

Living Word Fellowship Church

An Expository Explanation of Revelation Chapter 19

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I. Key Words, Apocalyptic Definitions in Chapter 19

Part II

A. Introduction:

This section is the ultimate climax of the book, for which readers have waited since 1:7. All the previous armies and other judgments were mere preludes to the coming of the final King of kings on a white horse.^[1]

With the destruction of Babylon, a hallelujah chorus is heard in heaven. The great multitude reappears for the first time by name since 7:9. Responding to the exhortation to “Rejoice” in 18:20, this multitude shouts its praise to God for two mighty acts of judgment: the condemnation of the great prostitute and his avenging the blood of the saints. This chapter records the only four uses in the New Testament of *hallelujah*, a Hebrew word meaning “Praise the Lord!” that is found frequently in the book of Psalms. David likewise rejoices over divine judgment: “But may sinners vanish from the earth and the wicked be no more.... Hallelujah” (Ps. 104:35; see NIV note). Tobit 13:17 states that in the eternal Jerusalem the houses of the holy city will cry, “Hallelujah!”^[2]

B. Key Words and Apocalyptic Definitions:

1. **Alleluia**—‘Praise ye JAH:’ here first in Revelation, whence *Elliott* infers the *Jews* bear a prominent part. JAH is not a contraction of JEHOVAH, as it sometimes occurs with the latter. It means ‘He who IS:’ Jehovah, ‘He who will be, is, and was.’ It implies God experienced a PRESENT help; so that ‘Hallelujah,’ says *Kimchi*, is found first in Psalms *on the destruction of the ungodly*. ‘HalleluJah’ occurs *four* times here. Cf. Ps. 149:4–9, plainly parallel, identical in many phrases, as well as the general idea. Israel, especially, will join in the Halleluia, when ‘her warfare is accomplished’ and her foe destroyed.^[3]

2. **God has judged His enemies (vv. 1–4).** Since the “great whore [harlot]” of Revelation 17 was destroyed by “the beast” and his fellow rulers (Rev. 17:16) in the middle of the Tribulation, the “great whore” referred to here must be Babylon the Great. Comparing Revelation 17:2 with 18:3 and 9, the connection is obvious. Both the apostate religious system and the satanic economic-political system led the world astray and polluted mankind. Both were guilty of persecuting God’s people and martyring many of them.^[4]

3. Every time we see the 24 elders and the four living creatures, they are giving praise to God. The 24 elders represent the church of this present time (4:6-8; 7:11-13; 11:16-17).

4. **The second coming of Christ** (was discussed in 1 Thess. 4:13-18; 1 Cor. 15:51-58) is anticipated in the words, for our Lord God Almighty reigns. John used the word “Almighty” (*pantokratōr*; also in 1:8; 4:8; 11:17; 15:3; 16:7, 14; 19:15; 21:22). Along with the exhortation to rejoice, announcement is made that the wedding of the Lamb has come, and His bride has made herself ready.^[5]

a) Most significant is the fact that in Revelation 19–20 there is complete silence concerning any translation of living saints. In fact the implication of the passage is that saints who are on earth when Christ returns will remain on earth to enter the millennial kingdom in their natural bodies. If the Rapture were included in the second coming of Christ to the earth, one would expect to find reference to such a major event in Revelation 19. But no such reference is to be found. For these and many other reasons chapter 19 is a confirmation of the teaching that the Rapture of the church is a separate earlier event and that there is no translation of the living at the time of His second coming to the earth. (For further discussion see John F. Walvoord, *The Rapture Question*.)^[6]

5. Diadems - A crown, sometimes in the form of cloth wrapped around the head of a king with jewels on it, normally worn by monarchs in Eastern countries to represent royalty and authority.

a) This is mimicked by the dragon (12:3), the beast (13:1), and the ten kings (17:12). This is why Christ represents Himself as the Almighty, the King of Kings, and the Lord of Lords.

