

**The Book Of Revelation
Study 90**

Revelation 19:4-6 (NASB)

⁴ *And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sits on the throne saying, "Amen. Hallelujah!"*

⁵ *And a voice came from the throne, saying, "Give praise to our God, all you His bond-servants, you who fear Him, the small and the great."*

⁶ *Then I heard something like the voice of a great multitude and like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, saying, "Hallelujah! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns."*

As the first part of this chapter unfolds we see that it gives us five reasons for heaven's joy and rejoicing.

Heaven rejoices because full salvation has come,

It rejoices because justice is meted out,

Because rebellion is ended,

Because God is now in control,

Because the marriage of the Lamb is completed.

We have already looked at the first three of these reasons, and now we want to look at the last two.

BECAUSE GOD IS NOW IN CONTROL

In agreement with the angelic chorus, hallelujahs ring out from other heavenly residents.

The **twenty-four elders** are best seen as representatives of the church

The **four living creatures** are cherubim, These are creatures that serve the throne.

These two groups have **worshiped** God throughout Revelation.

Prostrate before God's **throne** the two new additions to the heavenly chorus cried out, "**Amen. Hallelujah!**" That phrase comes from Psalm 106:48

Psalm 106:48 (NASB)

⁴⁸ *Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, From everlasting even to everlasting. And let all the people say, "Amen." Praise the LORD!*

It indicates their solemn agreement with the heavenly chorus already rejoicing over Babylon's downfall.

The text does not identify the owner of the **voice that came from the throne**, but it is likely an angel, since he refers to God as **our God**.

The voice authoritatively calls another group to join in the anthem of praise, saying, "**Give praise to our God, all you His bond-servants, you who fear Him, the small and the great.**"

The redeemed believers in heaven are described as God's **bond-servants**, and those **who fear Him**.

The all-inclusive phrase **the small and the great** transcends all human categories and distinctions to embrace everyone. All the redeemed are called to praise God.

When the redeemed obeyed the command from the heavenly voice and added their voices to the heavenly chorus, the dramatic sound John heard was **something like the voice of a great multitude**.

The loud chorus of praise rose to a deafening crescendo, which the apostle likened to **the sound of many waters, and the sound of mighty peals of thunder**.

The fitting finale to the heavenly oratorio of praise is a fourth **"Hallelujah!"** followed by the motive for it, **For the Lord our God, the almighty reigns."**

The evil world system has been completely destroyed, and God's kingdom has come in its fullness. The usage of **Hallelujah** is reminiscent of Psalms chapters 146 to 150, which repeatedly offer praise for God's sovereign rule and eternal fellowship with the redeemed. The title **Almighty** is used nine times in Revelation (V.- 15; 1:8; 4:8; 11:17; 15:3; 16:7, 14; 21:22).

BECAUSE THE MARRIAGE OF THE LAMB IS COMPLETED

Revelation 19:7-10 (NASB)

⁷ *"Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready."*

⁸ *It was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.*

⁹ *Then he *said to me, "Write, 'Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.'" And he *said to me, "These are true words of God."*

¹⁰ *Then I fell at his feet to worship him. But he *said to me, "Do not do that; I am a fellow servant of yours and your brethren who hold the testimony of Jesus; worship God. For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."*

The heavenly praise continues with a call for gladness, rejoicing, and giving God **glory** for yet a fifth reason, **the marriage of the Lamb**.

The imagery of marriage is used frequently in Scripture.

A marriage was a single greatest celebration and social event of the biblical world.

Wedding preparations and celebrations in ancient times were even more elaborate and involved than those of today and also lasted longer.

They consisted of three distinct stages.

^{1st} This was the betrothal, or engagement. This was an arrangement by both sets of parents contracting the marriage of their children.

It was legally binding and could only be broken by a divorce. (Matt. 1:18-19)

A betrothal contract was often signed long before the children reached the marriageable age of thirteen or fourteen.

Since marriage represented the union of two families, it was natural for the parents to be involved. And there were years of preparation for the time of marriage, as the boy prepared for his bride.

2. The second stage of the wedding was the presentation, a time of festivities just before the actual ceremony.

Those festivities could last up to a week or more, depending on the economic and social status of the bride and groom.

3. The third and most significant stage of a wedding was the actual ceremony, during which the vows were exchanged. At the end of the presentation festivities, the groom and his attendants would go to the bride's house and take her and her bridesmaids to the ceremony.

