



Last Sunday after our morning services, the temperature reached 110 degrees. When it gets that hot it is just plain scary. I don't know about you, but when it gets like that I have the feeling that there is some impending doom. Somethings going to break. The animals are going to die. It is like my spirit is desperate for some relief. Monday morning, I got up and

drove to the airport and took a flight to Detroit. The wife of my childhood friend picked me up and drove me out to their sheep farm where I've spent this last week. I am writing from a room with open windows. I am under a blanket to stay warm as I rewrite the beginning of this sermon. The relief that I feel is difficult to explain. It just feels SO GOOD to be out of the pressure of the Texas summer. That's kind of how this morning is going to feel as we move away from the doom and destruction we've been reading about in Revelation. This is relief. It is over. FINALLY after months of study, our spirits can be refreshed. We've left the scriptures chronicling the bowls of wrath that were poured out on the earth, and together we can shout a collective Alleluia! This morning, we'll finally get to hear about the great relief that is coming in heaven. It's time to celebrate!

Read Revelation 19:1-10

Heaven Exults over Babylon

19 After these things I heard a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, "Alleluia! [the] Salvation and [the] glory and [the] honor and [the] power belong to the Lord our God! (Revelation 19:1, NKJV with Greek definitive articles added).

Our scripture today starts with "Meta Tauta" – "after these things." John is talking about the destruction and misery that we've just read about. With man's false religion gone and with the one world economic system now destroyed, relief comes to the people of God. Heaven is occupied and John hears rejoicing. Four times in this passage, a large multitude in heaven is heard saying "Alleluia," meaning, of course, "PRAISE THE LORD." This is a Hebrew word expressed in Greek. The wicked are no longer in charge. The multitude of the saints of God can enjoy rest. The ALLELUIA is followed by explaining why it is that the Lord should be praised. The Greek text uses a definite article saying, "Praise God THE salvation and THE glory and THE honor and THE power belong to the Lord our God!

² For true and righteous are His judgments, because He has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication; and He has avenged on her the blood of His servants shed by her.” ³ Again they said, “Alleluia! Her smoke rises up forever and ever!” (Revelation 19:2-3, NKJV).

God’s wrath on earth is frightful. We might wonder how to reconcile this merciful God that we know with the judgment we have seen. God’s lovingkindness never ceases, but He is also a God of righteousness. And it is His righteousness which demands justice for His saints. It sometimes seems that God is unaware of (and unconcerned about) the evil that goes on in the world. Well guess what? He isn’t. He has seen every injustice on the earth, and those that have hurt and harmed the people of God will be held accountable. When He judges, it will be right and true and as things ought to be.

These judgments are explained. He judges the harlot (the abusing world) that shed the blood of His people. He will avenge the blood of His servants and saints. So many believers have died throughout history, not only by the cruel regimes of the world, but even at the hands of those who have called themselves the “church.” This will include those who will be martyred during the Tribulation period. We read about them back in Chapter 6.

The fifth seal was open, and John said, *“I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held.”*¹⁰ *And they cried with a loud voice, saying, “How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?”* (Revelation 6:9b-10, NKJV). In the devastation that we have read about, God’s people have been avenged.

³ Again they said, “Alleluia! Her smoke rises up forever and ever!” (Revelation 19:3, NKJV).

All the earthly religions, economic systems, and political systems have come to a smoky end, and it is all over. They have been dealt with forever. Remember we read that they were burned with fire. The text last week said that those watching feared coming near the burning lest they be burned. I didn’t mention it last week, but I think they won’t be able to go near it due to nuclear fallout.

⁴ And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sat on the throne, saying, “Amen! Alleluia!” ⁵ Then a voice came from the throne, saying, “Praise our God, all you His servants and those who fear Him, both small and great!” (Revelation 19:4-5, NKJV).

These are the same 24 elders and four living creatures that were there around the throne of God at the beginning of the vision. The 24 were those that I suggested might be twelve representatives from the Old Testament era and twelve from the New

Testament era. Perhaps it will be a group including some of those listed in the great hall of faith in Hebrews chapter 12. The rejoicing in heaven continues. As this judgment passes, and the great relief comes, the 24 elders along with the four living creatures are all prostrate before the throne of God in intense and total worship.

