought of it in terms of compliment, approval, or the giving of honor. I had never noticed that all enjoyment spontaneously overflows into praise unless (sometimes even if) shyness or the fear of boring others is deliberately brought in to check it. The world rings with praise-lovers praising their mistresses, readers their favorite poet, walkers praising the countryside, players praising their favorite game-praise of weather, wines, dishes, actors, motors, horses, colleges, countries, historical personages, children, flowers, mountains, rare stamps, rare beetles, even sometimes politicians or scholars. I had not noticed how the humblest, and at the same time most balanced and capacious, minds, praised most, while the cranks, misfits and malcontents praised least....

I had not noticed either that just as men spontaneously praise whatever they value, so they spontaneously urge us to join them in praising it: "Isn't she lovely? Wasn't it glorious? Don't you think that magnificent?" The Psalmists in telling everyone to praise God are doing what all men do when they speak of what they care about. My whole, more general, difficulty about the praise of God depended on my absurdly denying to us, as regards the supremely Valuable, what we delight to do, what indeed we can't help doing, about everything else we value.

I think we delight to praise what we enjoy because the praise not merely expresses but completes the enjoyment; it is its appointed consummation. (C. S. Lewis, *Reflections on the Psalms* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1958, pp. 93-95)

⁶ Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting:

“Hallelujah!

For our Lord God Almighty reigns.

⁷ Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory!

For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready.

⁸ Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear.”

(Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of God’s holy people.)

⁹ Then the angel said to me, “Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!” And he added, “These are the true words of God.”

¹⁰ At this I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, “Don’t do that! I am a fellow servant with you and with your brothers and sisters who hold to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For it is the Spirit of prophecy who bears testimony to Jesus.”

¹¹ I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and wages war. ¹² His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. ¹³ He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God. ¹⁴ The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. ¹⁵ Coming out of his mouth is a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. “He will rule them with an iron scepter.”^[a] He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. ¹⁶ On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

Praise for the Wedding

- The reign of God vs. the usurpers
- Lamb and the Bride
- God/Christ & People of God/Israel/Church
- OT (Hos. 2:14-20; Isa. 62:5; Jer. 2:2)
- Gospels (Mark 2:19; John 3:29)
- Paul (2 Cor. 11:2; Eph. 5:25-32)
- Fine Linen (cf. Filthy Rags Isa. 64:6)

Invitation to Wedding (to be the Bride)

- Beatitude for those invited (repeated 22:16-17)
- Warning against worship of the messenger.

Seven Visions of the End

- “Then I saw...” (19:11, 17; 20:1, 4, 11, 21:1) missing at 20:7.
- “Here is no calendarization of the End, but a tour through an eschatological art gallery in which the theme of God’s victory at the end of history is treated in seven different pictures, each complete in itself with its own message and with little concern for chronology.”²

The Return of Christ (Parousia)

- Flaming Eyes (1:14)
- Sword from his mouth (1:16; 2:12)
- Jesus is the Word of God (John 1, Heb. 1, 4)
- Other pictures of the Parousia: Mark 13; Luke 17; 1 Thes. 4; 2 Thes. 1; 1 Cor. 15)
- Bloody Garments (Isaiah 63:1-3)
- Rod of Iron (Psalm 2:9)
- Winepress of Wrath: Rev. 14:17-20)
- Army of the Saints (martyrs, Rev. 7:14; cf. Rom 8:34-39)
- Title: King of Kings. Lord of Lords

² E. Boring, Revelation: p. 195.

¹⁷ And I saw an angel standing in the sun, who cried in a loud voice to all the birds flying in midair, “Come, gather together for the great supper of God, ¹⁸ so that you may eat the flesh of kings, generals, and the mighty, of horses and their riders, and the flesh of all people, free and slave, great and small.”

¹⁹ Then I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to wage war against the rider on the horse and his army. ²⁰ But the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet who had performed the signs on its behalf. With these signs he had deluded those who had received the mark of the beast and worshiped its image. The two of them were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur. ²¹ The rest were killed with the sword coming out of the mouth of the rider on the horse, and all the birds gorged themselves on their flesh.

The Thousand Years

Revelation 20: ¹ And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain. ² He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years. ³ He threw him into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him, to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended. After that, he must be set free for a short time.

Three Senses of the Parousia

1. That Christ came as a revelation of God and Never left. Out pouring of the Spirit is Christ’s continual coming.
2. Christ is departed but “comes” again in judgment and grace within the events of History and the experience of the church and individuals responding conditionally to prayer/repentance/ rebellion.

3. Christ is heaven but will return unconditionally at the end of history to bring this age to its completion and establish God’s new order.

The Last Battle

- Carrion Feast
- Defining characteristic is not social but relational to Jesus
- Wedding Feast or Feast of the Vanquished? Choose.
- The Anti- Christ (Beast) and Anti-Spirit (False Prophet) –Emperor and Culture
- Lake of Fire

Satan Bound

- The Key and the Chain: “Locked, Sealed and Kept” but not destroyed (Isa. 24:2)
- Dragon/ Devil/ Satan still endures yet is constrained.
- A Reprieve from “Deceiving the Nations”
- What does this say about the power of evil?
 - Limited
 - Under God’s Sovereignty
 - Temporary

⁴ I saw thrones on which were seated those who had been given authority to judge. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded because of their testimony about Jesus and because of the word of God. They had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life and reigned with Christ a thousand years. ⁵ (The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended.) This is the first resurrection. ⁶ Blessed and holy are those who share in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years.

The Judgment of Satan

⁷ When the thousand years are over, Satan will be released from his prison ⁸ and will go out to deceive the nations in the four corners of the earth—Gog and Magog—and to gather them for battle. In number they are like the sand on the seashore. ⁹ They marched across the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of God’s people, the city he loves. But fire came down from heaven and devoured them. ¹⁰ And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

The Judgment of the Dead

¹¹ Then I saw a great white throne and him who was seated on it. The earth and the heavens fled from his presence, and there was no place for them. ¹² And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Another book was opened, which is the book of life. The dead were judged according to what they had done as recorded in the books. ¹³ The sea gave up the dead that were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead that were in them, and each person was judged according to what they had done. ¹⁴ Then

death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. The lake of fire is the second death. ¹⁵ Anyone whose name was not found written in the book of life was thrown into the lake of fire.

The Millennium

- A Reprieve
- Pre-, Post-, or A-
- Christ is Reigning, and his martyr church with him.
- Priests
- Kings: Ezekiel 37 (cf. 1 Cor. 4:8; 6:2-3)

The Defeat of Gog and Magog: Satan’s Last Stand

- Back to “Deceiving the nations”
- Gog and Magog (Ezekiel 38-39)
- Evil must be magnified to its fullest before being destroyed.
- “Resist the Devil and he will flee from you”
- Lords Prayer, “Deliver us from Evil”
- Eternal Torment



The Last Judgment

- White Throne
- The Books
- Lambs Book of Life (13:8, 17:8; cf. Ps. 139:13-16)
- Saved by Grace Eph. 2:8-10; Phil. 2:12-13
- God’s Courtroom Romans 8:31-34
- Death and Hades (1 Cor. 15:28, Isa. 25:6-9)
- The Second Death
- Judgment is no idle threat...21:8, 27