

TWO THINGS OF WHICH YOU CAN BE SURE

19 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! ²True and righteous are his judgments! He has judged the great prostitute who corrupted the earth with her immorality, and he has avenged the blood of his servants [that was shed] by her hand." ³And again they shouted, "Hallelujah!" The smoke from her [judgment] goes up forever and ever. ⁴The twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sits on the throne, saying, "Amen! Hallelujah!"

⁵Then a voice came from the throne, saying, "Give praise to our God, all you his servants, you who fear him, [both] the insignificant and the prominent." ⁶Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like the peals of thunder, shouting, "Hallelujah! for the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns! ⁷Let us rejoice and be exceedingly glad, and let us give him the glory, for the wedding [day] of the Lamb has come, and his bride* has made herself ready." ⁸She was granted [grace] to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean—the fine linen represents the righteous acts of the saints. ⁹Then [the angel] said to me, "Write: Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding feast of the Lamb." And he added, "These are true words of God." ¹⁰I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, "Do not do so. I am a fellow servant with you and with your brothers who keep the testimony of Jesus; worship God! Indeed, the testimony of Jesus is [one with] the Spirit of prophecy."

¹¹Then I saw heaven opened, and there before me was a white horse, and he who sat upon it was called Faithful and True. With righteousness he judges and wages war. ¹²His eyes are flames of fire, and on his head are many diadems; and he has a name written [on him] that no one knows but he himself. ¹³He is dressed in a robe splattered with blood, and his name is the Word of God. ¹⁴The armies of heaven followed him upon white horses, dressed in fine linen, white and clean. ¹⁵Out of his mouth came a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations. He will rule them with an iron scepter. He treads the winepress of the fierceness of the wrath of God, the Almighty. ¹⁶On his robe and on his thigh he has [this] name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS. ¹⁷And I saw an angel standing in the sun, who cried out in a loud voice to all the birds flying in mid-air, "Come, gather together for the great supper of God, ¹⁸so that you may eat the flesh of kings and the flesh of generals, the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses and their riders; indeed, the flesh of all men, both free men and slaves, both the insignificant and the prominent." ¹⁹Then I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies assembled together to wage war against him who sat on the horse, and against his army. ²⁰But the beast was captured, along with the false prophet who had performed the [miraculous] signs on his behalf—by means of [those signs] he had deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. [These two] were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with brimstone. ²¹The rest of them were slain with the sword of him who sat on the horse, [the sword] that came out of his mouth. And all the birds were filled with their flesh. (Rev. 19:1-21)

*Literally, "wife."

Introduction

At one time the Prudential Insurance Company ran the follow commercial on T.V.: There was a scene of the roaring waves of the sea; and then the camera focused in on a massive mountain of rock looming high out of the waters below. The message being conveyed was this: In contrast to a sea of financial uncertainty and instability, you can trust in the rock-like security of the Prudential Insurance Company.

We find the words of the angel recorded in Revelation 19:9 conveying much the same message. Speaking of the events recorded in this present chapter, as well as in the whole of the Book of Revelation, the angel declares, *“These are true words of God.”* That is to say, the things revealed here are truths of which we can be absolutely certain; truths upon which we can build our lives and invest our souls.

Though they may appear to be incredible and seem as though they will never come to pass, the great and final works of God will surely be accomplished. Because the LORD our God is the Almighty (19:6) and because He is faithful and true (19:11,) we may be confident that what He promises He will surely accomplish. As we study Revelation 19, let us consider, *“Two Things of Which We Can Be Sure.”*

I. You Can Be Sure that *“The Great Supper of God”* Will Come

John reports that he hears *“what sounded like the roar of a great multitude in heaven, shouting, ‘Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God!’”* (vs. 1.)

