Get used to the idea that Jesus is seeking to perfect your faith. Sooner or later, the real Jesus will require you to look the impossible straight in the eye and believe God for His power.

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REVELATION CHAPTER NINETEEN

Handout # 25

Prayer Study #424

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Chapter 19 marks a dramatic change from total destruction of the world system in judgment to bright days of blessing for the believers in Christ. This chapter ushers in the greatest event ever for the earth, the Second Coming of Christ to establish His kingdom of earth as it is in heaven. This chapter is a bridge between the Great Tribulation and the Millennial Reign. The two great events in this chapter are the Marriage Supper of the Lamb and the Return of Christ to the earth. It actually records two suppers: one is the Marriage Supper of the Lamb and the second is the feast of the buzzards on the flesh of those killed after the last part of the war of Armageddon.

Revelation 19

19 *After this I heard what sounded like a mighty shout of a great crowd in heaven, exclaiming, Hallelujah (praise the Lord)! Salvation and glory (splendor and majesty) and power (dominion and authority) [belong] to our God!*

2 *Because His judgments (His condemnation and punishment, His sentences of doom) are true and sound and just and upright. He has judged (convicted, pronounced sentence, and doomed) the great and notorious harlot (idolatress) who corrupted and demoralized and poisoned the earth with her lewdness and adultery (idolatry). And He has avenged (visited on her the penalty for) the blood of His servants at her hand.*

What a change in tone from Chapter 18 to Chapter 19. Babylon has fallen and the heavenly host is full of praise for the One who has avenged His Loved Ones. Most likely this great crowd shouting these words is all the multitude of angels in heaven, for the shouts of the saints and martyrs will come later in this chapter.

The word *Hallelujah* is an interesting word. It is actually a Hebrew word that is translated *Praise God!* from the Hebrew *halal,* which means *praise,* and *Jah,* which means *God.* Note that the word is in the Greek, English, and I suppose all translations as *hallelujah,* a Hebrew word. Thus, it has universe meaning in all languages, but it is only found in 4 places in the New Testament, and all those places are in this chapter.

<u>The Praise of All Nature and of the Church</u>

3 *And again they shouted, Hallelujah (praise the Lord)! The smoke of her [burning] shall*

continue to ascend forever and ever (through the eternities of the eternities).
4 *Then the twenty-four elders [of the heavenly Sanhedrin] and the four living creatures fell prostrate and worshiped [paying divine honors to] God, Who sits on the throne, saying, Amen! Hallelujah (praise the Lord)!*
5 *Then from the throne there came a voice, saying, Praise our God, all you servants of His, you who reverence Him, both small and great!*
6 *After that I heard what sounded like the shout of a vast throng, like the boom of many pounding waves, and like the roar of terrific and mighty peals of thunder, exclaiming, Hallelujah (praise the Lord)! For now the Lord our God the Omnipotent (the All-Ruler) reigns!*

All are praising the Lord. This is the last time the twenty-four elders appear as such for now they become part of the Bride of Christ.

The Marriage Supper of the Lamb

7 *Let us rejoice and shout for joy [exulting and triumphant]! Let us celebrate and ascribe to Him glory and honor, for the marriage of the Lamb [at last] has come, and His bride has prepared herself.*
8 *She has been permitted to dress in fine (radiant) linen, dazzling and white—for the fine linen is (signifies, represents) the righteousness (the upright, just, and godly living, deeds, and conduct, and right standing with God) of the saints (God's holy people).*
9 *Then [the angel] said to me, Write this down: Blessed (happy, to be envied) are those who are summoned (invited, called) to the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he said to me [further], These are the true words (the genuine and exact declarations) of God.*

Notice that we, as part of the bridal company, must prepare ourselves. How do we do that? By clothing ourselves in fine linen. We often quote the verse from Isaiah 64:6b: *…all our righteousnesses are like filthy rags.* We all know that only through the blood of Jesus can we be seen as righteous. Paul put it this way: *And be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith (*Philippians 3:9). Only when we are clothed in righteousness can we be the Church that Christ will present to Himself: *Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanses her with the washing of water by 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 5:25-27).

Jesus tells us in Matthew 22:30, **"*For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage but are like the angels of God in heaven."*** Paul writes in 1st Corinthians 13:12, "*For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known."* These scripture verses seem to

indicate that, while there will be no individual marriages in heaven, people will know their loved ones and the relationships they had on earth.

There is one marriage, however, that takes place in heaven. It is after the rapture and after the Bema Seat Judgment of believers (in which Christ will judge us according to what we have done for the kingdom-*For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire, and fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire-1st Corinthians 3:11-15).*

The Marriage Supper of the Lamb will be for all those who have been saved and will be a time of great joy and blessing.

