

Unit III. Visions of Praise
Family Restored

DEVOTIONAL READING: Revelation 5:1-14

BACKGROUND SCRIPTURE: Revelation 19

PRINT PASSAGE: Revelation 19:1-8

KEY VERSE

Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. (Revelation 19:7, KJV)

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“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.” (Revelation 19:7, NIV)

Lesson Aims

As a result of experiencing this lesson, you should be able to do these things:

- Discuss the implications of God’s judgment for believers.
- Believe that God’s judgment is inclusive of His justice and mercy.
- Affirm, receive, and enjoy the love of Christ for all, and anticipate the completion of God’s plan at the end of this age.

*Key Terms

Avenged (verse 2)—Greek: *ekdikeó* (ek-dik-eh’-o): vindicated; gave justice over.

God (verse 1)—Greek: *theos* (teh’-os): God, the Creator and owner of all things.

Hallelujah (verse 3)—Greek: *hallélouia* (al-lay-loo’-ee-ah): an adoring exclamation; “Alleluia” (KJV).

Heard (verse 1)—Greek: *akouó* (ak-oo’-o): having heard, listened, comprehended by hearing.

Praise (verse 5)—Greek: *aineó* (ahee-neh’-o): to give honor.

Righteous (verse 2)—Greek: *dikaios* (dik’-ah-yos): correct; righteous; by implication, innocent; “just” (NIV).

*(Word Study Supplement—Refer to page 2)



The Biblical Context

When tragedy occurred in a family in Israel, a kinsman-redeemer could make things right again, returning the honor and favor to the family and thus providing hope for a sustained future. In ancient times, a childless widow would quickly fall into financial peril and, possibly, indentured slavery due to unpaid debt. A kinsman-redeemer could intercede and clear the widow's debt (see Leviticus 25:25; 47-49) and remove the threat of a harassing enemy by being the avenger of blood (see Deuteronomy 19:12), thus reclaiming the widow back into the family and restoring name and family rights and privileges (see Deuteronomy 25:5-6). The book of Revelation shows Jesus as humanity's kinsman-redeemer who pays our debt (see Revelation 5), takes vengeance upon Satan (see Revelation 6-18), and announces His intention to marry us back into God's family (see 19:7-8), thus restoring us fully as joint-heirs with Christ.

Introduction

The global coronavirus pandemic left millions of families broken and bankrupt, ravaged by illness, death, domestic abuse, despair, job losses, and business failures. Many churches and food banks opened their doors to feed the hungry—hundreds and sometimes thousands at a time. Since early 2020, cities across the nation issued shelter-in-place orders, major corporations made massive layoffs and filed for bankruptcy, many children were left without mother or father, many nursing-home residents were denied visitors for months at a time, and millions of families and individuals around the world fought desperately to make ends meet. Many are still struggling to recover. Neither the Centers for Disease Control, the White House, churches, nor food banks could restore the severe losses that accompanied the pandemic. No words could mitigate the pain of those who lost a friend, a parent, a spouse, a child, or several family members to the merciless disease. When our world is overtaken by chaos and despair, only God can sustain us and restore our hope.

ANALYSIS OF THE BIBLICAL TEXT

Hallelujah—Rejoice! (Revelation 19:1-4)

KJV

AND AFTER these things I *heard* a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our *God*:

2 For true and *righteous* are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath *avenged* the blood of his servants at her hand.

3 And again they said, *Alleluia*. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever.

4 And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia.

NIV

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!”

While Revelation 19 is generally given the heading “The Battle of Armageddon,” the first half of the chapter is actually devoted to a scene in heaven from which we receive the last three songs of the Apocalypse. John wrote this section of the revelation after witnessing God’s destruction of Babylon along with the uncovering of much deception and bloodshed (see 18:23-24). John heard the sound of many voices in heaven (**verse 1a**). The large congregation lifts their voices to sing a series of praise songs to the Lord. The first song magnifies the Lord for His salvation, glory, honor, and power (**verse 1b**). The song is a direct response to the judgment pronounced on the harlot of Babylon who had been the leader in world idolatry, lewdness, and cruelty (**verse 2**). The Lord’s judgment, unlike that of Babylon, is “true and righteous” as He avenges the blood of the prophets, saints, and many others slain on the earth (see 18:24). After this shout, the large multitude issues a second “Hallelujah!” shout (**verse 3**). Their second praise is a response to the smoke that rises from the casting down of Babylon (**verse 4**), confirming that destruction thereof had been finalized. Most Bible translators follow the timeline and sequence of the original text—beginning with corporate praise, the defeat of Babylon, and a second expression of praise. Every rendering of the text records God’s final victory over our enemy. As the great crowd lifts up the highest praise unto the Lord, the twenty-four elders and four beasts join in the worship. They all fall down and worship the Lord, saying, “Amen, Hallelujah!” They are literally singing “So be it; praise God.” Genuine praise and worship to God has the power to transform lives. With a loud “Hallelujah!” they rejoice and praise the Lord. This is a proper response to what the Lord has done.