6 And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, "Alleluia! For the Lord God



Omnipotent reigns! 7 Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready." 8 And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints.

(Revelation 19:6-8, NKJV).

Once again, the voice of God is described as waters (like waterfalls) and the sounds of mighty thunder. We then see a picture of a Jewish wedding. The Church is pictured as a bride, and the groom is coming for the wedding. The Church is pictured in righteousness in fine linen. Throughout scripture, the people of God are portrayed as His bride.

9 Then he [the angel] said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb!'" And he said to me, "These are the true sayings of God." (Revelation 19:9, NKJV).



This is the great feast, the supper, when the saints of God are married to the Lamb.

10 And I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, "See that you do not do that! I am your fellow servant, and of your brethren who have the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." (Revelation 19:10, NKJV).

A Jewish Wedding Parallel

When I was a little boy, my father took our family to Mexico to an ancient synagogue in Monterrey. I attended a Jewish wedding. It was a magnificent affair. Before the actual marriage took place, the participants spent DAYS feasting together. I saw whole animals roasting over fires. There were probably a thousand people there. I do not remember exactly, but it seems like my father told me they had been feasting each evening for a

week or so. The marriage feast of the Lamb will be something like that, but a million times larger. My father was a medical doctor, and these wealthy people were his patients. They had invited us down for the wedding. I think it helps to understand what exactly goes on in a Jewish wedding to give us an understanding of the imagery of the Church as the "Bride of Christ." Weddings were and are a big deal in Jewish culture.

Betrothal time – In ancient times, the fathers of the bride and groom would meet and make a contract between themselves concerning their children. The father of the groom would seek out a wife for his son. He would make an arrangement to pair his son with the other man's daughter. The two fathers would shake hands on it, and a dowry would be paid. The father of the groom would pay the "bride price" to the father of the bride. When they reached marital age (13-15), the two young people would be brought together. The contract would now include the couple, with vows spoken. The dowry, a substantial amount of money or wealth, was transferred from the groom's family to the wife of the bride. The dowry was sort of like advanced alimony in case the marriage didn't work out. At this point, the now drawn up contract recited that a bride price had been paid, and vows had been exchanged. The couple were now legally married, but there was no consummation of the marriage or celebration. They didn't yet engage in sexual intimacy.

The Removal and Building - The groom would then leave his bride and would return to his father's house where he would begin to build an addition on to his father's house for him and his bride. This took a year for the groom to accomplish. That's why there were Levitical allowances for the groom to stay home from war and such things. The couple were considered husband and wife even though they had not yet consummated the marriage. The groom would stay busy preparing a place for him and his bride to dwell in his father's house once they were together as a couple.

After a year, and after the completion of the "room" for him and his bride, the groom would come back for her (like Matthew 25). In that story 10 bridesmaids were waiting and watching for the return of the groom. It was their responsibility to keep their lanterns ready and filled with oil so they would be able to see the groom when he returned. In that parable in Matthew 25, five bridesmaids had their oil ready, but the others did not. When news came that the groom was returning, the five who were unprepared without oil went out searching and asking to borrow oil from others. They were refused. You see, you can't get to Jesus on borrowed faith. You can't get to Him because your granny was a rock solid old time Christian. You can't get to Him because your parents knew Him, loved Him, and actively served Him. You've got to have your own relationship with Him.

The Wedding – With the groom having returned, a celebration was held. The bride was lifted up on a chair and she was carried to a seven day banquet. Under the canopy the bride and groom said further vows and the rabbi would break a glass. Then the party

began! After the marriage feast, the couple became one flesh as they consummated the marriage. All of this is a picture of the bride (the Church) and the groom (Jesus).



