The Wedding of the Lamb Has Come

Revelation 19:1-21

Key Verse:19:7 “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.”

 Have you ever passed through a long tunnel by train or car? When I was young, I took a train bound to Pusan from Kyungju my hometown. The train had to pass through a long and dark tunnel which I hated. It was scarry. I eagerly waited for the moment the train pass through. I have the same feeling as I write this passage. I have waited for the moment when God’s divine judgment finishes and new world appears. Now the hour has come in Revelation 19. Revelation 19 is the prelude of the coming of New Jerusalem in New Heaven in chapter 20-22. Jesus will come again riding on a white horse to judge his enemies, and finally our enemies will be condemned forever. As a train pass through the long and dark tunnel and comes outside bright and fresh, the ray of hope is shining our dark heart little by little. Some may go through this time of passing long and dark tunnels. But the day will come when we pass through the tunnels and enter the glorious and bright kingdom of heaven. Amen!

Please read the note: Chapters 4-5 are a scene of heavenly worship of Almighty God and the Lamb. The Lamb, who was slain, is qualified to open the scroll with seven seals and execute God’s judgment. Chapters 6-18 describe the contents of God’s judgment and the triumph of Christ expressed in a series of sevens: seals, trumpets, bowls, angels, and messages of judgment on Babylon. In chapter 19, heavenly worship reaches a crescendo with the wedding of the Lamb who defeats the beast. Revelation 19 consists of two parts: Praise over the Fall of Babylon and the Wedding of the Lamb (1-10) ---*sounds*, and the Heavenly Warrior Defeats the Beast---*sights* (11-21).

First, Amen, Hallelujah (1-10) Look at verses 1-2. “***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, 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***.” In chapter 17 &18 we studied the Fall of Babylon, which was described as a great prostitute. There was a war between the Lamb and the woman and her followers, and the Lamb triumphed over her. In chapter 18 when an angel picked up a large millstone and threw it into the sea, the destiny of Babylon is finalized. There is no more the power of Babylon. There is no more influence of the prostitute. The glory of the Lord and the victory of the Lamb has come! After this there is the great celebration over the fall of Babylon. The multitude of crowd in heaven sang, “Hallelujah!” The word “*Hallelujah*” means “Praise the Lord” [*Hallel* (Praise) +*jah* (Yaweh)] They praised the Lord of salvation, glory and power. They praised because God’s judgments are true and just. They praised the Lord who condemned the great prostitute and avenged on her the blood of his servants. They again shouted hallelujah because the smoke from the prostitute goes up for ever and ever. (3)

How did the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures respond to their praise? Verse 4 says that they fell down and worshiped God, who was seated on the throne. And they cried: “*Amen, Hallelujah*!” They responded to the praise of the multitude with “*Amen, Hallelujah*!” We also need to respond with *Amen, Hallelujah* when our enemies are destroyed. We have to shout, *Amen, Hallelujah*, when our prayer is heard. We support those who share their prayer topics by saying, “*Amen, Hallelujah*!” Those whose hearts are open to God are happy to say “*Amen, Hallelujah*”. I pray that we all may become men of ‘*Amen, Hallelujah*”, not of “Come on men! Come on God!”

Look at verse 5. “***Then a voice came from the throne, saying: “Praise our God, all you his servants, you who fear him, both great and small***!” The voice which encouraged all his servants to join praising the Lord followed. In verse “6 the multitude shouted again with another Hallelujah. They have other reasons why they praised the Lord. Look at verses 6b-8. “***Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns. 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. Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear.” (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of God’s holy people.)”*** This time they praised the Lord God Almighty (God the Omnipotent) because the wedding of the Lamb comes and his bride be made ready to welcome him. The wedding of the Lamb has come! Here the Lamb is Jesus Christ and the bride is his church. The bride should be ready to welcome the bridegroom Jesus, being clothed in fine linen, bright and clean. In Matthew’s gospel Jesus describes the wedding of the Lamb with the two parables: The Parable of the Wedding Banquet (Mt 22:1-14) and the Parable of the Ten Virgins (Mt 25:1-13) In the Parable of the Wedding Banquet Jesus teaches us to accept the invitation of the wedding banquet which God generously provided. In the Parable of the Ten Virgins Jesus teaches us to be ready to welcome Jesus’ return as the five wise virgins prepares oil in jars along with their lamps. In Revelation 19 we, those who are chosen and prepared, are in heaven to welcome our Lord Jesus Christ.

