

Heaven's Hallelujah Chorus

Revelation 19:1-10

Introduction

1. On March 23, 1743, *The Messiah*, written by George Frideric Handel (1685 – 1759) in 1741, was performed for the 1st time in London, England. Present was the King of England. The king was so moved by the singing of the “Hallelujah Chorus,” he spontaneously stood to his feet and remained standing until the end of Handel’s masterpiece. Ever since that day, it has been customary for the audience to stand whenever the “Hallelujah Chorus” is sung.
2. Following the destruction of Babylon and immediately before Jesus comes again to the earth, heaven will perform its version of the “Hallelujah Chorus.” Heaven, however, will not stand. Rather, they will fall down in worship (v. 4). The song will be sung in celebration of the judgment of the great harlot Babylon (v. 2) and in celebration of the marriage supper of the Lamb (vs. 7-9). The “Hallelujah Chorus” is in response to the command of 18:20, and in anticipation of Christ’s coming in 19:11-21. Nothing less than unabated, unhindered worship breaks out in heaven, worship that is extremely instructive and inspiring for all who love the Lamb, who love the Lord Jesus.

I. Worship God for His Salvation. 19:1-14

* After these things – is a key time marker. This vision follows the destruction of religious and economic Babylon (chs. 17-18), that evil, organized, Satanic system which opposes all that is of God, and it occurs at the end of the Great Tribulation. These verses serve as a bridge between the 7-year Tribulation and the 2nd Coming of Jesus (19:11-21).

1. See the joy in God’s salvation. 19:1-2

* Loud voice (*phonen megalen*) of a great multitude – probably angels are in view here because the saints seem to appear to enter the worship in v. 5.

* This worship is not quiet and sober, but loud and celebrative.

* Alleluia (lit. Hallelujah!) The word “hallelujah” occurs only in this passage in all of the New Testament (4x). It derives from 2 Hebrew words *halal* means praise and *ya*, an abbreviated form of *Yahweh*, meaning “Praise Yahweh” or “Praise the LORD.” The Hebrew word introduces a number of the Psalms (106, 111-113, 117, 135, 146-150).

* The reasons God is to be praised are noted in vs. 1-2. There are 6:

Verse 1

- 1) For His salvation.
- 2) For His glory (*doxa*).
- 3) For His power (*dunamis*).

Verse 2

- 4) For His true and righteous judgments.
- 5) For his judgment of the great harlot.
- 6) For His avenging the blood of His saints.

*Our God is a saving God, a glorious God, a powerful God, the true God, the righteous God, the judging and avenging God. He is no docile or disinterested deity. He sees all that happens. He knows all that happens and in the end, He will make all things right.

Transition: There is joy in God's salvation.

2. **See the justice in God's salvation. 19:2-4**

- *Babylon is a harlot, a spiritual and idolatrous fornicator.
- *Babylon is a murderer of the innocent saints of God.
- *The 2nd hallelujah – her judgment will never be forgotten.
- *The redeemed and the angels recognize, worship, and applaud the just and righteous thing God has done.
 - This is the last we see of the 24 elders and the 4 living creatures. Amen – let it be. Hallelujah – praise the Lord.
 - Verse 3 → 14:10-11
 - Verse 4 → 5:6-10

Transition: God's salvation will involve great joy for those who know Him. God's salvation will involve great judgment for those who don't.

II. **Worship God for His sovereignty. 19:5-6**

*Voice from the throne – could be an angel, one of the living creatures, one of the elders. Who is not crucial, what is said certainly is.

1. **Honor God with your praise. 19:5**

- *Praise (pre. Imp.) our God! He is ours and we are His! That is a great reason to praise Him!
 - *All – not some or most.
 - *His servants – (*doulos*) – Question: Whose servant are you? Am I? We all serve someone.
- His servants are the ones “continually fearing Him,” reverencing Him, honoring Him, caring more about what He thinks and wants than anyone else.
- *They understand that, “all that really matters in life is that you please God.”
 - *Both small and great – little people/big people; unknown/well-known; those who fear Him and serve Him will praise Him in life and in death, in word and in action.

Illustration

Little known Bob Longacre, Wycliffe Bible Missionary/Translator. Men don't know him, but God does.