The Jewish wedding had four stages:

1. **The Betrothal**, in which the man prepares a marriage contract (or covenant), which he presented to the intended bride and her father. This covenant included how much the intended groom would pay the bride's parents to compensate the parents for the cost of raising the bride and to show his love for her. This is a type of salvation with Jesus being the heavenly Bridegroom who paid the "bride price" by suffering and dying at Calvary. 1st John 2:2 says, "And He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." Propitiation means full payment.
2. **The Acceptance**-To see if the proposal was accepted, the young man would pour a cup of red wine for his intended bride and wait and see if she drank it. The cup is symbolic of a blood covenant. Jesus poured out His blood for our sins (Matthew 26:28-***"For this is my blood of the new testament which is shed for many for the remission of sins."***) When a person of faith receives Jesus Christ as their Savior it is a picture of the bride accepting the proposal of the Bridegroom.
3. **The Wedding Chamber and the Chuppah-**Once the bride accepted and drank the cup, the groom would announce, "I am going to prepare a place for you, and I will return for you when it is ready." The groom usually returned to his father's house and built a honeymoon suite onto the house. He was not allowed to do poor work, and he had to get his father's approval of his work before he could consider it ready for the bride. If asked the date of the wedding, all he could say was, "Only my father knows." Typically it took the groom a year to get the honeymoon suite ready. Meanwhile the bride would be making herself ready so that she would be beautiful for the bridegroom, and she had to wear a veil when she went out in public to let people know she had

been bought with a price. John 14:1-3 reads, ***"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's House are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also."***

4. **The Wedding-The Bridegroom Comes for His Bride-**The bride kept a lamp, her veil and her belongings next to her bed so that she could be ready whenever the Bridegroom came. Her bridesmaids also were waiting and had to have plenty of oil for their lamps. When the groom and his friends got close to the bride's house they would give a shout and blow a shofar to let her know to be ready. When the wedding party arrived at the father's house the newly weds went into the wedding chamber for a seven day honeymoon. The groom's best friend stood outside the wedding chamber for the groom to tell him that the marriage had been consummated. Then the wedding party would celebrate for seven days until the couple emerged so that the Marriage Supper could begin. The Marriage Supper begins at the beginning of the Millennial Reign. The friends of the Bridegroom are most likely the Old Testament believers and the persecuted martyrs. The Bride is the Body of Christ. Jesus is the Bridegroom.

Barclay tells us there are four aspects to this marriage, as to any marriage: There must be love; there must be intimate communion as the wife and husband become one flesh; there must be joy for there is nothing like the joy of loving and being loved; and there must be fidelity and Christians must be as faithful to Jesus as He is to them.

Worship is for God Only

10 *Then I fell prostrate at his feet to worship (to pay divine honors) to him, but he [restrained me] and said, Refrain! [You must not do that!] I am [only] another servant with you and your brethren who have [accepted and hold] the testimony borne by Jesus. Worship God! For the substance (essence) of the truth revealed by Jesus is the spirit of all prophecy [the vital breath, the inspiration of all inspired preaching and interpretation of the divine will and purpose, including both mine and yours].*

The angelic messenger makes perfectly clear that we are not to worship angels or other heavenly beings. We are to worship God only. Then he says something powerful: "*For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."* Jesus is the center of all genuine prophecy just as He is at the heart of all scripture. All prophecy and all scripture ultimately point to Jesus, and no one can speak to others about spiritual truth without first listening to Jesus Christ.

The Conquering Christ

11 *After that I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse [appeared]! The One Who was riding it is called Faithful (Trustworthy, Loyal, Incorruptible, Steady) and True, and He passes judgment and wages war in righteousness (holiness, justice, and uprightness).*
12 *His eyes [blaze] like a flame of fire, and on His head are many kingly crowns (diadems); and He has a title (name) inscribed which He alone knows or can understand.*
13 *He is dressed in a robe dyed by dipping in blood, and the title by which He is called is The Word of God.*
14 *And the troops of heaven, clothed in fine linen, dazzling and clean, followed Him on white horses.*
15 *From His mouth goes forth a sharp sword with which He can smite (afflict, strike) the nations; and He will shepherd and control them with a staff (scepter, rod) of iron. He will tread the winepress of the fierceness of the wrath and indignation of God the All-Ruler (the Almighty, the Omnipotent).*
16 *And on His garment (robe) and on His thigh He has a name (title) inscribed, king of kings and lord of lords.*

Jesus is coming as a warrior with a mighty army. This is a beautiful description of the Second Coming of the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords. He comes to crush the enemies of God by merely speaking His Word and pronouncing their judgment.

17 *Then I saw a single angel stationed in the sun's* ***[****light, and with a mighty voice he shouted to all the birds that fly across the sky, Come, gather yourselves together for the great supper of God,*
18 *That you may feast on the flesh of rulers, the flesh of generals and captains, the flesh of powerful and mighty men, the flesh of horses and their riders, and the flesh of all humanity, both free and slave, both small and great!*
19 *Then I saw the beast and the rulers and leaders of the earth with their troops mustered to go into battle and make war against Him Who is mounted on the horse and against His troops.*
20 *And the beast was seized and overpowered, and with him the false prophet who in his presence had worked wonders and performed miracles by which he led astray those who had accepted or permitted to be placed upon them the stamp (mark) of the beast and those who paid homage and gave divine honors to his statue. Both of them were hurled alive into the fiery lake that burns and blazes with brimstone.*
21 *And the rest were killed with the sword that issues from the mouth of Him Who is mounted on the horse, and all the birds fed ravenously and glutted themselves with their flesh.*

This is a rather gross passage of scripture. All the birds are being summoned by the

angel to eat the flesh of all those who made war against the Lord and who were killed.

We see in this scripture the destruction of the beast or Antichrist and the false prophet. They were not killed but thrown into the lake of fire to burn forever and ever. Amen!