I believe that all those who married remember the day of their joyful and blessed wedding. I remember the day when my wife missionary Mary was entering into the wedding hall, dressed in the beautiful white wedding dress. My heart was beating rapidly and my mouth was opened from ear to ear. The wedding ceremony was beautiful and the wedding hall was filled with joy, love, and God’s blessing. We both made a pledge before the Lord Jesus and God’s people. Even though we married, I felt that we both got married to Jesus. Jesus is our bridegroom and we are his pure bride. I believe that the day of wedding of the Lamb in heaven will be more joyful, beautiful, glorious, and blessed than any other wedding ceremonies on this earth.

Verse 8 teaches us how we as his bride should be prepared. “*Fine linen, bright and clean*, *was given her to wear*.” Fine linen is a white expensive cloth which are used for the priestly garment. (Ex 28:5,42;39:27,28) Jesus’ body was also wrapped by the strips of fine linen. (Jn 19:40, 20:5,6) As John explains the meaning of the fine linen, it stands for the righteous acts of God’s holy people. (8b) What is the righteous acts of God’s holy people? A white bright and clean linen implies the glory and loyalty to Jesus. As his pure bride we must keep our faithfulness, loyalty, and purity to our Lord Jesus. This white bright clean linen has an opposite connotation from the purple and scarlet cloth which the prostitute wears when she rides on the beast. (17:4) How can we show our faithfulness and loyalty to our Lord Jesus? How can a husband and wife show their fidelity to each other? By obeying their marriage vow and by keeping their purity for each other they can prove their faithfulness and commitment to their marriage. We go through many hardships and spiritual ups and downs while we live together as husband and wife. Especially when we find other’s weak points and short-comings, we are disappointed with each other and despair. But we must remember that no one is perfect. There is no perfect husband and no perfect wife, either. We can build up perfection and harmony while we are living and struggling together. In the same way there is no one righteous before God, not even one. There is no perfectly pure bride in the eyes of Jesus, not even one. But God cleansed us by the blood of Jesus, and we are dressed in white only by God’s grace. Even though we are not perfect, God accepted us as his people and invited us to the wedding banquet of his Son. This must be a marvelous grace and blessing for all of us. *Amen! Hallelujah*. I pray that we all may remember the grace of God and appreciate the blood of Jesus who washed our sins and made us his pure bride. May God help us to remember who we were, who we are, and are going to be in view of the wedding of the Lamb. Amen!

In verse 9 the angel’s message continued with a beatitude. “***Then the angel said to me, “Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!” And he added, “These are the true words of God.***” There appear seven Beatitudes in the book of Revelation, and this is the fourth of the seven. Indeed, blessed are those who are invited to the wedding banquet of the Lamb. Like the servants in the Parable of the Wedding Banquet in Matthew 22, we may go out and invite guests as many as possible. Filling the house of God with guests is the joy of God who provided the wedding banquet. We must diligently invite people to his house with God’s message, “*My oxen and fattened cattle have been butchered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding banquet*.” (Mt 22:4) Through our diligent prayer and invitation, may the house of God be filled with many guests who are dressed in white fine linen. (10) *Amen! Hallelujah!*

Second, the heavenly warrior defeats the beast (11-21) While verses 1-10 starts with ‘I heard’, verses 11-21 starts with ‘I saw.’ What did John see in heaven? Look at verses 11. “***I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. With justice he judges and wages war***.” In chapter 4 when the door of heaven opened, John saw the throne of God. In 11:19 when heaven opened, John saw God’s temple and the ark of the covenant. Now in 19: 11 John saw a man riding a white horse called ‘Faithful and True’, who indicates Jesus Christ. John saw the second coming of Jesus Christ as a judge and warrior. When Jesus came to this world at first time, he came as a savior. He was humble that he entered Jerusalem riding on a donkey. When he comes again, he comes as a warrior. He will come riding on a white hore to judge this world. Some may wonder the way of Jesus’ second coming. According to the book of Acts and 1 Thessalonians, Jesus comes in a cloud with great glory and power to meet his people in the air. (Mt 24:30, Mk 13:26,27, Ac 1:11, 1Thes 4:16,17) But in Revelation 19 Jesus comes with his armies to judge the beast. Some scholars view this as two separate events, still others see as one simultaneous event when Jesus comes again in cloud. Either way, the important thing is that Jesus will come again to judge the living and the dead and that we must be ready to welcome him.

