

Jesus Wins! A Banquet, a Bridegroom, and the Last Battle

November 8, 2026

Lesson Summary

Main Passages

Revelation 19:1-21

Session Outline

1. Celebration in Heaven (Revelation 19:1-10)
2. The Rider on a White Horse (Revelation 19:11-16)
3. The Beast and Its Armies Defeated (Revelation 19:17-21)

Theological Theme

Jesus wins.

Call to Action

How can you live today in light of Jesus's certain victory?

Leader Guide

Jesus Wins!

Introduction

It was May 8, 1945.

For over five years, World War II had raged with senseless violence and millions of tragic deaths, but on this day, there was cause for celebration.

The German General Alfred Jodl had signed an unconditional surrender just the day before (May 7, 1945). German troops were laying down their arms and standing down. The terror of the Nazi regime was over in Europe. Many prisoners of war were released; soldiers would soon be headed home to reunite with their loved ones, and the Allied world celebrated.

Massive celebrations happened in places like Paris, New Orleans, New York, and London. This day is known in history as Victory in Europe Day (or V-E Day). If you were to Google something like “epic victory celebrations throughout history,” this one would come up.¹

Today, in Revelation, we’ll read about an even greater victory. In this one, evil is defeated and good wins on an eternal scale. Jesus wins, and all of heaven celebrates.



When in your life have you had something meaningful to celebrate? What did you do to celebrate?



What has God taught you in our study on Revelation so far?

Session Summary

In today’s reading, there is a heavenly celebration. In a hallelujah chorus, a heavenly host celebrated their salvation, God’s righteous judgment on His enemies, God avenging “the blood of his servants” (v. 2), and the coming marriage of the Lamb. An invitation to the wedding supper of the Lamb is issued to all believers, and what a celebration it will be!

Revelation 19 shows us a picture of Christ that is powerful and triumphant. Christ is sitting on a white horse, ready to wage a holy war against the rebellious armies of the world who have assembled in defiance of God. While believers are invited to the marriage feast of the Lamb, nonbelievers are defeated by a victorious Christ. But there is one crucial takeaway—Jesus wins.

1. Celebration in Heaven (Revelation 19:1-10)



What was the cause for celebration in this passage?



What can we learn about how to celebrate God's work from this passage?

“This” in “After this” in verse 1 refers to the final fall of the spiritually corrupt Babylon John described at the end of Revelation 18. Chapter 18 also contained a command for the people:

*Rejoice over her, heaven,
and you saints, apostles, and prophets,
because God has pronounced on her the judgment she passed on you!*
— Revelation 18:20

At the start of Revelation 19, we see the vast multitude sing a heavenly hallelujah chorus (hallelujah meaning, “Praise Yahweh”²), following through on this command, and celebrating their salvation, God’s righteous judgment on His enemies, and God avenging “the blood of his servants” (v. 2).

“The notorious prostitute” in verse 2 was Babylon (Revelation 17:1-6), but not literally ancient Babylon. John’s readers probably had Rome in view here³, and more broadly, this figure was “wickedness personified”⁴—evil worldly power that opposed God and His people. And she was guilty of corrupting the people of the earth and getting them to turn to idolatry. The blood of God’s people was on her hands, and God not only judged her; He also avenged “the blood of his servants” (v.2).

But the rejoicing here isn’t over Babylon’s sin or fall. God does not wish for any to perish, but for all to turn to Him (2 Peter 3:9). Rather, here, the heavenly chorus praises God’s true and right judgment of the injustice done against God’s people.

The Marriage Supper

Heaven now begins to rejoice because Babylon the Great has fallen and it is time for the appearing of the Lamb’s bride. The great marriage supper of salvation is ready to commence. Although he has withheld a description of the coming of the Lord on at least three earlier occasions, John is now prepared to describe the glories of the Lord’s appearance.

