

The Revelation of Jesus Christ

In Chapter 19 we come to the longed-for return of our Savior. This event is often called the “the day of the Lord.” That phrase can refer just to His coming, or to the whole sequence of related events at the culmination of history. In both Old and New Testament, the believer is told to expect the day as imminent, to be prepared for its arrival, and to live in a way consistent with the expectation of it.

The day of the Lord figures in many prophecies given to Israel, and promises that God through His Messiah will accomplish these things:

Israel will be purified through tribulation.

“Alas! That day is so great there is none like it; it is a time of distress for Jacob; yet he shall be saved out of it” (Jer. 30:7s).

Israel’s enemies will be destroyed. *“That day is the day of the Lord God of hosts, a day of vengeance, to avenge himself on his foes” (Jer. 46:10s).*

The dead will be judged. *“Many of those who sleep in the dust of the ground will awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt” (Dan. 12:2).*

The Lord will rule over a time of blessedness and peace. *“In that day the branch of the Lord shall be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the land shall be the pride and honor of the survivors of Israel” (Isa. 4:2).*

The New Testament adds a number of specific promises for the Christian.

Men’s deeds will be exposed, judged, and rewarded. *“... on that day when God judges the secrets of men by Christ Jesus” (Rom 2:16). “... on the day of our Lord Jesus you will boast of us as we will boast in you” (2 Cor. 1:14). “... they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day of visitation” (1 Peter 2:12). “... there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on*

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that Day” (2 Tim 4:8). “...the earth and the works that are done on it will be exposed” (2 Peter 3:10).

We will attain the degree of spiritual perfection that the Lord desires for us. *“... he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ” (Phil. 1:6). “... the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will sustain you to the end, guiltless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Cor. 1:7-8).*

We will receive our bodily redemption. *“Do not grieve the Holy Spirit, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption” (Eph. 4:30). “... we wait for ... the redemption of our bodies” (Rom. 8:23).*

Creation itself will be redeemed. *“... we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells” (2 Peter 3:13). “...the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay” (Rom. 8:21).*

We will receive the full eternal reward of salvation. *“... that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord” (1 Cor. 5:5). “... everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day” (John 6:40).*

In brief, the day of the Lord will make what is wrong right, will complete what is lacking, will execute final judgment on the good and the evil, and will make the will of God a reality on earth as it is in heaven.

Every Christian should anticipate the day of Lord. But we should also consider how many of the promised blessings we enjoy now, and have since the moment we believed.

“...God ... made us alive together with Christ ... and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus” (Eph. 2:4-6).

“For you have died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God” (Col. 3:3).

Notes on Chapter 19

19:2 Again, the Lord's judgments are vindicated as true and just.

19:4 This is the final mention of the twenty-four elders. We have stated before that they represent the church in the interim between the rapture and the second coming of Christ. Later in the chapter, the church accompanies Christ in His victorious invasion so these elders would not again be seen in heaven.

19:7 The church figures as the Bride of Christ in Ephesians 5. We enjoy this relationship now but it will not reach its full consummation until the church is united with the Lord in the new heavens (Rev. 21:9).

19:8 The linen here would seem to indicate not the righteousness that is imputed to us through salvation, but rather the righteous deeds performed by Christians through the power granted to them (not by their own strength). “*For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them*” (Eph. 2:10).

19:9 Who are the guests invited to the marriage supper? Supposing that they are the “*spirits of the righteous made perfect*” of Hebrews 12:23, distinct from the angels of the preceding verse, these spectators would likely be the Old Testament saints and those redeemed during the tribulation. It is profoundly amazing that Christians, the saved of the present age, should hold such interest for the prophets of old. “*Concerning this salvation, the prophets who prophesied about the grace that was to be yours searched and inquired carefully ... It was revealed to them that they were serving not themselves but you ...*” (1 Peter 1:10-12).

19:10 The angel refuses to be worshiped, as do Paul and Barnabas in Acts 14. But Jesus accepted worship from His disciples (Matt. 14:33). We can

know for certain that Jesus is no created being. He is God.

19:11 This rider on a white horse is not the same as in Rev. 5:2. It is the Lord Jesus, called “faithful and true” as in the message to the Laodicean church. His purpose on this excursion is to judge and make war. From Zechariah 14, we expect that He and His armies will make their appearance on the Mount of Olives.

19:12 The eyes of flame speak of all-knowing discernment and the diadems of all-powerful authority. He has a secret name that is not shared with us. Jesus has revealed the Father to us but no one has fully revealed the son. Even His human biography falls short of all His perfections (John 21:25).

19:13 The blood may be that of Christ's enemies, as in Isaiah 63, or it may His own blood, the basis of His worthiness to open to open the seals in Chapter 5 and to judge here. A robe dipped in the blood of a substitute also figures in Joseph's story in Genesis 37:31.

19:14 The uniform worn by the armies who follow the Lord is the same white linen worn by His Bride. The church rides forth with its Head.

19:17 Everyone is invited to supper. But will it be the bridal supper of the Lamb, or the great fatal supper of God's judgment?

19:19 We saw the armies gathering in 16:14 and 17:14. What we do not see is any semblance of a battle. The Lord's victory appears effortless and instantaneous and requires no assistance from the armies that accompany Him.

19:20 Only two prisoners are taken alive. They are cast into the lake of fire.

19:21 In a moment the long conflict of the ages is over. God's patience, mistaken by scoffers as weakness, has come to an end. Those who have chosen death receive it and those who have chosen life share in His triumph.