

# **“The Marriage Supper of the Lamb”**

## **Revelation 19:7-10**

These verses are part of the paragraph that began in the first part of this chapter. That indicates that they are connected. As I pointed out in the last message, I believe these verses are a type of “parenthetical” – that is, I believe that the marriage supper is taking place out of chronological order of sequence to chapter 18 and to the rest of chapter 19. It is possible, and most likely, that the marriage supper is taking place in heaven while the end of the Tribulation is taking place on earth. It is the final event in heaven for the saints before we come back with Christ for the Battle of Armageddon.

The introduction for this portion of the vision is found in the first part of verse 7 – “Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him.” This is the “voice...out of the throne” heard (vs. 5) that declares the last Alleluia. Whether or not this is part of that last Alleluia is debatable – what the angel has to say is the point. Considering the fact that the “bride” mentioned here is the church, it would seem unlikely that this is part of the last Alleluia – the great chorus of all the saints of all the ages, as well as the angelic beings – considering who the bride is. It could be that the Alleluias are given during the feast at various times throughout. It can also be seen here that this group is announcing the feast – not all of them actually taking part in it.

At any rate, the voice from the throne points to the Lamb, the Groom, and says that He is worthy of the honour for the occasion, and there will be great gladness and rejoicing for the final act in the plan of

salvation has come, and all things are about to be fulfilled that began when Adam and Eve sinned and the need for a Redeemer was begun.

## **I. WHAT IS IT?**

***A. It's called the "marriage of the Lamb" in vs. 8 – it's called the "marriage supper of the Lamb" in vs. 9 – the words "marriage" and "marriage supper" are the same Greek word***

***B. John Walvoord says this of the "marriage supper" of that time period, and of the whole of marriage ceremonies***

Though marriage customs varied in the ancient world, usually there were three major aspects: (1) The marriage contract was often consummated by the parents when the parties to the marriage were still children and not ready to assume adult responsibility. The payment of a suitable dowry was often a feature of the contract. When consummated, the contract meant that the couple were legally married. (2) At a later time when a couple had reached a suitable age, the second step in the wedding took place. This was a ceremony in which the bridegroom accompanied by his friends would go to the house of the bride and escort her to his home. This is the background of the parable of the virgins in Matthew 25:1-13. (3) Then the bridegroom would bring his bride to his home and the marriage supper, to which guests were invited, would take place. It was such a wedding feast that Christ attended at Cana as recorded in John 2:1-12.

The marriage symbolism is beautifully fulfilled in the relationship of Christ to His church. The wedding contract is consummated at the time the church is redeemed. Every true Christian is joined to Christ in a legal marriage. When Christ comes for His church at the rapture, the second phase of the wedding is fulfilled, namely, the Bridegroom goes to receive His bride. The third phase then follows, that is, the wedding feast. Here it is significant to note that the bride is already the wife of the Lamb, that is, the bridegroom has already come for His bride prior to His second coming described in 19:11-16. That which is here announced is not the wedding union but the wedding feast. This has been variously interpreted as relating to the wonderful fellowship in heaven following the rapture or to the millennium itself. Of primary importance at this point, however, is the order of events. The third phase of the wedding is about to take place, namely, the feast, which presumes the earlier rapture of the bride.

## **II. WHO WILL BE THERE?**

### ***A. The Lamb – this is, of course, the Lord Jesus Christ***

Romans 7:4

<sup>4</sup> Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God.

2 Corinthians 11:2

<sup>2</sup> For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.

### Ephesians 5:31–32

<sup>31</sup> For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.