After the ceremony would come a final meal, followed by the consummation of the marriage.

Scripture uses the familiar imagery of a wedding to picture the Lord's relationship with His church.

2 Corinthians 11:2 (NASB)

² For I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy; for I betrothed you to one husband, so that to Christ I might present you as a pure virgin.

The Church's betrothal contract was signed in eternity past when the Father promised the Son a redeemed people and wrote their name in the Book of Life.

The Apostle Paul described the church's presentation in Ephesians;

Ephesians 5:25-27 (NASB)

²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her,

²⁶ so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word,

²⁷ that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless.

That presentation will take place at the Rapture.

Speaking of both the present time of preparation, as He makes a home for His bride, and the moment of presentation when He comes for her, Jesus said:

John 14:2-3 (NASB)

² "In My Father's house are many dwelling places; if it were not so, I would have told you; for I go to prepare a place for you.

³ "If I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself, that where I am, there you may be also.

In the imagery of an ancient wedding, the Rapture marks the time when the Bridegroom, the Lord Jesus Christ take His bride to His Father's house.

During the tribulation, the raptured Church will be presented in heaven. But at the end of the 7 years of joyous fellowship and wonderful celebration, the time will come for the wedding ceremony, the marriage of the Lamb.

That final union of the Bridegroom and the bride is marked by a great supper.

Now the entire heavenly chorus, including angels V.1, the twenty-four elders V.4, the four living Creatures V. 4, and all the hosts of the redeemed V. 5, is exhorted to **rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him** because all the preparation is completed and **the marriage of the Lamb has come.**

Betrothed in Eternity Past, presented in the Father's house since the Rapture, the church is now ready for the wedding ceremony to begin.

That ceremony will coincide with the establishment of the millennial kingdom, and stretch throughout that thousand year period to be finally consummated in the new heavens and the new earth. (21:1-2)

The idea of a thousand-year-long ceremony may seem farfetched; yet it is no more difficult than several thousand years of betrothal.

It must be remembered that "a thousand years in God's sight are like yesterday when it passes by.

Psalm 90:4 (NASB)

⁴ *For a thousand years in Your sight Are like yesterday when it passes by, Or as a watch in the night.*

2 Peter 3:8 (NASB)

⁸ *But do not let this one fact escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day.*

In the new heavens and the new earth, the bride concept will be expanded to include not only the church, but also all the redeemed of all ages as the New Jerusalem become the bridal city. (21:1-2)

In preparation for her marriage to the Lamb, **His bride has made herself ready. That was not of her own works**, but rather by God's gracious working.

Paul taught that believers, by God's grace, participate in His work in their lives.

Philippians 2:12-13 (NASB)

¹² *So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling;*

¹³ *for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.*

To the Colossians he wrote:

Colossians 1:29 (NASB)

²⁹ *For this purpose also I labor, striving according to His power, which mightily works within me.*

The bride has made herself ready in the power of God, by the grace of God, through the work of the Spirit of God.

Purged from all sin and impurity, she is a flawless, blameless, unblemished virgin.

Having been presented glorified, purified, and spotless before God's throne, **it is given to the church, to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean.**

Fine linen was expensive and beautiful cloth like that worn by Joseph, and David, and Mordecai; The word **bright** *lampros*, means glistening, shining, or radiant.

Clean, is translated "Pure" .

Such dazzling garments were worn earlier in Revelation by angels, and will be the clothing of the armies of heaven that accompany Christ when He returns to earth. (V.14)

The **Fine linen**, with which the bride is clothed in the vision represents **the righteous acts of the saints.**

At salvation, believers were clothed with Christ's righteousness, imputed the them.

Romans 4:5-6 (NASB)

⁵ *But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness,*

⁶ *just as David also speaks of the blessing on the man to whom God credits righteousness apart from works:*

At this time the church is clothed with a righteousness of its own.

Because the glorified believers are intrinsically righteous, like the holy angels.

Not only will the church have only an imputed righteousness, but also then an imparted holy perfection.

Then, the angel who had been speaking with John **said to the apostle, "write, Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb."**

The word **Blessed**, here means, happy, joyous, satisfied, and fulfilled.

The recipients of this blessing are **those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.**

That they are invited guests, marks them as a distinct group from the church, since a bride would hardly be invited to her own wedding.

These guests represent Old Testament believers.