After this initial chorus, we observe the twenty-four elders and four living creatures from Revelation 4 worshipping once again, and the praise of this great host turns to God's reign. God has always been sovereign on His throne, even as evil has been permitted to operate, but in the events of our passage, this changed. Evil is defeated once and for all—forever and for good.



How can we remember God's sovereignty in the midst of ongoing evil in the world today? Why must we?

Now, the bride (the church) is ready, and the marriage feast is coming, recalling a beautiful passage from Isaiah:

*On this mountain,
the LORD of Armies will prepare for all the peoples a feast of choice meat,
a feast with aged wine, prime cuts of choice meat, fine vintage wine.
On this mountain
he will swallow up the burial shroud,
the shroud over all the peoples,
the sheet covering all the nations.
When he has swallowed up death once and for all,
the Lord GOD will wipe away the tears
from every face
and remove his people's disgrace
from the whole earth,
for the LORD has spoken.
—Isaiah 25:6-8*

Now that is truly a reason to celebrate!

2. The Rider on a White Horse (Revelation 19:11-16)



How does John describe the rider on the white horse here?



How is this picture of Jesus similar to or different from how you normally picture Him?

Culturally, many only view Jesus as gentle, meek, and mild. The vision of Jesus is powerful and fierce. Note the emphasis on Jesus's names: He is called "Faithful and True" (v. 11), "Word of God" (v. 13), "KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS" (v. 16).

Christ is faithful and true, and He judges and makes war with justice. His eyes blaze with divinity and fury⁵, and John saw Him with many crowns, symbolizing His absolute power.⁶

Verse 12 describes a written name that no one knows, a reminder that God has not fully revealed Himself to us (Deuteronomy 29:29). Even in heaven, we will still learn about God and uncover new aspects of His character.

Jesus's robe was dipped in redemptive blood, and "Word of God" recalls the opening of the gospel of John:

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. All things were created through him, and apart from him not one thing was created that has been created. In him was life, and that life was the light of men. That light shines in the darkness, and yet the darkness did not overcome it.
—John 1:1-5

And the armies of heaven are at His back. Angels are certainly a part of this army, but so are the saints, God's people, with whom He will later reign (Revelation 20:6). There is a sharp sword emerging from His mouth (God's Word), with which He will "strike the nations" (Revelation 19:15) who He "will rule [. . .] with an iron rod" (v.15). The winepress imagery in verse 15 recalls Revelation 14:14-20.

 Why is it important that we not only see Jesus as gentle, meek, and mild but also as One full of authority and power?

The passage ends with a very important title: "KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS" (v.16). Christ is sovereign and victorious over all.

3. The Beast and Its Armies Defeated (Revelation 19:17-21)

 How do we further see God's response to evil in these verses?

 Who is the victor here, and who is defeated? Why is this important?

Remember the rebellious human armies that gathered to oppose the Lord in our reading in Revelation 16 last week?

Believers get an invitation to feast at the “marriage feast of the Lamb” (v. 9), but this host who has rebelled against God will be feasted on by “all the birds flying high overhead” (v.17). This act recalls a passage from Ezekiel:

“Son of man, this is what the Lord GOD says: Tell every kind of bird and all the wild animals, ‘Assemble and come! Gather from all around to my sacrificial feast that I am slaughtering for you, a great feast on the mountains of Israel; you will eat flesh and drink blood [. . .] At my table you will eat your fill of horses and riders, of mighty men and all the warriors. This is the declaration of the Lord GOD.’” —Ezekiel 39:17, 20

The armies of the earth “gathered together to wage war” (v. 19), but they were no match for the triumphant Christ. First, the beast and false prophet, the deceiver, from Revelation 13 are “thrown alive into the lake of fire” (v. 20). Then, the rest fell at the sword that came from Jesus’s mouth, and the assembled birds ate their fill (v. 21).

This can feel harsh, but remember, God is just and right in His judgment. We are all given the opportunity to accept His salvation or not. There’s no neutral ground. You’re either in or you’re out, and “the wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23).



