

February 4, 2024 by Steve Brandon



The Day of Victory

Revelation 19:1-10

1. The Victory Parade (verses 1-5)

2. The Victory Party (verses 6-10)

I want to take you back in history to Tuesday, May 8, 1945. That day marked the official end to World War 2 in Europe. It is officially known as V-E Day. "Victory in Europe Day." Adolf Hitler, the Nazi leader, had committed suicide a week earlier (April 30, 1945). The surrender was authorized by his successor, Karl Dönitz. [\[1\]](#)

After nearly six years of fighting in Europe, the Allied forces came out victorious! Do you know what took place throughout Europe on that day? I have some pictures for you. Here is Piccadilly Circus in London. Mobs of people, all over. Here are the crowds outside of Buckingham Palace, where the king and Queen of England appeared to celebrate with the people. Here is Winston Churchill waving to the crowds gathered in Whitehall on that day. To give you a sense of the craziness of the day, here are some Brits on a car near the Tower of London.

It was a day of grand celebration. Not only in England were the celebrations of that day. Crowds gathered in Paris near the Arc de Triomphe. Times Square in New York was packed with people. Here are some Americans elated that Germany had surrendered.

Now, World War 2 wasn't finished. There was still fighting in the Pacific. V-J day (or Victory over Japan Day) didn't take place for another three months (August 14, 1945) when Japan finally surrendered. But in those dark days, the victory in Europe signaled a major step toward peace, as the Allied forces tasted a measure of victory on that day. There was great celebration that day.

After the bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, similar celebrations were felt around the world. This is the joy in Piccadilly Circus in England. These are Americans in Paris. This is Times Square in New York. This is Pearl Harbor. You can't help but to feel the joy and excitement of the people of the world on that day. These weren't planned gatherings for some holiday. These were spontaneous celebrations across the world!

I show you these pictures because this is the emotion of our text today, Revelation 19. The great bombs of judgment have been dropped (in Revelation 16, 17, and 18), and God's day of victory has come at last! There is great rejoicing in heaven when God's day of victory came.

The title of my message this morning is "The Day of Victory." It comes from Revelation 19, verses 1-10. So, if you haven't opened your Bibles, I invite you to open them now and turn to Revelation 19. We are coming close to the end of our exposition of this great book of the Bible.

Revelation has shown us much about the righteousness of God and his coming judgement, whether that's when the angels open the scrolls, or blow the trumpets, or pour out the bowls. All of the judgments of God have come to a climax in chapters 17 and 18, where the great prostitute, the beast and Babylon are all soundly defeated.

This morning, as we come to Revelation 19, we see "The Day of Victory." Let me read the text for you, beginning in verse 1 and reading through verse 10.

Revelation 19:1-10

After this I heard what seemed to be the loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, crying out,

"Hallelujah!
Salvation and glory and power belong to our God,
for his judgments are true and just;
for he has judged the great prostitute
who corrupted the earth with her immorality,
and has avenged on her the blood of his servants."

Once more they cried out,

"Hallelujah!
The smoke from her goes up forever and ever."

And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who was seated on the throne, saying, "Amen. Hallelujah!" And from the throne came a voice saying,

"Praise our God,
all you his servants,
you who fear him,

small and great.”

Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude, like the roar of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, crying out,

“Hallelujah!
For the Lord our God
the Almighty reigns.
Let us rejoice and exult
and give him the glory,
for the marriage of the Lamb has come,
and his Bride has made herself ready;
it was granted her to clothe herself
with fine linen, bright and pure”—

for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints.

And the angel said to me, “Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.” And he said to me, “These are the true words of God.” Then I fell down at his feet to worship him, but he said to me, “You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brothers who hold to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God.” For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

I’m not sure whether or not you noticed, but in this passage, the word, “Hallelujah!” is repeated four times! It comes in verse 1!

Revelation 19:1

Hallelujah!

Salvation and glory and power belong to our God,

“Hallelujah!” appears in verse 3, talking about the judgment of the great prostitute.

Revelation 19:3

Hallelujah!