6. 19:11–13. As John gazed into heaven, he saw Christ on a white horse. Though some have identified this rider with the rider in 6:2, the context is entirely different. In 6:2 the rider is the world ruler of the Great Tribulation, while here the rider is a ruler who obviously comes from heaven itself.^[7]

a) The white horse is thus a symbol of Christ's triumph over the forces of wickedness in the world, the details of which follow.^[8]

· First, John described the Conqueror (Rev. 19:11–16) and then His conquests (Rev. 19:17–20:3). The rider on the white horse (Rev. 6:2) is the false Christ, but this Rider is the true Christ. He is not coming *in the air* to take His people home (1 Thes. 4:13–18), but *to the earth* with His people, to conquer His enemies and establish His kingdom.^[9]

b) 19:14–16. The drama of the scene is further enhanced by the multitude of **the armies of heaven** described as **riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean** (cf. v. 8). In Christ's mouth was a sharp sword (cf. 1:16; 2:12, 16; 19:21) which He would use to strike down the nations. The word for "sword" (*rhomphaia*) was used of an unusually long sword and sometimes used as a spear, thus indicating a piercing action. In addition to using the sword for striking down, He will use **an iron scepter** for ruling (cf.

Ps. 2:9; Rev. 2:27). Christ is also described as the One who **treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty** (cf. 14:19–20; and cf. “Almighty” in 1:8; 4:8; 11:17; 15:3; 16:7, 14; 19:6; 21:22). This scene is a dramatic indication of the awfulness of the impending judgment. Matthew 24:30 indicates that those on earth will be witnesses of this impressive scene.^[10]

- I. The sharp sword is a symbol of God’s Word (Rev. 19:21; see also Eph. 6:17; Heb. 4:12; Rev. 1:16). This is in keeping with the fact that Christ will consume the enemy “with the spirit of His mouth” (2 Thes. 2:8; note also Isa. 11:4). We have met with the “rod of iron” before (Rev. 2:27; 12:5), a symbol of His justice as He rules over the earth. The image of the winepress must be associated with the judgment at Armageddon (Rev. 14:14–20; see also Isa. 63:1–6).^[11]
- II. 19:17–18. The armies of earth are no match for the armies from heaven. The sharp sword in Christ’s mouth (v. 15) is symbolic of His authoritative word of command that destroys earth’s armies by divine power. Millions of men and their horses will be destroyed instantly.^[12]

7. **Come, gather together for the great supper of God (19:17).** Two banquets are presented in this chapter and implicitly contrasted. The first banquet is the wedding supper of the Lamb and serves as a blessing for the saints. The second is the great supper of God and results from the outpouring of his wrath. The slaughter that occurs is complete and excludes no one who has taken the mark of the beast (cf. 6:15; 13:16).^[13]

^[1] Keener, C. S. (1993). [The IVP Bible background commentary: New Testament](#) (Re 19:11–16). InterVarsity Press.

- [2] Arnold, C. E. (2002). [Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary: Hebrews to Revelation](#). (Vol. 4, p. 353). Zondervan.
- [3] Brown, D., Fausset, A. R., & Jamieson, R. (n.d.). [A Commentary, Critical, Experimental, and Practical, on the Old and New Testaments: Acts–Revelation](#): Vol. VI (p. 717). William Collins, Sons, & Company, Limited.
- [4] Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). [The Bible exposition commentary](#) (Vol. 2, p. 616). Victor Books.
- [5] Walvoord, J. F. (1985). [Revelation](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 974). Victor Books.
- [6] Walvoord, J. F. (1985). [Revelation](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 976). Victor Books.
- [7] Walvoord, J. F. (1985). [Revelation](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 976). Victor Books.
- [8] Walvoord, J. F. (1985). [Revelation](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 976). Victor Books.
- [9] Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). [The Bible exposition commentary](#) (Vol. 2, p. 617). Victor Books.
- [10] Walvoord, J. F. (1985). [Revelation](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, pp. 976–977). Victor Books.
- [11] Wiersbe, W. W. (1996). [The Bible exposition commentary](#) (Vol. 2, p. 618). Victor Books.
- [12] Walvoord, J. F. (1985). [Revelation](#). In J. F. Walvoord & R. B. Zuck (Eds.), *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Vol. 2, p. 977). Victor Books.
- [13] Arnold, C. E. (2002). [Zondervan Illustrated Bible Backgrounds Commentary: Hebrews to Revelation](#). (Vol. 4, p. 357). Zondervan.