At present, Christ exercises the divine authority and power of God to preserve His people and to restrain the powers of darkness. When Satan requested to test Job, the LORD gave him limited permission to do so, declaring, *“Look; everything that he has is in your power; only do not lay your hand upon the man himself”* (Job 1:12.) When Satan asked further permission to test Job, the LORD replied, *“Look; he is in your hand; only spare his life”* (Job 2:6.) Jude addresses his Christian readers as, *“those who have been called, who are loved by God the Father and kept by Jesus Christ”* (Jude 1.) The Christian may encounter severe trials in his life, but he can be assured that Christ will employ His almighty power to preserve his soul.

But the day is coming when Christ shall employ the divine power of God to bring His people into a perfect state of peace and blessing, and consign the devil and all his hosts to everlasting judgment. A graphic portrayal of this is presented in Revelation 20:10, *“The devil who deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are also. They will be tormented day and night forever and ever.”*

We are now transported to that future day as we hear the heavenly multitude praising God because *“he has avenged the blood of his servants”* (vs. 2.) The reason for just vengeance to be taken is presented in Revelation 17:6, *“I saw that the*

woman [i.e.; Babylon] *was drunk with the blood of the saints, the blood of those who had been martyred for Jesus.* “Babylon,” the great hedonistic society of man, hates those who follow Christ and reflect His lifestyle. Such is the case because she hates the moral restraints on her life that are required by a holy God who is our Creator and to whom we are accountable. “Babylon” stands in opposition to the life of devotion to God and submission to His moral law, the life that is exemplified by Christ and by those who are His disciples. “Babylon” desires to give free reigns to her passions and to be master of her own life, even as she is enslaved to her sinful desires. Furthermore, “Babylon” she cannot stand the torment of conviction she experiences when exposed to the righteous life of Christ as it is exemplified by His disciples in word and in life.

As the Christian lives in the midst of any “Babylonian” society, the Scripture makes clear that what we may expect in one form or another is persecution; the Apostle Paul warns Timothy: *“everyone who would live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted”* (2 Tim. 3:12.) Persecution may take the form of ostracism—a young Christian lady was no longer invited to any parties because she protested against the ungodly conduct of her friends. Persecution may take the form of mockery and verbal abuse—Christian college students found themselves being mocked and shouted to silence when they ventured to present the Christian view point on a particular subject. Persecution may take the form of deprivation—Revelation 13:16-17 speaks of the most severe form of job discrimination:

He [i.e.; the false prophet] *compelled everyone, the insignificant and the prominent, the rich and the poor, the free man and the slave, to receive a mark on their right hand or on their forehead. ¹⁷No one could buy or sell unless he had the mark, which is the name of the beast or the number [that represents] his name.* (Rev. 13:16-17)

Persecution may take the form of physical assault and execution—referring to the wanton, hedonistic society of “Babylon,” the angel declares, *“they poured out the blood of the saints and the prophets”* (Rev. 16:6a.)

Sometimes it is not enough to tell a suffering Christian to simply turn the other cheek, what is needed is the assurance that a day of justice and righteous vindication is coming—that day is the subject of Revelation 19. Note, also, 2 Thessalonians 1:6b-10,

God is just; He will pay back affliction to those who afflict you ⁷and give relief to you who are afflicted, and to us as well. This will happen when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven in blazing fire with his powerful angels. ⁸He will punish those who do not know God [i.e., they do not have love for nor fellowship with God] and do not obey the gospel of our Lord Jesus. ⁹They will be punished with everlasting destruction and shut out from the presence of the Lord and from the majesty of his power ¹⁰on the day he comes to be glorified in his saints and

to be marveled at among all those who have believed. This includes you, because you believed our testimony to you. (2 Thess. 1:6b-10)

The day when Christ consigns the devil to judgment—the day when God avenges the blood of His servants—is described in verses 11-21 as *“the great supper of God.”*

We are assured that on that day it will be *“with righteousness”* that the Lord Jesus Christ shall judge and *“wage war”* (vs. 11.) His standard of judgment will be the absolute righteousness of God as revealed in His commandments. The Psalmist declares, *“they will sing before Jehovah, for he comes, he comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world with righteousness and the peoples with his truth”* (Psl. 96:13.) Again, the Psalmist assures us, *“The ordinances of Jehovah are sure and altogether righteous”* (Psl. 19:9b.) In accordance with that divine standard, the Lord Jesus will wage war against all those who defy that holy standard and will prevail against them, consigning them to everlasting judgment.