How does this reminder of God’s wrath toward those who reject Him motivate us to share the gospel?

Conclusion

The point of today’s passage is simple: Christ wins. Revelation 20 further describes Satan’s final defeat. The enemy loses. Once and for all. He is thrown into the lake of fire, and there, he, the beast, and the false prophet are all “tormented day and night forever and ever” (Revelation 20:10).

And anyone whose name is not found in the book of life (anyone who has not trusted Jesus) will also meet eternal torment.

This is a hard passage to read, but it is an important truth. The eternal future waiting for those who don’t believe in Jesus is the torment of separation from God. Our passage today prompts this question: Is your name in the book of life? And if so, how are you urging others to come to Christ as well? This passage is a call to sobriety about the end of the age and the urgency to share Christ with others, that they might receive His salvation.

- ❓ What can we learn about God and His character from this passage?
- ❓ How should this passage affect how we share the gospel?
- ❓ Who is someone you could share your faith with this week?
What are some ways you could do that?

Prayer of Response

Thank God for saving His people through Christ. Thank Him for being true and righteous and for having a good plan for all of humanity. Ask for His help as you continue your study in Revelation. Ask Him to show you the people you could start sharing your faith with and for His help in taking the next step in obedience to Him and in love toward others.

Memory Verse

Then he said to me, "Write: Blessed are those invited to the marriage feast of the Lamb!" He also said to me, "These words of God are true."—Revelation 19:9

Additional Resources

- *Exalting Jesus in Revelation* by Daniel Akin
- *Revelation for You* by Tim Chester
- *Be Victorious* by Warren Wiersbe



Historical Context of Revelation

Purpose

Much of the book of Revelation focuses on events at the end of the age (eschatology), more so than any other book in the Bible. But it also focuses on practical choices that believers and unbelievers must make in the course of their lives that have far-reaching consequences at the end.

Author

The traditional view holds that the author of Revelation is the apostle John, who wrote the Fourth Gospel and the three letters of John. Evidences for this view include the following. (1) The writer referred to himself as “John” (1:4, 9; 22:8). (2) He had personal relationships with the seven churches of Asia Minor (1:4, 11; 2–3). (3) His circumstances at the time of writing (1:9) matched those of John the apostle (who was placed in Asia Minor from about AD 70 to 100 by reliable historical sources from the second century AD). (4) The saturation of the book with Old Testament imagery and echoes implies a Jewish writer, like John, operating in overwhelmingly Gentile Asia Minor.

Setting

The initial audience that received the book of Revelation was a group of seven local churches in southwest Asia Minor (1:11; 2–3). Some of these congregations were experiencing persecution (2:9–10, 13), probably under the Roman emperor Domitian (ruled AD 81–96). Others had doctrinal and practical problems (2:6, 13–15, 20–23). Also behind these surface problems was the backdrop of unseen but powerful spiritual warfare (2:10, 14, 24; 3:9).

Special Features

The resurrected, glorified Jesus Christ revealed himself to the apostle John, who had been imprisoned “on the island called Patmos” (1:9). Christ’s twofold purpose was: (1) to “unveil” a spiritual diagnosis for seven of the churches in Asia Minor with which John was familiar (chaps. 2–3), and (2) to reveal to John a series of visions setting forth events and factors related to the end times (chaps. 4–22).

Extended Commentary

Revelation 19:1-21

19:1–4 The vast multitude pictured as a choir singing the heavenly “Hallelujah Chorus” (vv. 1, 3, 4, 6) was taken to heaven in 7:9 and are identified as the “heaven dwellers” by comparing 7:15 and 13:6. They now praise God for: (1) their salvation, and (2) his righteous judgments upon Babylon, the notorious prostitute (17:1), thus avenging the blood of his servants, the martyrs (see note at 6:9–11). On the twenty-four elders, see 4:3–4. On the four living creatures, see 4:6–7.

