

2 Armies! 2 Suppers! 2 Destinies!

Awaiting Our Destination

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An Exposition of Revelation 19:7-21

“Let us be glad and rejoice and give honor to him for the marriage [supper] of the Lamb is come and his wife hath made herself ready.” Revelation 19:7.

In sharp contrast to the three previous chapters of Revelation, this section commences with a scene of joy and celebration. It is the celebration of the marriage of Christ and his bride. It is the marriage supper.

“Blessed are they which are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb” Verse 9.

What is the marriage? When was it consummated and who is the bride? There has been much misunderstanding and confusion on this question. Often, in scripture, there are two items with the same name. The “two’s” of the Bible are a fascinating study in themselves.

There are two marriages in the plan of salvation as well as two brides. There is a spiritual bride, a spiritual marriage, with a spiritual marriage supper. There is also a literal bride, a literal marriage and a literal supper. The spiritual bride is the Christian church, God’s chosen people.

“For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church. Husbands love your wives even as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it. Therefore shall a man shall leave his father and mother and shall be joined to his wife and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.” Ephesians 5:23, 25, 31, 32.

“As the bridegroom rejoices over the bride, so shall God rejoice over you.” Isaiah 62:5.

The spiritual marriage takes place at conversion. After the believer is wooed by the Holy Spirit, he yields his heart to Christ and is joined to Him in a spiritual union, or marriage. The believer takes the husband’s name - Christian. The husband provides the food - the word of God - and also the clothing for his wife. This is the robe of Christ’s own righteousness. At the same time the spiritual marriage supper is celebrated.

“If any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come into him and will sup with him and he with me.” Revelation 3:20.

The literal marriage is of Christ to the New Jerusalem. This concept is based on an Old Testament practice of a ruler involving his son in the rule of the kingdom. This was initiated by a ceremony of marrying the son to a leading city of the kingdom. (1) Likewise, God the Father, at an appointed time, conducts the ceremony in which He marries His Son to the leading city of the kingdom, the New Jerusalem. This city is the literal bride of Christ.

“Come hear, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb’s wife. And he showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem.” Revelation 21:9, 10.

This marriage of Christ to the New Jerusalem is being conducted during the pre-advent, or investigative Judgment, which the book of Daniel reveals commenced in 1844 and concludes at the Close of Probation of the human race. In this period, the kingdoms of this world become the kingdom of Christ.

“I beheld till the thrones were cast down [placed] and the Ancient of days did sit. The Judgment was set and the books were opened. One like the Son of man came to the Ancient of days and there was given him a kingdom and his kingdom, that which shall not be destroyed.” Daniel 7:9, 10, 13, 14.

This same truth is confirmed in the parable of the ten virgins of Matthew 25 -

The ten Virgins

The professed people of God as guests invited to the marriage

The Bridegroom

Jesus Christ entering into the judgment scene to receive his kingdom

The Bride

The holy city New Jerusalem which will be given to Christ during the pre-advent judgment

Wise Virgins enter

Since 1844 when the pre-advent judgment began, some of God’s people, by faith, have entered into the wedding into the judgment scene, to the union of Jesus to the New Jerusalem

At the conclusion of the wedding, the bridegroom comes to gather the guests for the marriage supper.

After the close of probation [When the judgment closes] Christ comes to earth to gather the guests, to take them to the marriage supper of the Lamb.

Other scripture confirm the truth of this parable.

“Let your loins be girded about and your lights burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he comes and knocks, they may open to him immediately. Blessed are those servants whom the Lord when he comes, shall find watching: verily I say to you that he shall gird himself and make them to sit down to meat and will come forth and serve them.” Luke 12:35-37

This will be fulfilled when the prediction of Revelation 19:7-9 takes place after the Second Coming of Christ.

“His wife hath made herself ready.” Revelation 19:7

How does the holy city make herself ready? Verse 8 gives the answer -

“To her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of the saints.”

In what way is the holy city arrayed in fine linen? In a symbolic sense. The fine linen represents the righteousness or the righteous deeds of the saints. In what way is the holy city arrayed or adorned by the righteousness of the saints? We suggest that this will occur when the saints, resurrected and translated, at the Second Advent, in perfection of character and body, enter into the holy city and dwell there. This will be the union of the spiritual bride and literal bride. They become one. The chief adornment of a city is its citizens. Thus, when the saints on reaching heaven are welcomed into the New Jerusalem, that city will literally be arrayed or adorned with the righteousness of the saints. What adornment!

