



The Wedding Feast of the Lamb (Revelation 19)

Many people read the book of Revelation as if it were an egg timer, ticking away seconds to the end of the world. A closer look shows that this last book of the NT is a challenging word to Christians who are suffering for their faith. Tempted to compromise with their culture, the Apostle John sent this prophecy to seven Christian communities in Asia Minor. Greg Carey wrote: “Revelation confronts its audience with a stark choice between Lamb power and Beast power.” You must choose the Lamb or choose the Beast. The Lamb is Jesus. The Beast is Satan. You either belong to Babylon or are a citizen of the New Jerusalem. You are either aligned with the “Whore” or with the “Bride of Christ.” To choose the Beast (Roman culture) is to defile your faith. Revelation summons God’s people to “come out” of their idol-infested world and “come” in to the city of God. There is no neutral ground.

After the three sets of judgments (seals, trumpets, and bowls), Babylon (an ancient city which symbolized Roman culture and all cultures opposed to the will of God) has fallen and John describes the return of Christ as a wedding feast where Jesus the Groom, is forever united with His people, the Bride. In Revelation 6:10, the martyred saints asked, “*O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?*” In Revelation 19, Jesus answers. In the new heavens and the new earth, our relationship with Jesus will be a pure and permanent marriage relationship. Evil will be destroyed and we will live with Him forever. To put it another way: **Jesus’ mission is to be married to His people!**

Jesus finances the wedding feast.

Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come
(Revelation 19:7 NIV)

The lamb is the sacrificial lamb; Jesus our substitute, does for us what we cannot do for ourselves. Sin and salvation are all about this idea of substitution. Whenever we sin, we substitute ourselves for God. We assume a seat on the throne reserved solely for God. We say, “I will be my own god!” But when God moves to save us, He assumes the seat solely reserved for us. He says, “I will receive their punishment.” And that is what Christ did on the Cross. “Christ wins our salvation through losing, achieves power through weakness and service, comes to wealth via giving all away. And those who receive his salvation are not the strong and accomplished but those who admit they are weak and lost.” (Tim Keller)

“Saving belief is not mere mental assent, but a believing in – a living in – the knowledge of that news. It is a leaning on, a relying on. We must come to grips with the fact that we are unable to satisfy God’s demands on us, no matter how morally we try to live. We don’t want to end up

trusting a little in ourselves and a little in God; we want to realize that we are to rely on God fully, to trust in Christ alone for our salvation.” (Mark Dever)

Jesus gives the wedding gown.

“His bride has made herself ready. Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear.” (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the saints.) (Revelation 19:7b-8 NIV)

God takes the suffering, persecution, pain and difficulty; he stitches these fabrics together to become a stunning wedding gown. At the marriage feast of the Lamb, his bride will be beautifully adorned. God will transform the bride’s suffering into a thing of glory that will cause all of creation to explode in worship to Him!

“God is never doing just one thing in what he does with us. He is always doing thousands of things that we cannot see. He never has only one purpose in what he does. He always has thousands of purposes, in everything he does. He is infinitely wise, and everything he does relates to everything else that he does sooner or later. For those who love him and are called according to his purpose, all of them—all of them!—work together for good.” (John Piper)

Jesus offers the wedding invitation.

“Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.” (Revelation 19: 9 NIV)
This means: “Blessed are those who are invited and have accepted the invitation to the marriage supper of the Lamb.”

Who would turn down this invitation? Who would refuse to RSVP? Keep reading—Revelation 19:11-21 is about how the enemies of Christ will be treated for their refusal to accept His gracious invitation. To His people, Jesus comes as groom. To His enemies, Jesus will come as a conquering judge.

Power is when you can go to war wearing white. The Roman legions didn’t wear white. American Marines don’t either. But the armies of heaven do. The armies of heaven wear fine, white linen and ride on pristine, white horses; no khakis, no Kevlar. Just white! And when they show up, they don’t do any fighting. Jesus does! Furthermore, there is no battle! And why? Because there’s already been the battle. On the battlefield of the Cross, Jesus stripped Satan of his power and defanged the dragon. Therefore, in Revelation 19, Christ simply declares that his enemies have been conquered and they are! That’s power. One moment God’s enemies gather for war and the next moment the vultures are picking over their carcasses.

The rest of them were killed with the sword that came out of the mouth of the rider on the horse, and all the birds gorged themselves on their flesh. (Revelation 19:21 NIV)

When Christ comes, you will either eat at the wedding feast or you will be the feast! He has financed the wedding feast. He has provided the wedding gown. He has offered the invitation. Now what will you do?