

Revelation 19: The Judgment of Babylon, Part V

Scripture: Revelation 19:1-5

Introduction:

Chapter seventeen has given us an understanding of who the whore of Babylon is, the way in which she has deceived the world and killed the people of God, and her relationship to the beast from the sea. Chapter 18 has revealed to us the utter fall of Babylon, the mournful response of the world, and the result of the fall of Babylon upon the world. And you might recall again in verse 20 of chapter 18, in the midst of all of the mourning and devastation, a voice calls aloud, "Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you holy apostles and prophets, for God has avenged you on her!" As I stated last time, that charge is the preface, which prepares us for what is about to take place in the beginning of Chapter 19. The first several verses of Chapter 19 now give us heaven's response to the fall of Babylon, in response to that charge.

Keeping in mind the two reasons for Babylon's ultimate and permanent overthrow, will help us appreciate the rejoicing that takes place in Chapter 19. In the last two verses (19b and 20) of Chapter 18, we were told the following:

1) "For by your sorcery all the nations were deceived" (19b). Babylon; this materialistic, man-centered world system has deceived the world into coveting and idolizing its seducing lusts. It has detracted the attention of created human beings away from knowing, loving, serving and glorifying their Creator, by replacing Him with man-made, temporal, unfulfilling idols. And so, the whore is destroyed for this.

2) "And in her was found the blood of prophets and saints, and of all who were slain on the earth" (20). The glorious Bride of Christ, which sought to expose the whore for the lying, deceiver that she is, has been constantly attacked by the whore. She sought to expose the deceptive lie of the whore's unfulfilling, ungodly lusts, while revealing the true joy that comes by knowing, loving and serving the true and living God. And because of this, many saints have been persecuted, oppressed and even killed by the whore. [see also 6:9-11; 17:1-2, 6; 18:3, 23b, 24]

And so, as we find heaven rejoicing, we ought to expect the reasons for this rejoicing to be bound to these two realities [Read 19:2a&b]. In the fall of Babylon, the glory of God is vindicated, as He recompenses the whore who dared to stand in the way of God, the all glorious, eternal Creator, by, to and for whom all things were created. And, in the fall of Babylon, the saints and martyrs who have suffered, bled and died for their faith, while contending with the whore, will finally be vindicated!

I. Heaven's Response to the Fall of Babylon (19:1-5)

In the first five verses, we are given three responses to the fall of Babylon:

1) A great multitude in heaven responds with a loud voice, saying, "Alleluia ("Praise the Lord!") Salvation and glory and honor and power belong to the Lord our God!"

This multitude, more than likely, representing the saints in glory (see Rev. 7:9ff), offers praise to God, as the One who deserves and possesses all glory, honor and power because He alone has brought about the ultimate deliverance of His people, in the destruction of Babylon. The world thought it was in control. The whore thought that she was an untouchable queen, who possessed the world, but God has brought about her complete destruction, and in doing so, He has glorified Himself with the glory He deserves, and He has justly avenged His saints! At the end of the day, no one is getting away with anything. The glory of God's justice will be magnified unto its perfection; not one violation will pass through unharmed. Justice will be complete, be it in the wrath of God absorbed by Christ on behalf of His people, or in the destruction of the world for its utter rebellion. His judgments are both true and righteous, because He has recompensed the whore, both for her corrupting and deceiving the world, and for the blood of the saints, which she has shed all along (vs. 2).

And then, this multitude says again, "Alleluia" ("Praise the Lord"), adding, "Her smoke rises up forever and ever!" The whore's destruction is complete and eternal. Like the mill stone cast into the sea, she will never rise again, as she has throughout the history of the world. All that has opposed God; all that has stolen the hearts of people through excess, lust and luxury, will be forever destroyed, never to rise again! All that has contended with the people of God will

be removed permanently. Every hindrance to the glory rightfully due God will be torn down permanently. Things will be as they ought to be, in God's created order! And so, the resurrected souls of the people of God in heaven; the whole multitude of them, will rejoice! For the end has come!

2) And then secondly, a response is given by the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures, who surround the throne of God. They confirm and add their "Amen" to the joyful praise of the great multitude of saints. In verse 4, we are told that they fall down and worship the all sovereign God who sat on the throne, saying, "Amen! Alleluia!" Truly! Indeed! Most certainly and absolutely....Praise the Lord!

3) And then finally, we are told in verse 5, "Then a voice came from the throne, saying, 'Praise our God, all you His servants and those who fear Him, both small and great!'" Apparently, one of the glorious beings who surround the throne (note: "Praise *our* God...") now calls aloud for every true servant of God, on heaven and on earth to join the chorus of praise. It is good, right and proper to give praise to our God for the redemption and salvation of His people, for the avenging of His people, and most of all, for the vindicating of His great and glorious Name in the destruction of a created world system, which has committed *unrepentant* cosmic treason against its Creator! And so, this voice calls aloud for all servants of the living God (for all who fear/revere Him), everywhere, small and great, to praise God for His expressed justice in the glorification of His great and holy Name! Of course, every true servant of God would want to praise God at this point, but it is worth noting that it would be criminal and unjust to do anything less than that! God is God! God is the all sovereign, omnipotent, Creator of all things, to whom everything belongs, to whom everything that has breath and life owes its very existence, and to whom every redeemed sinner ought to be eternally thankful for the amazing *grace* He has shown us in Christ!

II. Conclusive Thoughts

1) Do you yearn for God to be glorified now? Do you hunger and thirst for the time when God and His Christ will be forever exalted as they deserve! Do you long for the day when every knee will bow before Christ, acknowledging Him as Lord! If you are a child of God and

you don't, then you probably grasp very little of who God is, what He truly deserves, and all that He has graciously done for undeserving sinners such as you and I.

2) If you are not a Christian, do you realize that you have been seduced by a lying, lustful whore of a world system...and she is taking you straight to hell with her? Do you realize that all of the joys wrapped up in this temporal world system are unfulfilling lies that last but a day, and serve only to detract your attention from the true joy found in Christ?

True eternal joy is bound to Christ and His church. The utter deception is to believe otherwise; to deny the very will, purpose and power of the Creator who made you...who sewed you together in your mother's womb for His *glory*! God made us for His glory, and we are indeed most joyful when we find our joy in Him. True life is knowing, loving, serving, worshiping, enjoying and glorifying God! True joy is seeing God receive His rightful glory! True joy for the creature is found in the glorification of the Creator! The whore, with all of her man-centered, self-seeking, pride driven lusts and allurements is a sham, a lie...a washed up, dying, world system, that never could, and never will fulfill the true desires of the heart, which was created by and for God. Everything the whore promises is a lie. She is a whore! And she is soon to be cast down forever and ever. And only those who are in Christ will live, and experience the true and everlasting joy that comes with having loving fellowship with the living God! God made us for His glory! God made us for His glory...for His glory...for His glory! We belong to Him! And in Him, we find life, peace, blessing, rest, contentment and everlasting joy!

[Close with Dennis Johnson's conclusive words---pg. 265-66, *TOTL*]

AMEN!!!