Heavenly Hallelujahs and the Marriage Supper of the Lamb
Revelation 19:1–10

Babylon has fallen! The commercial and governmental center of the One-World Government has fallen; the city has gone up in flames and the empire of the Antichrist has totally collapsed; this has initiated exaltation in heaven over Babylon's destruction; in the first six verses of Revelation 19, the word "hallelujah" appears four times (verse 1, 3, 4, 6); the voices of a great multitude are rejoicing.

The word “hallelujah” means “praise the Lord”; this is the only place in the New Testament where this word appears; it is a word frequently found in the Psalms; the first time it is used is in Psalm 104:35 which says: “May sinners be consumed from the earth, and the wicked be no more. Bless the LORD, O my soul! Praise the LORD!” Let the wicked be no more, Hallelujah? That may seem strange that the psalmist first praises God because a time of judgment is coming on the wicked and they will be consumed; in our text, the multitude in heaven is praising God, in part, because Babylon has fallen.

The word “hallelujah” as found in Scripture is primarily used to celebrate God's salvation and destruction of Israel’s enemies; in our text, as previously noted, the word “hallelujah” is used four times so let’s more fully understand why the great multitude in heaven is praising God and saying, “Hallelujah!”

The Praise to God in Heaven (19:1–6)

Who gives the praise? The praise comes from three different groups in heaven.

1. The angels... “After these things I heard a great multitude in heaven, saying, ‘Alleluja! Salvation and glory and honor and power belong to the Lord our God! For true and righteous are His judgments, because He has judged the great Harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication. He has avenged on
her the blood of His servants shed by her.’ Again they said, ‘Allelujah! Her
smoke rises up forever and ever!’” (19:1–3). Who this multitude is, is but a
guess, but we already have the saints mentioned in verses 4–6, so we will refer
to this great multitude as “ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands
and thousands” of angelic beings giving praise to God (5:11); they praise Him
for these reasons:

- **Because God affirmed that salvation from an evil world has
come**... “Salvation and glory and honor and power belong to our God”
(v. 1b). These angels were saying “Hallelujah” because the salvation
hour has arrived; the evil systems of the world have finally been
destroyed; I don’t believe the text is referring to our present soul’s
salvation, rather, that the evil systems of the Antichrist and the False
Prophet have finally been destroyed; true believers have been delivered
or saved from that evil system once and for all; such salvation displays
the glory and the honor and the power of God and for that reason the
angels cry out with loud voices, “Hallelujah!”

- **Because God acted with righteous judgment**... “For true and
righteous are His judgments...” (v. 2a); the angels praise God because
His justice has been meted out; He has judged Babylon, the great Harlot
who was corrupting the earth with her immorality; and He has avenged
the blood of His servants on them; remember the prayer of the martyrs
when the fifth seal was opened? “How long, O Lord, holy and true, until
You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?”
(Revelation 6:10); the time of God’s vengeance has come; the angels
rejoice, and the martyrs rejoice as the song in heaven is one of
hallelujahs!

We live in a society where we are constantly distressed about all the
injustices of our judicial courts; if a guilty person can afford a good
lawyer, he will serve less time than a poor person who can't afford the
best legal protection; he might even get off “scot-free”; that makes for
injustice; we have prayed and pleaded with God for justice and
righteousness to prevail in our land; we have prayed for evil to be dealt
with proportionally and equitably; but sin still reigns! The day will come
when our prayers will be answered; when the Messiah comes and sets
up His government on this earth, the prophet Isaiah says, He will "uphold
it with justice and righteousness from then on and forevermore; the zeal
of the LORD will accomplish this" (Isaiah 9:7); the prophet Jeremiah said,
“Behold, the days are coming, declares the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch and He will reign as King and act wisely and do justice and righteousness in the land” (Jeremiah 23:5); when you get over to verse 15 of Revelation 19, it speaks of Christ coming to earth with “a sharp sword in His mouth, and with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron.” It is because the judgments of the Lord are true and righteous that the angels cry out with loud voices, “Hallelujah!”

- Because God has annihilated Babylon forever... “And they said, ‘Allelujah! Her smoke rises up forever and ever!’” (v. 3); Rebellion against God’s people has ended; this is the second “hallelujah” over Babylon; the first one was that righteous judgment has come upon this city (v. 2); this “hallelujah” in verse 3 is because Babylon is gone forever; the flames and the smoke from her destruction rises forever and ever; this is, of course, a hyperbole, that is, an exaggeration for the sake of effect; the flames and smoke will die out, so the emphasis here is the permanent destruction of Babylon—it will never rise again; the rule of the Antichrist is over! Persecution is over! False religion is over! Materialism is over! Evolutionary science is over! Everything evil is over! Satan has had his way since the Garden of Eden, but his time to reign is over! All rebellion is over and the angels in heaven are shouting, “Hallelujah!”