All of this reflects our salvation in Jesus. 1) Jesus paid the bride price with His blood. 2) Jesus has gone to prepare a place for us in His Father's house! 3) He will return with the Rapture of the Church to take His bride to the place prepared for her. The wedding feast is COMING! We should always be comforted to know that He is

coming back for His own. Jesus explained this, *"Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. ² In My Father's house are many mansions [many rooms]; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also."* (John 14:1-3, NKJV with author's insertion added).

Jesus is coming back for US! We, as believers, are the bride. We are to anticipate and look forward to His return. He's coming for us. It is imminent. He is coming! On that day, we will finally be with the Lord forever. It reminds me of a song my sweet little mother used to sing,

Coming again, Coming again,
May be morning, may be noon,
May be evening and may be soon!
Coming again, Coming again;
O what a wonderful day it will be -
Jesus is coming again!¹

Christ on a White Horse

Now John sees the end. Here we see that horses will be in heaven. Jesus comes in on a white war horse. When He came into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, He was on a lowly donkey, but when He returns, it will be on a war horse with all of its power. He first came as a lamb, but He will return like a lion. He is the Lion of Judah, and the scepter shall never depart from Him! Alleluia! He will come with power and might.



¹¹ Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war. ¹² His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His

¹ <https://lyricstranslate.com/en/john-w-peterson-jesus-coming-again-lyrics.html>

head were many crowns [diadema]. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself. ¹³ ***He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word [LOGOS²-“divine revelation”] of God.*** ¹⁴ ***And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen [the church clothed in righteousness], white and clean, followed Him on white horses.*** ¹⁵ ***Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword [Jesus ruling and judging], that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron [picture of messianic rule Psalm 2:7-9].*** ³ ***He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God [God’s enemies will be crushed like grapes in a winepress Isaiah 63:1-6].*** ¹⁶ ***And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written:***

KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.

The Beast and His Armies Defeated

17 Then I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in the midst of heaven, “Come and gather together for the supper of the great God, 18 that you may eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them, and the flesh of all people, free and slave, both small and great.” (Revelation 19:11-18, NKJV with author’s insertions added).

There will be a great deal of clean up. This angel will summon buzzards, vultures, and crows to eat all of the carnage that is left on the battlefield. They will eat up ALL people who were not believers: kings, peasants, slaves, free. God’s judgment shows no discrimination.

19 And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army. 20 Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone. 21 And the rest were killed with the sword which proceeded from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse. And all the birds were filled with their flesh. (Revelation 19:19-21, NKJV).

This describes the magnificent end. The antichrist and the false prophet will be thrown into “the lake of fire.” Satan will be thrown into the Lake of Fire later in chapter 20. The

² In Irish Gaelic rendered “An Bri”. This means the “meaning”, “the energy”, the “force”. It is distinct from the word “word” just used regularly in a grammatical way.

³ ‘You are My Son, Today I have begotten You.’⁸ Ask of Me, and I will give You The nations for Your inheritance, And the ends of the earth for Your possession. ⁹ You shall break them with a rod of iron;

scavenger birds will descend on the Jezreel Valley, the Plain of Armageddon, and there they will feast on the corpses of all those slain in the battle.

Scripture tells us that "*...in that day His feet will stand on the Mount of Olives, which faces Jerusalem on the east. And the Mount of Olives shall be split in two, from east to west, making a very large valley; half of the mountain shall move toward the north and half of it toward the south. (Zechariah 14:4, NKJV).*

Brothers and sisters, He's coming again! And, He's coming again just like the angels in the book of Acts tell us. ¹⁰ *And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel,* ¹¹ *who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven."* (Acts 1:10-11, NKJV).

Do not despair this morning. Jesus is coming again! And He will come JUST LIKE HE PROMISED. WHAT A RELIEF THAT IS!

Let us pray.

Union Grove is one of the oldest Baptist communities of faith in the State of Texas dating back to 1844. Pastor Faber McMullen may be reached by email at uniongrove362@gmail.com or by snail mail at: 15301 FM 362, Navasota, Texas 77868. Tel: 936-825-1227 (Edited and proofed by Amanda Neese- Webster, Texas.) All financial gifts to this ministry are tax-deductible as a 501 (c) (3) Corporation.