In verses 12-13 the Apostle John describes the Lord Jesus as He shall appear on the Last Day: *“His eyes are flames of fire”*—here is depicted His absolute purity, a purity before which all wickedness is detected and consumed. *“On his head are many diadems”*—here is seen His absolute sovereignty as the King of kings and the Lord of lords. *“He has a name written [on him] that no one knows but he himself;”* as the Son of God, Christ is awesome, inscrutable, beyond the scope of human comprehension. *“He is dressed in a robe splattered with blood.”* This is not His own precious blood that was shed at Calvary on behalf of those who believe in Him. On the contrary, this is the blood of those who have defied God and His commandments as their blood is now required of them and the punishment for their disobedience is enacted against them; note Isaiah 63:1-3,

Who is this who comes from Edom, from Bozrah, with his garments stained crimson? [Who is this,] this one who is clothed with majesty, striding in the greatness of his strength? [It is] I, the one whose speech is righteous, the one who is powerfully able to save. ²Why are your garments red, like the garments of him who stomps in the winepress? ³I have stomped in the winepress alone; of [all] the peoples there was no one with me. Indeed, I stomped upon them in my anger and I trampled upon them in my wrath. Their blood splattered my garments, and I have stained all my clothing. (Isa. 63:1-3)

“His name is the Word of God.” The Lord Jesus Christ is the full revelation of God, as He testified to Philip and the rest of His disciples, *“I have been with you for such a long time, and you still do not know me, Philip? He who has seen me, has seen the Father. How can you say, Show us the Father?”* (Jn. 14:9.) Christ Jesus is the revelation both of the mercy and grace of God (witnessed at Calvary,) and of the justice and holy wrath of God (to be witnessed on the day of the Final Judgment.)

Verses 15-16 continue the description of the revelation of Christ on the day He will judge the world. Out of His mouth proceeds a sharp sword with which He strikes the nations—it is the Word of God. This picture is in keeping with the Lord’s own testimony made during the days of His earthly ministry:

... he who rejects me, and does not receive my teaching, does have one who condemns him; the word that I have spoken, that [word] shall condemn him on the last day. ⁴⁹[This is the case] because I did not speak of my own accord; on the contrary, the Father who sent me, he has commanded me what to say and how to speak. ⁵⁰And I know that his commandment is eternal life. Therefore, what I say is just what the Father has spoken to me. (Jn. 12:48-50)

He will rule with a rod of iron—God is the true Lord and Ruler over His creation and He shall exercise that righteous and divine rule. For those who submit to Christ’s divine lordship, His rod and staff lead and protect, a blessed fact of which the Psalmist testifies: *“Your rod and your staff, they comfort me”* (Psl. 23:4b.) But for those who resist and defy His divine lordship, His rod and staff serve as instruments of judgment:

The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together against Jehovah and against his Anointed One. ³“Let us break their chains,” they say, “and throw off their fetters.”... ⁹You will rule them with an iron scepter; you will dash them to pieces like pottery. (Psl. 2:2-3,9)

Verses 17-21 now describe *“the great supper of God”* in very graphic terms. The birds of prey are invited to gather together so that they may eat *“the flesh of all men, both free men and slaves, both the insignificant and the prominent”* (vs. 17-18.) Those who defy their Creator are finally destined for the utmost humiliation and contempt—in Scripture, the giving of the body over to the birds of prey and not affording it a burial was an act of utmost contempt, this is the type of imagery employed in Revelation 19.

