

THE RETURN OF CHRIST

PLEASE do not read these comments until you have read the Scripture for this lesson. First, let the Holy Spirit teach you directly from His Word.

INTRODUCTION:

Jesus Christ promised His disciples that He would return (Jn 14:3) and two angels told His disciples on the Mount of Olives He would return in the same way that they saw Him go up into Heaven (Act 1:11). However, there are two aspects to His return: (1) His return in the clouds for the believers before the Tribulation (I Th 4:13-18); and (2) His return to the earth on the Mount of Olives with the believers at the end of the Tribulation (Zech 14:1-4; Acts 1:9-12). The return of Christ to the earth is given in Revelation 19. John revealed the coming of Christ to earth by seeing Heaven opened and He rode on a white horse. He was called Faithful and True and in righteousness He came to judge and make war (Rev 19:11).

AIM OF THE LESSON:

Tell how the return of Christ to earth will be a great blessing for believers, but a ghastly d for unbelievers.

Two angels told Jesus' disciples "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as you have seen him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11).

OUTLINE OF THE LESSON (use the Study Notes to add to this lesson plan as the Spirit leads you):

I. Marriage of the Lamb in Heaven (19:1-10)

A. Excitement in Heaven (19:1-6)

Four great shouts of "Hallelujah" (meaning "praise the Lord") will resound in the courts of Heaven when Babylon, the great harlot, is finally destroyed. But why is there such joy in Heaven when this happens? It must be remembered that Satan has used Babylon, the great harlot, to turn whole nations and many people away from God for thousands of years. Babylon is the city where idolatry began under the direction of Nimrod. He built a tower to worship the heavens that God created instead of worshipping the Creator (Gen 11:1-4). The heavens were the visible idols of the people in Babylon. Satan has devised idolatry of all kinds since that time (Rom 1:23), but it all stated in Babylon. It needs to be understood that idolatry is the worship of demons (1 Cor 10:19-20). Anything that draws people away from the worship God, first and foremost, is called spiritual fornication. Babylon is the source of all spiritual fornication. She also is the cause of much bloodshed among believers\ . So when she is destroyed, there will be great rejoicing in Heaven.

19:1-3 The first group that shouts "Hallelujah" is a great multitude. It does not say "people" in the Greek text and it is unlikely that they are in this group since they are exhorted to praise God in 19:5. It is likely a great multitude of angels are the first and second to shout "Hallelujah." They praise God for His salvation, but what aspect of His salvation? The context gives the answer (Rev 18:1-24; 19:2-3). It is about the salvation of God when He completely destroys Babylon. Antichrist will raise the "great harlot" to her zenith of wickedness during his rule. He will force all nations to worship him as god. Those that worship him will be given a mark to buy and sell, but those that refuse to worship him will be killed (Rev 13:16-17). This policy will affect the commerce and politics of all nations. This is Babylon at its worst. When Babylon and the wicked results of her idolatry are destroyed, God is praised for His salvation from the defilement of her wicked idolatry. Now glory and honor will be given to God.

19:4-5 The second group is composed of two classes of heavenly beings: the 24 elders, representatives of the church, and the four living creatures, representatives of all living creatures and they will cry "Amen; Hallelujah" and worship God. Then a voice from the throne will exhort all the servants of God, small and great, to praise our God. The voice cannot be that of God, because it speaks of "our" God; it must be that of an angel. All of the redeemed sinners will join the heavenly choir in praising God.

19:6 When all three groups lift up their voices together, it will be the voice of a great multitude singing a "Hallelujah" chorus that will be deafening. It will sound like a mighty waterfall or like thunder in a storm.

APPLICATION: This day will fill you with boundless joy and make you sing Hallelujah with the multitude in Heaven, if you have received Jesus as your Savior--your future is bright. However, if you have not received Jesus as your Savior, your future is bleak. You will be cast into the Lake of Fire forever. But you can still change your mind and receive Jesus as your Savior. He is waiting for you to make that decision.

B. Exaltation of the Bride (19:7-10)

19:7-8 When the filthy harlot of Antichrist is judged and removed from the earth, the pure Bride of Christ will return to earth with Him. The Bride (the Church of Christ) has made herself ready by receiving the righteousness that Christ provided her by His death for her sins and by being cleansed by His word (Eph 5:25-27). The marriage of the Bride to Christ (the Lamb) would take place in Heaven sometime between the judgment seat of Christ (2 Cor 5:10) and His return to earth with His Bride. The marriage supper of the Lamb will take place on earth when He returns to his home (His Kingdom). Those who are saved before and after the church age (the "blessed" ones) are invited to this great feast (19:9). John was overwhelmed with the message of the angel and proceeded to worship the angel, but the angel stopped him from doing it and told him that he simply had the testimony of Jesus. He told him to worship God. Then he said that the spirit of prophecy is the testimony of Jesus—prophecy should be focused on Jesus, not on us.

APPLICATION: These events should excite you if you are a true believer in Jesus Christ. Praise Him for the victory He will have over Antichrist and the great harlot. Praise Him that He will reclaim the earth and rule it in righteousness to the glory of His Father. Rejoice that He will open the gates of His Kingdom to all that receive Him as their Savior and King. Have you received Him? If not, do it now

II. Judgment of the Antichrist on Earth (19:11-21)

A. Description of Christ (19:11-16)

This is a description of Jesus Christ as He leaves Heaven with His Bride (19:14) to judge the Antichrist and his allies on earth. Jesus Christ will come to "make war," but He will do it in righteousness (19:11). When He comes, He will strike fear into the hearts of all His enemies (Rev 6:15-17). His eyes of fire will pierce through their lives of sin with righteous judgment. The many crowns on His head will demonstrate His sovereign authority. His blood-stained clothing reveals that He has already judged Edom to deliver the Jewish believers that fled from Antichrist to the wilderness (Isa 63:1-6; Zech 12:7). His armies will be impressive; His sword will be deadly; and He will execute the wrath of God. He has three names, but only two are known to men: The Word of God and King of kings and Lord of lords (19:12,13,16).

APPLICATION: Jesus Christ will judge sin with His powerful sword and death. Do not think that you will escape His judgment, if you do not repent of your sin and receive Him as your Savior.

B. Defeat of Antichrist (19:17-21)

When the Lord makes His preparations to defeat the Antichrist, He calls for all the fowls to come for a huge supper of the dead bodies of Antichrist's armies (19:17-18). This war will be fought in the valley of Jehoshaphat on the east side of Jerusalem (Zech 14:1-4) where the enemies of the Lord will be completely destroyed. Antichrist and the False Prophet will be cast alive into the Lake of Fire where they will be tormented forever and ever. Notice, they go to this place before anyone else and are still suffering there when Satan joins them a thousand years later (19:20; 20:10). The rest of the wicked will die in the battle and be judged by Christ at the great white throne after His reign over the earth for a thousand years. Then they will be sent to the Lake of Fire with the other unbelievers (19:21; 20:11-15).

APPLICATION: The pleasures of sin are for a season, but the penalties of sin are forever. Do not let Satan deceive you that you will be the exception to this rule. There are no exceptions with God.

THE COMING OF CHRIST WILL BE A BLESSING FOR BELIEVERS, BUT A BATTLE FOR BLASPHEMERS.