“And he said unto me, write, Blessed are they that are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb.” Verse 9

The call to the marriage supper is sounding now. Ever since man was driven out of Paradise, the call has been sounding to return to the fold of God. This is the call of the gospel of Christ. To all who respond, to them will be granted the inestimable privilege of sharing in the glorious celebration of the marriage supper in the kingdom. Then Christ will fulfill his promise.

“I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father’s kingdom,” Matthew 26:29

This is when Jesus Christ will also wait on us and serve us.

“He shall gird himself and make them to sit down to meat and will care forth and serve them.” Luke 12:37.

In this life the believer is called to serve Christ.

“Thou shall worship the Lord thy God and Him only shall thou serve.” Matthew 4:10.

In the kingdom Christ declares that he will serve us, especially at the marriage supper. The fact that in the kingdom of God, in the heavenly realm, we will eat and drink, reveals that in the Hereafter the saved will possess real, tangible bodies. It also indicates that we will enjoy eating as well as socializing.

“And he said unto me these are the true sayings of God.” Verse 9.

To aid the believer to believe, God confirms what he declares by emphasizing that God’s Word is the truth. Heaven is no pie in the sky. It is not a dreamland nor a figment of the imagination.

“It is impossible for God to lie.” Hebrews 6:18. Marvelous events await the child of God.

“Eye hath not seen or ear heard, neither hath entered the heart of man, the things that God hath prepared for them that love him.” 1 Corinthians 2:9.

“I fell at his feet to warship him [the angel] and he said to me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellow servant and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus.” Verse 10.

Why is the worship of an angel forbidden? Because angels are created beings. The only one who may call for worship is the one who can create, for the power to create is the mark of divinity. This is why the first and second commandments forbid the worship of anyone except God alone. It is disloyal to the Creator and detrimental to man.

“Thy Fellow servant”

i.e. of John the prophet. Though the angel was of a higher order of being than man, possessed of supernatural powers, yet he classes himself as a fellow servant of John. Here is an example of the humility of mind of those of the heavenly world. Pride does not dwell there. Love of self cannot abide there. This is why St. Paul declared:

“Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus... who made himself of no reputation and took upon himself the form OF A SERVANT.” Philippians 2:5,7.

Humility is the mark of the genuine believer just as it is of those of the heavenly world. But more than that. The angel used the term “servant”. One of the main principles of God’s kingdom is service. Heaven is not an existence of inactivity but of service to others and this brings contentment, happiness and fulfillment, just as it does in this earthly realm.

“And of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus.”

John’s brethren having the testimony of Jesus were those with the prophetic gift, i.e. prophets. This is confirmed by Revelation 22:9.

“Then said he unto me, see thou do it not: for I am thy fellow servant and of thy brethren the prophets and of them that keep the sayings of this book: worship God.”

Notice the parallels between the two verses of 19:10 and 22:9.
Revelation 19:10. Revelation 22:9.

| | |
|-----------------------------------|--|
| “He said unto me “ | Then said he unto me |
| See thou do it not | See thou do it not |
| I am thy fellow servant | I am thy fellow servant |
| And of thy brethren | And of thy brethren |
| That have the testimony of Jesus. | That have the testimony of the prophets. |

The testimony of Jesus is equated with the gift of prophecy. “For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy” The term “testimony of Jesus” is employed four times in Revelation

| | |
|-------------------|----------------------------------|
| Revelation 1:2. | “The testimony of Jesus Christ,” |
| Revelation 1:9. | “The testimony of Jesus Christ.” |
| Revelation 12:17. | “The testimony of Jesus Christ.” |
| Revelation 19:10. | “The testimony of Jesus.” |

Some translators have incorrectly rendered the phrase, “The testimony about Jesus Christ” or “the testimony to Jesus Christ” or “the testimony for Jesus Christ” etc, but the Greek means “the testimony of Jesus Christ”. This means that the testimony is a message from Jesus Christ through his prophet.

The word “testimony” is often employed in scripture to represent the message that a true prophet receives from God to deliver to His people.

“They rejected his statutes and his covenant that he had made with their fathers and his testimonies which he testified against them.” 2 Kings 17:15.

“Neither have our kings, nor our fathers, kept thy law, nor hearkened to thy commandments and the testimonies, wherewith thou didst testify against them.” Nehemiah 9:34.

“You shall diligently keep the commandments of the Lord, and his testimonies which he hath commanded thee.” Deuteronomy 6:17. See also Jeremiah 44:23; Psalm 25:10; Psalm 93:5.