🔍 WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Why do you think many believers are hesitant to praise God openly?

Heavenly Rejoicing! (*Revelation 19:5-8*)

KJV

5 And a voice came out of the throne, saying, *Praise* our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great.

6 And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

7 Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.

8 And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

NIV

5 Then a voice came from the throne, saying: “*Praise our God, all you his servants, you who fear him, both great and small!*”

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.)

Before the third song, John heard a voice exhorting all servants that fear the Lord to praise Him. The voice from the throne of God could be that of Jesus’ but was more likely the voice of one of the angels who serve at God’s throne (**verse 5**). John heard the great multitude again (**verse 6a**). As peals of thunder sounded, John actually heard the voice of a huge multitude praising the Lord, our God Almighty, because He was beginning His physical reign on earth (**verse 6b**). The voices shouted, “Hallelujah! The Lord God omnipotent reigns” (see **verse 6c**). The group is perhaps the redeemed of the ages, lifting their voices in unison to give praise to almighty God. They add to their shout an urging to “rejoice and be glad and give him glory!” (**verse 7a**, NIV). For a third time, the group chants “Hallelujah”—an encouragement for all to rejoice. Not only is God all-powerful, reigning forever, but He has defeated the great harlot, who was defiling the earth with her immorality, and proved Himself as the victorious God who avenges His people. Heaven rejoices for the final phase of the saints’ redemption and salvation. The marriage of the Lamb and His church is at hand (**verse 7b**). The bride of Christ is formed by faith—the spiritual seed of Abraham. She is adorned in the finest and brightest apparel, signifying the purity of having been washed by the blood of the Lamb. Her fine linen (**verse 8**) is the righteousness of the saints made possible only by grace and mercy, and the sacrifice of God’s holy Lamb, Jesus Christ. We should rejoice in expectation of the Lord’s second coming, the time when all will join the heavenly celebration.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

What blessings have you received for which you would want to rejoice?

A Closing Thought

We do not have to wait until we reach heaven to begin rejoicing over what the Lord has done. We can rejoice now over present blessings, such as the salvation or spiritual restoration of a loved one. The Bible tells us that heaven rejoices over the return of a repentant sinner who finds his way back to God (see Luke 15:7-10). If heaven will rejoice, we too should rejoice when family and friends find their way to God.

Your Life

This week, pause and consider unsaved or backslidden family members or church members. Commit to praying for them. Consider ways that you can reach them with the love and message of Jesus Christ.

Your World!

As you identify lost and backslidden family members, friends, and church members, plan and partner with a small group of Christians to celebrate their salvation or restoration in the Lord.

Closing Prayer

Holy God, we celebrate You, for You are our pardoner, our provider, and our protector. While we look forward to spending eternity in Your holy presence, we give You our best and highest praise right now for all You have done and continue to do. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Conclusion

(Preparing for Next Week's Lesson)

While reading the Background Scripture, consider the Good News of Christianity: the invitation to know Christ is extended to all.

Home Daily Bible Readings

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| MONDAY, November 22 | "God Speaks to a Pagan King" | (Genesis 20:1-7, 14-16) |
| TUESDAY, November 23 | "An Angel Speaks to Cornelius" | (Acts 10:1-8) |
| WEDNESDAY, November 24 | "A Vision of Inclusion" | (Acts 10:9-22) |
| THURSDAY, November 25 | "The Queen of Sheba Blesses God" | (1 Kings 10:1-9) |
| FRIDAY, November 26 | "A Centurion Comes to Jesus" | (Luke 7:1-10) |
| SATURDAY, November 27 | "Peter Enters Cornelius's House" | (Acts 10:23-33) |
| SUNDAY, November 28 | "God Shows No Partiality" | (Acts 10:34-47) |

NOTES