The supper is now prepared (vs. 19-21a.) “The beast,” (representing the totalitarian empire of man in his effort to rule the world,) the kings of the earth, and their armies come together to war against Christ. Here is portrayed the universal hatred of Christ and His church exhibited by the world; as the Lord Jesus warned: *“You will be hated by all men for my name’s sake”* (Lk. 21:17.) But sinful mankind, aligned together against their God and against His people, meet a devastating final defeat: *“all the birds were filled with their flesh”* (vs. 21b.) Graphically pictured here is the final destiny of sinful mankind: total shame and humiliation—their corpses being eaten by the birds of prey—and condemnation.

The angel gives the assurance, *“These are true words of God”— “the great supper of God”* will come.

II. You Can Be Sure That “The Wedding Feast of the Lamb” Will Come

“The wedding feast of the Lamb” is a combination of images that graphically convey the truth that the Lord Jesus Christ will finally bring His redeemed into the most sacred and blessed union with Himself.

At present we cannot even begin to understand and can only partially experience the relationship between Christ and the believer as it is defined in a passage as Colossians 3:3-4, *“you died, and your life is [now] hidden with Christ in God. ⁴When Christ, [who is] our life, shall appear, we also shall appear with him in glory.”* But on that great day we will know to the fullest the wonderful promise of the Lord Jesus: *“On that day you will know that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you”* (Jn. 14:20.) A young lady, when she has become engaged, looks forward to her wedding day; all the more, as Christians should we look forward with anticipation to *“the wedding feast of the Lamb.”* In Titus 2:12b-13 the Apostle Paul describes the kind of life that should characterize the Christian: *“we should live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present world, ¹³while we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ.”*

Verse 7b tells us that Christ’s bride *“has made herself ready.”* Upon becoming engaged, a young lady prepares herself for her wedding day; all the more, as Christians should we be preparing ourselves for *“the wedding supper of the Lamb”*—Scripture tells us that this is our Christian obligation:

Beloved, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. ³Everyone who has this hope set on him purifies himself, just as he is pure. (1 Jn. 3:2-3)

Note that literally it is his *“wife”* who has made herself ready for their wedding day. In the biblical tradition, an engaged couple were legally committed to one another; their relationship was finalized and consummated on their wedding day—note Matthew 1:18-19,

*Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way: When his mother **Mary had been engaged to Joseph**, before they came together she was found to be with child of the Holy Spirit.¹⁹And **Joseph her husband**, being a righteous man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privately.* (Matt. 1:18-19)

As Christians, we must grasp the truth that we have been engaged to Christ, we belong to Christ and are no longer our own: *“You do not belong to yourself; ²⁰you were bought with a price. Therefore, glorify God with your body”* (1 Cor. 6:19b-20.)

According to verse 8, the Lamb's bride "*was granted [grace] to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean.*" The "*fine linen*" is defined as "*the righteous acts of the saints.*" The point being made is the fact that it is the Christian's calling to develop a holy life of devotion to God; as the writer to the Hebrews exhorts the community of believers to whom he addresses his epistle: "*Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord*" (Heb. 12:14.) Furthermore, the very righteousness that is required of the Christian is divinely given to the Christian and produced within him by the Holy Spirit:

*It is by grace that you have been saved through faith—and this is not of yourselves, it is the gift of God—⁹it is not of works, therefore no one can boast.
¹⁰We are his handiwork, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared in advance in order for us to walk in them. (Eph. 2:8-10)*

Yet it is our Christian obligation to yield ourselves to the Holy Spirit, doing so daily, as He carries out His sanctifying work in the lives of Christ's own.

The angel assures us, "*These are true words of God*"— "*the wedding feast of the Lamb*" will come.

Conclusion

The events described in Revelation 19 are well-known articles of the Christian faith; yet from the perspective of our everyday lives they may seem to be remote, distant, and almost fantastic. This is why the angel of God solemnly testifies: "*These are true words of God.*" Because the Lord our God is the Almighty (19:6) and because He is faithful and true (19:11,) let us be fully confident that these great and awesome events described in Revelation 19 will surely come to pass.