The smoke from her goes up forever and ever.

“Hallelujah!” comes in verse 4.

Revelation 19:4

And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who was seated on the throne, saying, “Amen. Hallelujah!”

“Hallelujah!” comes in verse 6.

Revelation 19:6

Hallelujah!

For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns.

I trust that you know the meaning of the word, “Hallelujah!” It’s a Hebrew word. It’s a Hebrew word of command. “Hallelujah” is translated, “Praise the LORD!” “Hallel” is to praise. “Hallelu” is the second person plural command to praise. “Jah” is the shortened form of Yahweh, which is God’s name. “Hallelujah!” is a command to praise the Lord!

Do you know how many times the word, “Hallelujah!” appears in the New Testament? Four times. They are all right here in this passage! It’s as if the entire Bible, calling people to praise the Lord, is reaching its climax right here in Revelation 19, when God’s victory is secure! “Hallelujah!” “Praise the Lord!”

The command to praise the Lord here isn’t coming in this context because there is a lack of those praising the Lord. It’s coming as a spontaneous exhortation to all around to join in the rejoicing at the victory of God on his day of victory. The day when God’s judgment has landed upon the world, and God is finally vindicated! All the wrong in the world that he has overlooked, he has now judged! Those who have loved him and served him are joining with him in joy over his victory!

We see this very clearly in my first point:

1. The Victory Parade (verses 1-5)

That’s essentially what we have in verses 1-5. We see the multitudes gathering in the streets, and pouring down tickertape from heaven, and rejoicing in God’s victory. Look again at verse 1.

Revelation 19:1

After this I heard what seemed to be the loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, crying out,

Notice here that this isn’t a vision proper that John experiences. Typically, we read something like this, “After this I looked, and behold, a door

standing open in heaven!" (Revelation 4:1) "After this I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth" (Revelation 7:1) "After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude" (Revelation 7:9) "Then I saw another mighty angel coming down from heaven" (Revelation 10:1) "And I saw a beast rising out of the sea" (Revelation 13:1) "Then I looked, and behold, on Mount Zion stood the Lamb" (Revelation 14:1) "Then I saw another sign in heaven" (Revelation 15:1) "After this I saw" (Revelation 18:1).

But here, John doesn't talk at all about "seeing" anything. Rather, he "hears." He hears "what seemed to be the loud voice of a great multitude." That is, he hears a multitude of people, all saying with one voice, "Hallelujah!" You know what this is like? It's like our congregational readings. It's like there is one voice. But you can hear the multitude of voices all saying the same thing. And listen to what they say:

Revelation 19:1

After this I heard what seemed to be the loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, crying out,

Hallelujah!
Salvation and glory and power belong to our God,
for his judgments are true and just;
for he has judged the great prostitute
who corrupted the earth with her immorality,
and has avenged on her the blood of his servants.

In other words, "God won!" It is his "Day of Victory." God has saved his saints! He has shown his power and glory in judging the great prostitute.

Do you remember Revelation 17? In that chapter, we see the fall of the great prostitute, who was identified as Babylon (Revelation 17:5). We read of Babylon's destruction in chapter 18, representing all of the pleasures of the world, which faded away (see 1 John 2:15-17).

But now, it's V-G day! The Victory of God day! Finally, God has avenged the blood of his servants. This takes us back to Revelation 6, when the martyrs were under the altar, pleading with the Lord, "O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth" (Revelation 6:10)? In the judgment of Babylon, he had avenged their blood, and of all of the martyrs for all time. The affirmation for his judgement comes in verse 2.

Revelation 19:2

for his judgments are true and just;

This is one of the keys of understanding Revelation 19. The judgments of God are true and just, and they are to be celebrated! We saw this last week in chapter 18:20. "Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you saints and apostles and prophets, for God has given judgment for you against her!" There is a way in which we ought to rejoice at the judgement of God when it comes true and just upon an unbelieving, rebellious world.