Transition: Honor God with your praise.

2. Honor God for His power. 19:6

* Great crowd/multitude.

- Sound of many waters (like a waterfall, a mighty cataract).
- Sound of mighty (strong) thunders. The noise is deafening!

* Hallelujah! Praise the LORD!!!

* Lord God Omnipotent (*pantokrator*) – used 9 times in Revelation (1:8; 4:8; 11:17; 15:3; 16:7, 14; 19:6, 15; 21:22), only 1 other time in the New Testament in 2 Corinthians 6:18, and there it is an Old Testament quote.

- “Word means one who holds all things in his control” (Mounce, 339). This is an omnipotent God, an all-powerful God.

* He is also a God who has begun to reign (ingressive aorist). What is already now a reality in heaven is now about to become a reality on earth. Matthew 6:10, “Your Kingdom come” has arrived.

Transition: Worship God for salvation and sovereignty.

III. Worship God for His spouse. 19:7-9

* The image of marriage symbolizing the relationship of God and His people appears several times in the Bible (Isaiah 54:5-7; Hosea 2:19; 2 Corinthians 11:2, Ephesians 5:25-27).

* 3 distinct stages to a Jewish marriage.

- 1) Betrothal took place from God’s perspective in eternity past/from ours at the time of conversion.
- 2) Procession to get the bride – THE RAPTURE (1 Thess. 4:13-18)
- 3) Wedding Feast / Celebration – a) 7 years in heaven during the Tribulation or b) The millennial kingdom or c) The eternal state.

My view: Feast began at rapture extends through the 1000 year reign. Note: “Marriage of the Lamb has come.”

1. Her preparation is to be the bride. 19:7

* Glad ... rejoice ... give glory to Him (the Lamb).

Lamb is Christ (29 times in Revelation. 28 of Jesus, except 13:11).

Wife – The Church, redeemed of all the ages.

We belong to Him as a bride to a groom!

* Through sanctification, we have made ourselves ready (Ephesians 2:10).

2. Her purity is to be a blessing. 19:8

* Was granted – God did it too.

Philippians 2:12-13, *Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.*

*In contrast to the apparel of the harlot, the bride is fine, clean, bright symbolizing her righteous behavior.

*Acts of faithful obedience is the proper behavior and response to the sacrificial love of the bridegroom, the Lamb (Ephesians 5:22-25).

3. **Her privilege is to be at His banquet. 19:9**

Write (aor. imp.)

Blessed (4th of the 7; 1:3; 14:13; 16:15; 19:9; 20:6; 22:7, 14).

Called to the marriage supper – 1) a reference to believers as the bride, 2) in contrast with “the supper of the great God” (19:17-18).

*Some see guests as Old Testament saints (cf. Hebrews 11) and Tribulation saints (MacArthur, Wiersbe).

IV. **Worship God for His Son. 19:9-10**

“The revelation that God’s redemptive plan cannot and will not be thwarted brought great relief, comfort and joy to the apostle” (MacArthur, 206). We see this made clear in the witness to the Son.

1. **There is integrity in His words. 19:9**

True sayings (words) of God. No falsehood, deceit, deception or lying in this revelation. It comes from God.

2. **There is testimony in His words. 19:10**

*John errs, as does anyone, in worshipping an angel, a creature. This is idolatry (cf. 22:8-9!).

*Do not do that – lit. “See thou not” (pre. imp.).

*Angels are fellow servants, slaves (*sundoulos*).

*They too bear witness to Jesus, hold the testimony given by Jesus.

***WORSHIP GOD!** Why? 1st commandment. And

3. **There is prophecy in His words. 19:10**

*The testimony of Jesus is the spirit (theme, essence, focal point) of prophecy.

*The true spirit of prophecy always points to Jesus.

*The message given by Jesus is the essence of prophetic proclamation.

- Either way it’s all about Him, it’s all about the Lamb! -

Conclusion

On earth when we sing the “Hallelujah Chorus” we stand. In heaven when they sing the “Hallelujah Chorus” they fall down and worship (vs. 4). Standing is fine for now. Falling down will be the only appropriate response then. Hallelujah, the King is about to come! Are you ready?