Let’s go back to the passage. The rider is called “Faithful and True” which shows the character of the Messiah, Jesus. Jesus is faithful because he obeyed the Father’s will and appeared as a man. He obeyed the Father even to the point of death on the cross. His obedience manifested God’s faithfulness to keep his promises and prophecies about the Messiah. Jesus is full of grace and truth. Jesus said that he himself is the truth. (Jn 14:6) Here is the word ‘truth’ also means ‘reliable and trustworthy.’ Jesus is the only one who we can trust and rely on for our salvation and eternal life. Praise Jesus! *Amen! Hallelujah!* How does Jesus look like? Look at verses 12-13. “***His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God.***” Eyes like blazing fire (1:14, 2:18) and head with many crowns (*diademata*) are already described as the image of the Messiah. He has two names in this chapter “the Word of God” in verse 13 and “KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS” in verse 16. The Word of God is in Greek, “*ho logos tou theou*”, is the same title of Jesus, John used in John 1:1. This means Jesus is God’s divine revelation. We see God in Jesus because he is God the Incarnate. Jesus also taught the word of God. He taught the secret of the kingdom of God in the gospel. Jesus is also the Sovereign Lord and the Creator God who deserves to be worshiped and loved by the whole universe. F. Handel wrote “*Messiah*” whole-heartedly in order to glorify Jesus as King of kings and Lord of lords.

People wonder about the blood stained on Jesus’ robe in verse 13. Whose blood is in Jesus’ robe? His own blood? The Saints’ blood? Or others’ blood? Many believe that it may be his own blood. But others claim that the blood may be the blood of God’s enemies. In Isaiah 63:1-6 there is God’s vengeance over his enemies by trampling down as he treads the winepress. “*Why are your garments red, like those of one treading the winepress? I have trodden the winepress alone; …I trampled them in my anger and trod them down in my wrath; their blood spattered my garments, and I stained all my clothing*.” (Is 63:2,3) Still, others say that the blood may be the blood of saints. Maybe all blood be mixed? We may ask Jesus about whose blood is when we meet him again.

In verse 14 there are armies of heaven who follow Jesus to fight against the beast. They are dressed in fine linen, white and clean and riding on white horses. The armies are the saints, the beautiful bride, who were redeemed by the blood of Jesus. This is amazing that the pure virgin bride all became the mighty warriors who fight with their bridegroom Jesus. As Jesus is called with two aspects, “Faithful and True”, we are also called with two aspects, “Pure Bride and Mighty Warrior.” We must keep our hearts as pure as dove and as brave as warriors. Amen!

Verses 17-21 shows John’s vision about the destruction of the beast. In verses 17-18 an angel who stands in the sun calls all the birds to eat the flesh of people who followed the beast. In verse 19 John saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to wage war against the rider on the horse and his army. There is a great war between Jesus and the beast. We call this apocalyptical war ‘Armageddon’ as we studied in 16:16 when the sixth bowl was poured out. What was the result of the war? Look at verses 20-21. “***But the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet who had performed the signs of its behalf. With these signs he had deluded those who had received the mark of the beast and worshiped its image. The two of them were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur. The rest were killed with the sword coming out of the mouth of the rider on the horse, and all the birds gorged themselves on their flesh***.” Jesus won! The rider who rode in white horse with his armies captured the beast and threw him with the false prophet into the burning hell. There is no more the power of demon or influence of the evil. Jesus completely and eternally triumphed over Satan. All those who followed the beast and false prophets became the food for the hungry birds. This is the great victory of Jesus and great day of Christians. This is the day when we sing “*Hallelujah, Amen*!” This is the day when our sufferings are over. This is the day when we pass through the long and dark tunnel. Praise the Lord! Amen!

In conclusion we thank God who washed us by the blood of the Lamb and made us his pure bride. Let us sing “*Hallelujah, Amen*!” by remembering the grace of God who loved us and forgave our sins and invited us to the heavenly banquet. Let us also join God’s holy battle for the name of Jesus in this ungodly and perverse generation. We, our Missouri Valley UBF will have the United Easter Sunday worship service on April 4th. Let us prepare this glorious and joyful worship service with resurrection faith. Amen!