Chapter 19 is the expanding of chapter 18:20. It's the rejoicing! The question rightly comes to us all. Do you see the wickedness of the world? Untold billions of people rebelling against the Lord! Do you see the just judgment that the world is due? His judgment upon all who refuse to bow the knee to the Lord of lords and King of kings? There must be something within you to say God you must judge. If you don't understand the judgment then you have no understanding of your salvation in Christ! You need to understand that God judges, and that is what he saves us from.

This is at the heart of Revelation 19. The judgment has been accomplished. God's people have been revealed! God is to be glorified! "Hallelujah!"

We see another "Hallelujah!" in verse 3.

Revelation 19:3

Once more they cried out,

"Hallelujah!
The smoke from her goes up forever and ever."

This is an allusion to the lake of fire that we will see in chapter 20:10, "and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulfur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night forever and ever." Here, the focus is upon the smoke, which "goes up forever and ever." Revelation 19 reports that in heaven, there will be praise to God for the eternal punishment in hell forever! That's God's true and just judgment!

For all of the pictures that I showed you of the joy of the world in the ending of World War 2, there was not rejoicing everywhere. Not in Germany and in Japan. Oh, sure, there was relief on behalf of the people, but the leaders who were to be tried for war crimes were not rejoicing in that day. A few of them were held responsible in the Nuremberg trials, which followed the war. But many escaped judgment. But not so here in Revelation 19. God's judgments are thorough and complete. No one will escape his judgment. God's servants will rejoice!

Another "Hallelujah!" comes in verse 4.

Revelation 19:4

And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who was seated on the throne, saying, "Amen. Hallelujah!"

Do you remember these guys? They first appeared on the scene in Revelation 4. The 24 elders were seated on 24 thrones around God's throne. They were clothed in white garments, giving praise to God. Here they are, doing the same, "Amen. Hallelujah!" The four living creatures are described in Revelation 4:8 as having "six wings [and] full of eyes all around and within." Day and night these creatures never cease to say, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come" (Revelation 4:8)! Now, these four living creatures stop their flying, take the knee to bow before the Lord on the throne, and say "Amen. Hallelujah!"

The praise continues in verse 5.

Revelation 19:5

And from the throne came a voice saying,

"Praise our God,
all you his servants,
you who fear him,
small and great."

We don't know who this voice is. It's some anonymous voice that John hear! Calling all his servants, all who fear him, small and great, to praise our God! This is the heart of 1. The Victory Parade (verses 1-5). The crowds in heaven were gathered together to praise the Lord! Praising him that he has obtained the victory.

Now, just like V-E day and V-J day, there was more work to be done to bring the war to conclusion. Agreements needed to be signed agreeing upon post-war conditions. Troop withdrawals needed to take place. Justice upon the guilty. We will see all of these things take place in Revelation 19 and 20. But in Revelation 19, with the defeat of Babylon, the victory has been secured. It is "The Day of Victory." And there is much reason for rejoicing.

Let's move on to verses 6-10.

2. The Victory Party (verses 6-10)

Revelation 19:6

Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude, like the roar of many waters and like the sound of mighty peals of thunder, crying out, this is a unified multitude saying together with one loud voice,

"Hallelujah!
For the Lord our God
the Almighty reigns."

This is the great reality of why there is such rejoicing in heaven! Because, God has finally come in full victory to rule and reign in heaven and on earth. This is the answer to the prayer that Jesus taught us to pray! "Thy kingdom come Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven!" This is the reign in heaven coming upon the earth and establishing his kingdom. So, as verse 7 says:

Revelation 19:7

Let us rejoice and exult
and give him the glory,
for the marriage of the Lamb has come,
and his Bride has made herself ready;

It's right here that we see the redemption of God's people comes into full focus. The metaphor here is one of marriage. The Lamb is the bridegroom. The Bride is the church, God's people. And the party is the great wedding feast! The bride here stands in great contrast to the great prostitute of chapter 17. This prostitute "committed sexual immorality" with the kings of the earth. She made the world drunk with her sin (Revelation 17:2). She was "full of blasphemous names" (Revelation 17:3). She was "full of abominations and the impurities of her sexual immorality" (Revelation 17:4). She was adorned with the riches of the world (Revelation 17:4). The bride here, on the other hand was clothed differently.