2. The twenty-four elders and the four living creatures... They “fell down and worshipped God who sat on the throne, saying, ‘Amen! Allelujah!’ Then a voice from the throne, saying, ‘Praise our God, all you His servants and those who fear Him, both small and great!’” (19:4–5). We met the 24 elders for the first time in chapter 4; they represent both the OT and NT saints in heaven; we have seen them with crowns on their heads as rewards for service to God that was well done; we saw them cast their crowns before Him who sits on the throne, and then fall before Him in worship; we have met the four living creatures before in chapter 4; they are special angels moving in and around the throne of God singing praises to Him and to the Lamb; now they all fall before the throne and worship Him crying out, “Amen! Allelujah!” Then all His servants in heaven, both small and great, heard a voice from the throne, telling them, “Praise our God!” As you can see, there is going to be a lot of praising going on in heaven! That ought to be a lesson for us; if we have trouble praising God while here on earth, then what makes you think you will be happy in heaven? Praise is the theme of heaven! We
need to get used to saying "Amen! Allelujah!" because they will be oft-repeated words once we get before the throne of God.

3. *The great multitude*... “And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, “Allelujah! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns!” (19:6). The voices of the redeemed saints are adding their voices to those of the angels; sometimes their praise is quiet and soothing like the sound of running water, and sometimes it is loud and boisterous like mighty thunderings; these saints have a reason to sing with a power and an experience with which the angels cannot identify; these saints, like you and I, have been saved from our sins; Christ did not die for the angels; they had to remain sinless if they were going to stay in heaven; one sin and they were kicked out; the writer of Hebrews put it like this: Christ “does not give aid to an angel, but He does give aid to the seed of Abraham” (Hebrews 2:16); as believers we are all the seed of Abraham through faith (Galatians 3:14). He will come to our aid every time we cry out to Him “Help!” Amen!

And for what do we praise Him? He is the Lord God! He is the Omnipotent One who reigns! He is our Lord who has become King! He has taken over! He has risen to the fullness of sovereign control! When you go back to verse 5, God from His throne is calling for our praise.

*Why do we praise God?* These first six verses in Revelation 19 tell me four reasons to give Him praise:

1. Praise Him for His *character*... He is a God of salvation, and glory, and honor, and power (19:1). Amen! Hallelujah!

2. Praise Him for His *commitment to truth and righteousness* in bringing judgment on the earth (19:2a)... He will abolish all injustice! Amen! Hallelujah!

3. Praise Him for His *conquest of Babylon*... Babylon represents all false religion and an evil government that seeks to destroy our faith in the one true God and His Son Jesus Christ; He will see to it that this evil empire of the Antichrist will rise up in smoke and be forever destroyed! (19:2b–5) Amen! Hallelujah!

4. Praise Him for His *coming Kingdom*... “For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns!” (19:6b); He is coming again to set up His kingdom on earth and
He will rule 1000 years in Jerusalem from the throne of David; and we get to rule and reign with Him! Amen! Hallelujah!

But there is still more reasons to say “Hallelujah!”

The Preparations for the Marriage Supper of the Lamb (19:7–10)

_The readiness of the Bride_… “Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready” (19:7); that magnificent marriage imagery is designed to demonstrate the greatness of the celebration when the Lord is joined to His beloved people; in this imagery, the Lamb, Jesus Christ is the groom and His beloved bride is the Church; there will be a day when we are joined with our Lord in the fullness of that eternal glory that He has planned for us.

Repeatedly Scripture depicts the Lord Jesus as the bridegroom; Jesus speaks of Himself in that way through His teachings and parables (Matthew 9:15; 22:1–13, 25:1–10); John the Baptist referred to Jesus Christ as the Bridegroom (John 3:29–30); in 2 Corinthians 11:2 the Lord appears as the Bridegroom and in Ephesians 5:32–33 He appears as the husband.

It is equally clear from Scripture that the Church is the bride; again Ephesians 5:27 speaks of the church as Christ’s bride, as does 2 Corinthians 11:2.

In the ancient biblical culture, a wedding had three components to it: there was a betrothal, a presentation, and the ceremony.

The betrothal was a type of engagement; the groom would travel from his father’s house to the home of the prospective bride and pay the father of the bride a purchase price called a dowry, thus establishing a marriage covenant; so Christ came from His Father’s house to pay the price for His bride (John 1:1,14; Philippians 2:5–8; 1 Corinthians 6:20); when one gets engaged today, the bride is given an engagement ring; it is the guarantee on the part of the groom to be that there will be a wedding at a future date; Paul tells us the Holy Spirit has been to us as a “guarantee of our inheritance”; he writes that “having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee” (Ephesians 1:13–14) that the day will come when we will be married to Christ; the word translated “guarantee” _(arabon)_ is the word for “engagement ring”; we are not presently married to Christ, but we are engaged.
to Him and the Holy Spirit in our lives is our engagement ring that guarantees there will be a wedding; that is the betrothal stage.