<sup>32</sup> This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

## **B. "His wife" – the bride**

1. This is the Age of Grace saints
2. John Walvoord also writes: Another problem of interpretation is the proper inclusion of the term "wife." In the biblical use of the figure of marriage, variations can be observed in both the Old and New Testaments. Frequently in the Old Testament, as for instance in the book of Hosea, Israel is described as the unfaithful wife of Jehovah to be restored to her position as a faithful wife in the future millennial reign. While marriage is often used as an illustration of various truths, the norm for the doctrine is that Israel is already married to Jehovah and has proved unfaithful to her responsibility as a wife. By contrast, in the New Testament the church is pictured as a virgin waiting for the coming of her bridegroom (2 Cor. 11:2). In this case the wedding union is still future as well as the wedding feast. The dispensational distinction between the saints of the present age belonging to the

church, the Body of Christ, and saints of other ages, such as those in the Old Testament or those in the future tribulation, therefore seems to be observed in this passage where the wife is distinguished from the great multitude identified in chapter 7 as martyrs out of the great tribulation. The “marriage of the Lamb” is properly the marriage supper of the Lamb, the final aspect of the marriage relationship between Christ and His church.

#### Ephesians 5:25–27

<sup>25</sup> Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

<sup>26</sup> That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

<sup>27</sup> That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

### ***C. The saints of all other ages***

1. They will be the attendants, so to speak – they will be there, they just won’t be seated at that table with the Age of Grace saints
2. This is seen in the voice of the multitudes in the Alleluias, as well as the way the bride and the Lamb are spoken of in the third person

### ***D. The angelic beings will be there as well – also seen in the great multitude of voices***

### **III. WHAT IS REQUIRED TO BE THERE?**

#### ***A. The invitation – "Blessed are they which are called" – vs. 9 – this is the age of grace saints***

In this verse, as in verses 7 and 8, the wife of the Lamb is distinguished from the attendants at the wedding, the wife apparently being the church, and the attendants at the wedding the saints of past and future ages. The unfounded notion that God treats all saints of all ages exactly alike is hard to displace in the theology of the church. The fact that the divine purpose is not the same for Israel, the Gentile believers, or the church of the present age is plainly written in the Word of God. Such distinctions, however, should not be made greater than they really are. God does not deal with Israel on the same plane as He does the Gentiles, nor does He deal with the church on the same plane as He does the Gentile saints or Israel. Each has its peculiar advantages and particular place in the divine program. Just as no two individuals have exactly the same destiny, so no two nations or groups in God's program are treated exactly alike. In all these relationships God is completely sovereign, righteous, and wise. (John Walvoord)

#### ***B. To make ourselves "ready" – to be saved and sanctified – vs. 7c-8***

1. One aspect of the marriage supper as found in vs. 7 is that the wife, the bride, has "made herself ready" – that is, she is seen having put on the wedding garments as mentioned in vs. 8

2. The readiness is seen as the “righteousness of saints” – first, clothed in Christ’s righteousness, and, second, we have become righteous in our lives

#### Romans 3:25–26

<sup>25</sup> Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

<sup>26</sup> To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

#### Philippians 3:9

<sup>9</sup> 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:

3. This is speaking of our walk with the Lord while alive on this earth, to some degree, although our place at the table is established with our salvation – we are not saved by works, we are not kept by works. Our works are to point people to Christ and our position during the Millennium is going to be based upon those works. Our place at the table is based solely upon the righteousness of Christ that we are clothed in.

Conclusion: Vs. 10 gives some concluding remarks regarding the one who gave John this portion of the vision, and it points, in the last phrase, to the fact that all prophecy of future things was given to point

people to Jesus. We, as the church, those to whom the book of Revelation was given to, are to use these visions to point to the Lamb, and to point people to the Lamb. This is the "spirit of prophecy" – it is the "testimony of Jesus." All our preaching, all our teaching, is to be done with the final outcome of people hearing about Christ. That truth has been seen in the book of Revelation all along, and it is further emphasized here.

We really don't know any more about the marriage supper than what is said here. We don't know how long it lasts, we don't know what we will eat – all we know is that it will be a glorious, happy time for all that are there, from the attendees (the age of grace saints) to the attendants (the great multitude of ch. 7 and of the first part of ch. 19), to the angelic beings.

It is a glorious time – right before the most horrific time the world has ever known.