Revelation 19:8

it was granted her to clothe herself
with fine linen, bright and pure"—

for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints.

Rather than being clothed with sin, this bride is clothed with fine, bright and pure linen. Symbolically, this represents the righteous deeds of the saints. These righteous deeds are all of the self-sacrificial acts of love that God's servants do. These righteous deeds are plenty. Such as:

- Helping the homeless.
- Forgiving those who have wronged you.
- Acknowledging others in humility above yourself.
- Feeding the hungry.
- Giving to those in need.
- Working for justice in this world.

- Dealing fairly with others.
- Remaining faithful to your family in all relationships.
- Showing patience toward others, especially when being stretched.
- Embracing reconciliation with others.
- Showing self-control in the midst of temptation, maintaining a disciplined life of devotion to God.
- Overflowing with gratitude toward others.
- Remaining steadfast through life's trials.
- Welcoming strangers into your home with open arms.
- Praying for those who love. repenting of your sin before others.
- Bearing the burdens of other by offering support, comfort, and practical assistance to those in need.
- Seeking peace among those in conflict.
- Speaking truth in love with kindness and compassion.
- Living with integrity, following through with promises made.
- Encouraging the fainthearted.
- Helping the weak.
- Sharing your faith.
- Demonstrating joy in difficult circumstances.

These are but a few of the righteous acts of the saints with which the bride will be clothed. This is the vindication of God's justice. The great prostitute is one who hates the Lord, and is judged for her sin. The bride is altogether different, she had demonstrated that she loves the Lord, doing righteous deeds. Then, we read verse 9.

Revelation 19:9

And the angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb." And he said to me, "These are the true words of God."

John was then, caught up in the moment.

Revelation 19:10

Then I fell down at his feet to worship him, but he said to me, "You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brothers who hold to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God." For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

I think that John was caught up in the excitement of it all, like the many at V-E and V-J day! Ready to do anything! Ready to worship. Like this sailor, who was walking in Times Square kissing all of the ladies in excitement and enthusiasm! A photographer happened to catch this picture. This is (perhaps) the most famous of all pictures of V-J Day. Today, however, in light of the "Me Too" movement, this is not right thing to do. But you can share his compassion and excitement! John here was inappropriate, but with his excitement he was trying to worship anything. We don't worship other beings or angels. We worship the Lord only!

Let's go back to verse 9 and see what the worship will be like. It's like a wedding reception. Few places in the world are happier than wedding receptions. The bride and the groom and happy, that at long last they can begin their lives together. The people invited to the reception are happy for them. But this is the ultimate wedding reception: when Jesus is wed to the church, the bride promised him long ago, even before time began.

This is certainly the largest wedding reception that will ever be, as all believers in Christ, from the dawn of creation until his coming, will be at this wedding reception. This includes the Old Testament followers of the LORD. Abraham and Sarah, Isaac, and Jacob. Joseph and Moses and Gideon. David and Abigail and Ezra and Nehemiah. It includes the disciples, Mary and Peter and James and John Paul and Barnabas and Luke and Mark, along with those from church history, like Chrysostom and Augustine and his mother, Monica. It's the Reformers, Zwingli and Calvin and Luther and his wife, Catherine, and the Puritans, Bunyan and Owen and Susanna Wesley. Missionaries like David Brainerd and Amy Carmichael, along with the preachers of old, Spurgeon and Lloyd-Jones and James Montgomery Boice. If you have read a Christian biography about someone, they will be there. Along with untold millions, of whom you have never heard. And blessed are you if you have been called to the feast. That's what verse 9 says.

Revelation 19:9

Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.

Will you be at that feast? Will you be blessed?

Jesus said, "Many will come from east and west and recline at table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 8:11). Are you a part of the many? Are you a part of the bride? Or are you a part of the great prostitute that was judged?