Then there is the presentation stage; it was a time when the betrothed bride was brought in the public and presented to all that were related to both parties; this presentation will take place at the rapture of the Church, when the entire body of Christ is caught up to meet the Lord in the air and then are gathered into heaven where the church is presented in all her fullness to all the heavenly hosts as well as the OT saints (1 Thessalonians 4:13–18); that is the presentation stage.

The final stage is the wedding itself; it will take place in heaven, for Revelation 19:7 says, “for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.” How has she made herself ready? Look at verse 8.

The righteousness of the Bride... “And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints”(19:8); the Church, as the bride, has made herself ready; the Bridegroom, Jesus has sanctified her with the washing of the water of the Word, “That He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish” (Ephesians 5:26–27); Jesus has washed us from all our sin; He has purified us and sanctified us and declared us holy and blameless; that is what makes us worthy to be His bride!

The apparel we wear is fine linen, bright and clean, which is defined as “the righteous acts of the saints”; while our salvation is based solely on God’s grace through our faith, and not of works lest we boast (Ephesians 2:8–10), yet our faith is to be such that we demonstrate good works, without which James said that faith is dead (James 2:17); it is important to note, we do not make ourselves righteous by anything that we do; we are holy and righteous; we are wearing wedding apparel of fine linen, clean and bright because God so declared it based on the sacrifice of Christ when He took our sins with Him on the cross and in exchange, He gave us His righteousness (2 Corinthians 5:21; Ephesians 2:4).

The rejoicing of the Bride and the marriage supper of the Lamb... “Then he said to me, ‘Write, Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!’ And these are the true sayings of God” (19:9); following a wedding
there is generally a reception that comes in the form of a meal; that will be true for the wedding between Christ, the Bridegroom and the Church as the Bride.

Jesus prophesied this wedding feast when He instituted the Lord’s Supper as part of the Passover meal: “And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed it and broke it, and gave it to the disciples and said, ‘Take, eat, this is My body.’ Then He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, ‘Drink from it, all of You. For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say to you, I will not drink of this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father’s kingdom” (Matthew 26:26–29).

Jesus is not only telling us we will eat and drink in Father’s kingdom, but there will be a time when we will sit down with Him at the marriage supper of the Lamb, not only to celebrate the wedding, but to remember the sacrifice that Christ made to make it possible for us to be His Bride!

Those of us who attend this feast are called “blessed”; this is the fourth beatitude in Revelation; a beatitude is something that begins with “blessed”; it is a word of joy and happiness! The first beatitude in Revelation is, “Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it, for the time is near” (1:3); we are blessed when we read and hear the message of this book as well as when we live out what is written; in our text we learn, that we are blessed to be married to Christ and to sit down with Him at the marriage supper of the Lamb! This is going to be one fun party; don’t ever get the idea that heaven is going to be boring—it will be a time of worshipping, and serving, and relaxing, and feasting, and partying! I believe the biggest party ever will be the marriage supper of the Lamb!

The recognition of outside guests at the marriage supper... “Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb” (19:9). The word translated “called” could better be translated “invited” as it is in the New American Standard translation; the wedding is Christ being married to the Church; we are the bride of Christ; but the invitation to the marriage feast is extended beyond the Church; it would include the nation of Israel, that remnant of Jews who come to know Jesus as their Messiah; Hosea tells us that God renewed His marriage vows to that remnant of Jews He is protecting from the Antichrist when they escaped into the wilderness (Hosea 2:14–20); Isaiah refers to Israel as the wife of Jehovah (Isaiah 54:5–6); the martyrs who died during the
tribulation will be invited, yet they were not part of the raptured Church; I imagine even the angels of heaven will be in attendance. What a party, right?!

The refusal by the angel to be worshipped... “And I fell at his feet to worship him. 'But he said to me, 'See that you do not do that! I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus... (19:10a); John falls down to worship the angel who has just told him about the marriage supper of the Lamb; the angel says to him, “Do not do that!” Angels are not to be worshipped; they are fellow servants of God as we are; they bear the testimony of Jesus as we do; that is, they know about Christ’s sacrificial death to save mankind from sin; even though Christ did not die for angels, the angels in heaven totally appreciate what Christ did in His effort to save the world from sin.