Matt. 8:11 and Luke 13:28 both refer to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob as being in the kingdom, and Luke 13:28 also mentions the prophets.

All the heroes of the faith mentioned in Hebrews 11 will be among the invited guests

John the Baptist, who described himself as the friend of the bridegroom. He will also be there as a guest.

All the Tribulation saints, glorified and still alive on earth and entering the millennial kingdom, will be guests.

Some may question why the church age believers should be granted the honor of being the bride, while believers from other ages are merely guests.

But one may equally ask why God singled out Israel to be the covenant people. The only answer to both questions is that God sovereignly purposed that it be so.

It must be remembered that the wedding imagery is just that; imagery that is not reality, but pictures God's intimate union with His people.

There will be no second hand citizens in God's kingdom, just as all the participants in a wedding enjoy the celebration.

And also remember that in the New Heavens and the New Earth, as said before, the imagery of the bride will be expanded to encompass all he redeemed from all ages (21:1-2)

Israel looked forward to this great wedding banquet:

Isaiah 25:6-10 (NASB)

⁶ *The LORD of hosts will prepare a lavish banquet for all peoples on this mountain; A banquet of aged wine, choice pieces with marrow, And refined, aged wine.*

⁷ *And on this mountain He will swallow up the covering which is over all peoples, Even the veil which is stretched over all nations.*

⁸ *He will swallow up death for all time, And the Lord GOD will wipe tears away from all faces, And He will remove the reproach of His people from all the earth; For the LORD has spoken.*

⁹ *And it will be said in that day, "Behold, this is our God for whom we have waited that He might save us. This is the LORD for whom we have waited; Let us rejoice and be glad in His salvation."*

¹⁰ *For the hand of the LORD will rest on this mountain, And Moab will be trodden down in his place As straw is trodden down in the water of a manure pile.*

Isaiah 26 also records one of the joyous songs the redeemed of Israel will sing:

Isaiah 26:1-4 (NASB)

¹ *In that day this song will be sung in the land of Judah: "We have a strong city; He sets up walls and ramparts for security.*

² *"Open the gates, that the righteous nation may enter, The one that remains faithful.*

³ *"The steadfast of mind You will keep in perfect peace, Because he trusts in You.*

⁴ *"Trust in the LORD forever, For in GOD the LORD, we have an everlasting Rock.*

Verse 19 of that chapter describes the resurrection that will bring the Old Testament saints to the banquet:

Isaiah 26:19 (NASB)

¹⁹ *Your dead will live; Their corpses will rise. You who lie in the dust, awake and shout for joy, For your dew is as the dew of the dawn, And the earth will give birth to the departed spirits.*

In Daniel:

Daniel 12:2 (NASB)

² *"Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, these to everlasting life, but the others to disgrace and everlasting contempt.*

The blessed truth that God will be in personal fellowship forever with all the redeemed saints of all the ages is so significant that the angel solemnly affirmed to John, "**These are true words of God.**"

To the beleaguered and aged apostle in exile on the harsh barren island of Patmos, this must have been amazing and almost impossible. The triumph of God's kingdom after all

In John's day, the church was being persecuted from without and attacked by heresies from within, and it was crumbling.

The revelation that God's redemptive plan cannot and will not be thwarted brought a great deal of relief, comfort, and joy to the apostle.

So great was John's astonishment at the angel's message that he involuntarily and thoughtlessly **fell at his feet to worship him**, a practiced strictly prohibited in Scripture:

Colossians 2:18 (NASB)

¹⁸ *Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize by delighting in self-abasement and the worship of the angels, taking his stand on visions he has seen, inflated without cause by his fleshly mind,*

Calling him back to his senses with a sharp rebuke, the angel said, "**Do not do that; I am a fellow servant of yours and your brethren who hold the testimony of Jesus; worship God.**"

Like John, the angel was a **servant** of God sent to minister to John and his **brethren who hold the testimony of Jesus**.

Angels serve all believers, particularly those who like John, are involved in preaching the gospel.

So he reminds John that he is to **worship God!! Only**.

Worship is the theme of redemptive history, and the purpose for which believers were redeemed

John 4:23 (NASB)

²³ *"But an hour is coming, and now is, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth; for such people the Father seeks to be His worshipers.*

The angel's final word to John is a reminder that "**the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.**"

This is the call to be faithful to the **testimony of Jesus** until he comes. That is the glorious gospel. Be faithful till he comes.