This isn't the first time that the marriage metaphor was used in the Bible to describe God and his people. God often talked about Israel as being his wife. "For your Maker is your husband, the Lord of hosts is his name" (Isaiah 54:5). "They broke my covenant, though I was their husband" (Jeremiah 31:32).

The apostle Paul (in Ephesians 5) describes the church as the bride of Christ. In that chapter, Paul speaks about how Jesus came and gave himself up for her by dying on the cross for her sins so that he might sanctify her. "So that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish" (Ephesians 5:27).

This is the good news we embrace. Not that we have been so lovely, or perfect or good, but that Jesus died for us to cleanse us and make us righteous before the Lord! That one day, we would enjoy the wedding day, when the church is united for all time with her lover, Jesus.

That's what we see here in Revelation 19. We see the pure and spotless bride being presented to her husband, Jesus. The question is this: Will you be at the feast? I say this because Jesus loved to use this wedding illustration (or great banquet) to describe the end of time. In every one of his stories, there were those who were left out.

In Matthew 25, Jesus told the story of the 10 virgins. They "took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom" (Matthew 25:1). Five of these virgins were foolish. They took no oil and their lamps burned out. But five were wise. They brought extra flasks of oil, that they might be ready for the bridegroom to come. As the five foolish virgins were out buying their oil, the bridegroom returned. When they returned, the door was shut to them. and though they asked, "Lord, lord, open to us" (Matthew 25:11). The Lord refuses, saying "I do not know you" (Matthew 25:12).

In Luke 14, Jesus was at a feast,

Luke 14:15-24

When one of those who reclined at table with him heard these things, he said to him, "Blessed is everyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!" But he said to him, "A man once gave a great banquet and invited many. And at the time for the banquet he sent his servant to say to those who had been invited, 'Come, for everything is now ready.' But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a field, and I must go out and see it. Please have me excused.' And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to examine them. Please have me excused.' And another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.' So the servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house became angry and said to his servant, 'Go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and crippled and blind and lame.' And the servant said, 'Sir, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room.' And the master said to the servant, 'Go out to the highways and hedges and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled. For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste my banquet.'"

Will you taste his banquet? Will you be at the wedding feast?

Revelation 19:9

Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.

Of course, everyone is invited to the marriage supper. Jesus said, "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy laden and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28). But verse 9, here must mean something more than receiving the invitation. Rather, it's that we are called and brought to the banquet, and that we come prepared.

In Matthew 22, Jesus told another wedding parable. He said:

Matthew 22:2-14

The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding feast for his son, and sent his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding feast, but they would not come. Again he sent other servants, saying, 'Tell those who are invited, "See, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding feast."' But they paid no attention and went off, one to his farm, another to his business, while the rest seized his servants, treated them shamefully, and killed them. The king was angry, and he sent his troops and destroyed those murderers and burned their city. Then he said to his servants, 'The wedding feast is ready, but those invited were not worthy. Go therefore to the main roads and invite to the wedding feast as many as you find.' And those servants went out into the roads and gathered all whom they found, both bad and good. So the wedding hall was filled with guests.

But when the king came in to look at the guests, he saw there a man who had no wedding garment. And he said to him, 'Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding garment?' And he was speechless. Then the king said to the attendants, 'Bind him hand and foot and cast him into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' For many are called, but few are chosen.

There isn't a more parallel account in all the Bible of Revelation 19. Are you coming to the wedding feast? Do you have your wedding garment? You say, "What is the wedding garment?" "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord; my soul shall exult in my God, for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation; he has covered me with the robe of righteousness" (Isaiah 61:10).

This is the gospel. Jesus takes our shabby clothes and gives us new clothes! As I told you, this morning we will be celebrating Lord's Supper today. It's a bit like a rehearsal dinner, where those who attend everything that's going to happen at the wedding the next day. After the rehearsal comes a nice dinner. This is the Lord's Supper. It is the anticipation of things to come.

This sermon was delivered to Rock Valley Bible Church on February 4, 2024 by Steve Brandon.
For more information see www.rockvalleybiblechurch.org.

[1] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Victory_in_Europe_Day