Paul warned the Colossians not to be cheated of their reward in heaven by the “worship of angels” (Colossians 2:18); in certain circles of Judaism the angels had a very large place; in apocalyptic literature that was written between the OT and the NT, angels were said to bring one’s prayers before God; or angels were said to intercede between man and God; the archangel Michael was said to be the guardian angel over Israel; a fourth century rabbi named Jehudah said that men must not pray in Aramaic, because angels did not understand Aramaic! We do know from Daniel 10:13 that not only do demons interfere with answered prayer, but angels also deliver the answer to our prayers, and in Daniel’s case, his answer from God to his prayers was delayed for 21 days because the demonic prince over the kingdom of Persia withstood the angel who was delivering the answer and Michael, the chief prince, had to come and help him; angels have had a very high place in the minds of the Jewish people and it was not uncommon for them to be subjects of worship; but when John fell before the angel who was giving him revelation, the angel told him “No! It is forbidden to worship angels!”

The responsibility to only worship God... "Worship God!" (19:10b); only God must be worshipped; remember when the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, Jesus, and worshipped Him because He alone was worthy to take the scroll from Him who sits on the throne and break its seals? Jesus Christ became the center of worship in heaven! Yet, we are only to worship God; what does that say about Jesus? He is God! This is some good ammunition to present to the Jehovah’s Witnesses when they come knocking at your door; they deny the deity of Jesus, they believe He was the archangel Michael; what have we just learned is we are not to worship angels;
we are only to worship God, but Jesus is the object of worship in heaven, therefore Jesus must be God!

_The reason to worship Jesus... “For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy”(19:10c); there is a lot of criticism about teaching Bible prophecy; very few congregations do it; yet Jesus said, His testimony is “the spirit of prophecy”; that is, all prophecy, one way or another, is all about Him._

There are ten good reasons why we should teach prophecy:

1. We worship a God of prophecy because He can declare the end from the beginning and will bring to pass things that have not yet happened (Isaiah 46:9–11).

2. Fulfilled prophecy assures us of God’s sovereignty that He rules over all (Psalm 103:19).

3. Fulfilled prophecy validates the Word of God (Isaiah 37:26).

4. The quantity of prophecy in the Bible demands its attention; between one-fourth to one-third of the Bible is prophecy; Paul told the Thessalonians: “Do not despise prophecies” (1 Thessalonians 5:20).

5. Prophecy validates Jesus as God in the flesh (Revelation 19:10).

6. Prophecy can be an effective tool of evangelism; Peter’s sermon on the day of Pentecost was based on Bible prophecy from beginning to end (Acts 2:14–26) as was Phillip’s sermon to the Ethiopian Eunuch (Acts 8:26–39).

7. Prophecy can be an effective tool for moral teaching; the prophets took the Word of God and applied it to contemporary problems of the day, like denouncing idolatry (Isaiah 44:9–20; Jeremiah 10:1–16) and hypocrisy (Jeremiah 7:8–11; Amos 5:21–24).

8. Prophecy can be a stimulus for spiritual growth (Romans 13:11–14; 1 Timothy 6:11–14; Titus 2:11–15; 1 Peter 4:7–13).
9. Prophecy provides insights concerning current world events; it speaks about the disintegration of society (Matthew 24:37–38; 2 Timothy 3:1–5); the crisis in the Middle East (Zechariah 12:1–3, 6–9) the increasing apostasy in the church (2 Timothy 4:1–4; 2 Peter 2:1–3).

10. Prophecy provides hope; it speaks about the return of Christ (1 Thessalonians 4:13–18; Revelation 19:11–16); the resurrection of the dead (1 Corinthians 15:42–44, 51–55); rewards for good works (Matthew 16:27; Revelation 22:12); new glorified bodies (Isaiah 35:5–6; Philippians 3:20–21); reigning over the world with Jesus (2 Timothy 2:11–12; Revelation 5:9–10); victory over Satan (Revelation 20:7–10); eternal life (Matthew 25:31–46; John 17:1–3).

Prophecy is more than foretelling the future; it has to do with forthtelling the Word of God; it is teaching and preaching the Word of God; the very heart of communicating the Word of God is the testimony of Jesus; the angel is telling John that he is sent to help preachers and teachers bear witness of Jesus which is the soul of preaching; if a preacher is not preaching the Word of God he is not going to have angelic support; he is not going to have heavenly affirmation; what a promise is made to all believers who proclaim the Word of God; God wants to make sure His word gets across and He sends it to us anointed by the Holy Spirit and assisted by His angels.

So the hosts in heaven are saying “Hallelujah!” Hallelujah because salvation, glory, honor, and power have come from God; hallelujah because the smoke of Satan’s sinful world rises forever; hallelujah because God sovereignly sits on the throne and rules over all; hallelujah because the Lord our God reigns, and hallelujah because the marriage supper of the Lamb has come!

Worship God! Only worship God! For He alone is worthy of our worship; and the prophetic Word, which is the testimony of Jesus, alone is worthy of our hearing, our obedience to Him, and our sharing it with others! Amen!