19:6–8 The praise of the vast multitude (see note at vv. 1–4) as a heavenly choir now heralds: (1) the coming reign of the Lord, and (2) the joyful marriage of the Lamb. The wife of the Lamb (Christ) is the church (Eph 5:31–32), those redeemed from all nations (Rv 5:9–10; 7:9) by his blood (1:5–6; 5:9–10). Since these descriptions are equally true of the vast multitude (7:9; 19:1, 6) and the “heaven dwellers” (12:12; 13:6), it appears that there is a shift in imagery from the same group of people being portrayed as a choir to being the wife of the Lamb.

19:9 The fourth beatitude of the Apocalypse has a twist: If a person accepts the “invitation” and goes to the marriage feast of the Lamb, his faith will make him part of the wife (the church). It is called a “feast” because it endures, beginning on the evening of the wedding and continuing for days.

19:10 God’s people are prohibited from the worship of any being other than God (Ex 20:3–6). Nevertheless, overcome with awe, John fell at the feet of the angel to worship him. The angel immediately corrected him. The phrase the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy apparently means that all biblical prophecy either directly or indirectly testifies about Jesus, the Messiah (Lk 24:27, 44–48; 1Pt 1:11–12).

19:11–13 John had previously seen heaven opened in 4:1. This rider on a white horse is not the same as the one in 6:2. He judges and makes war with justice, not in the boastful and blasphemous way that the beast does (13:5–7). This is why he is called Faithful and True. On eyes ... like a fiery flame, see note at 1:14. Many crowns shows that Christ has more power to rule than Satan (12:3) or the beast (13:1). A name ... that no one knows except himself reminds readers that the Lord has not revealed everything about himself and his plan (Dt 29:29; see Rv 10:3–4). A robe dipped in blood looks back to Jesus’s redemptive death (7:9) and forward to his treading the winepress of God’s wrath (19:15; Is 63:1–6). In the Gospel of John (1:1, 14), John began by referring to Jesus as the Word (Gk *logos*).

19:14 Since the armies accompanying the Lord are wearing pure white linen, as did the Lamb’s wife (v. 8), this is another image for the same group elsewhere called the “vast multitude” (vv. 1, 6; 7:9) and the “heaven dwellers” (12:12; 13:6). On why these are not angels, see note at 17:14. White horses implies that Christ allows his people to participate in the climactic victory, as they later reign with him (20:6).

19:15–16 God’s word pictured as a sharp sword looks back to the description of the Son of Man in 1:13–16. Strike the nations is reminiscent of Ps 2:9. Rule ... with an iron rod is the end-time fulfillment of what was predicted of the newborn Son in 12:5. On the winepress of the fierce anger of God, see 14:14–20.

19:17–19, 21 The great armies of the earth, led by the beast and the kings of the earth, assemble to make war against the Lamb (apparently at Armageddon; see 16:12–14, 16). But they end up being killed by the sword that comes out of the mouth of the rider on the white horse (Christ) and fed to the birds at the great supper of God.

19:20 The beast (see 13:1–3) and the false prophet (see 13:11) are captured and thrown alive into the lake of fire, apparently the first to be sentenced there (Mt 25:41). They are not destroyed, but will suffer torment forever (Rv 20:10).⁷

References

1. war.gov/Multimedia/Experience/VE-Day/; history.com/this-day-in-history/may-8/victory-in-europe
2. Christopher A. Beetham and Nancy L. Erickson, eds., *The NIV Application Commentary on the Bible*, One-Volume Edition, NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2024), 1318.
3. Walter A. Elwell and Barry J. Beitzel, “Babylon, Babylonia,” in *Baker Encyclopedia of the Bible* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1988), 250.
4. Ibid.
5. Beetham and Erickson.
6. A. Boyd Luter, “Revelation,” in *CSB Study Bible: Notes*, ed. Edwin A. Blum and Trevin Wax (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2017), 2042.
7. Ibid.