In Psalm 119, the word “testimonies” is used twenty three times. See also Nehemiah 9:26, 30, Deuteronomy 32:46, and 2 Kings 17:15, where it shows that when a prophet testifies as to what God has revealed to him, that is “the testimony.”

In what way could the angel be of John’s brethren, the prophets? Maybe in the sense that when God communicates his testimonies to the church there is a divine order - four persons are involved. The testimony proceeds from the Father, through the Son, to his angel, and then to the prophet.

“The revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave to him to show to his servants things which must shortly come to pass and he sent and signified it by his angel to his servant.” Revelation 1:1.

An angel of God is always involved in the transmission of God’s messages to his prophets. Jesus Christ and the Armies of Heaven Invade This World.

Verses 11-16. A Symbolic Scene of Armageddon

“And I saw heaven opened.” Verse 1.

“And I saw” denotes a new vision. The scene reverts back to the Second Advent. It is repetition and enlargement again.

“Behold a white horse’

This is a repetition of Revelation 6:2. “I saw and behold a white horse.” There are two white horses in Revelation - one at the commencement of the Christian era, and the other at its close. Both are symbolic. Both are associated with Christ’s opposition to evil. The Revelator lists 7 features of Christ at His Second Advent. “He that sat on him was called faithful and true.” This is Christ, for in Revelation 3:14 he is called, “The faithful and true witness”.

1. “Faithful” - Denoting Christ’s faithfulness and loyalty to the Father - even unto death.

“Consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus; who was faithful to him that appointed him.” Hebrews 3:1, 2.

It denotes also the faithfulness of Christ to his people. He has made ceaseless intercession for them before God for two thousand years. He has been continually with his people amid their earthly conflicts, in fulfillment of his promise, “Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.” What faithfulness!

“And True Witness” - When on earth he declared, “I am the truth.” John 14:6. After two thousand years, Jesus Christ is still the truth. His witness, his word is eternal truth. Why is Christ pictured riding a white horse? A horse denotes warfare and white denotes righteousness and purity.

“Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow.” Isaiah 1:18.

“In righteousness he doth judge and make war.”

Therefore the white horse represents a war of righteousness by Christ. In Revelation 6:2 it represented a spiritual war by Christ and his people against the spiritual forces of evil (2). At the close of the Christian era it represents a literal war by Christ against the literal forces of evil, as we shall show. Under Christ, the Christian church commenced the warfare against evil triumphantly, as predicted in the first seal of Revelation 6:1, 2. “He went forth conquering and to conquer.” However, as time continued, the church was well-nigh overcome, but the scene of Revelation 19:11 depicts the church as being finally triumphant.

A War Picture

“He doth judge and make war.” Verse 11.

“Judge” means to avenge or punish. This is a scene of vengeance. At the Second Advent Christ rewards every man.

“My reward is with me to give every man according as his work shall be.” Revelation 22:12.

The rejectors of salvation, who turn on his people, he will reward with destruction.

2. “His eyes as a flame of fire.” Verse 12

This is a repetition of Revelation 1:14 and 2:18 which represents Christ as the all-seeing One. Nothing is hidden from him. He sees the good and he sees the evil, to which he is utterly opposed and will destroy.

3. “On his head were many crowns.” Verse 12

This denotes not only royalty but that he is King of kings. The bishop of Rome wears a triple crown to indicate that he is “king of earth and of heaven and of the lower regions.” (3) He is the counterfeit Christ. The true Christ, since the close of his priestly ministry, is King of kings. This denotes that there are other ruling powers under Christ. These involve the leaders of other worlds and leading angels to whom is delegated ruling authority as well as others whom heaven classes as kings under Christ. (4)

4. “He had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself.”

It has been suggested that this name represents Jesus Christ in a new role as the great Avenger of his people. (5) It is indeed a new role. We now witness “the wrath of the Lamb.”

“Hide us from the face of him that sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of his wrath is come.” Revelation 6:16, 17.

5. “And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood,” Verse 13.

This cannot represent his sacrificial or priestly ministry. He has laid off those garments for those of the King. He is now the Avenger; the other role of the kinsman redeemer of Revelation 5 is being fulfilled. The seventh seal has been removed from the book containing the title deeds of the kingdom of this world and Christ, as the lion of the tribe of Judah, invades his rightful domain to take possession and to punish those who have usurped his authority and despised and slain his servants.

This scene of Christ’s garment stained with blood is borrowed from the Old Testament description of Christ in Isaiah 63, in his work of vengeance against the Edomites, because of their inveterate hatred of his people Israel. There are several parallels between Isaiah 63:1-6 and Revelation 19:11-16 which indicate that the scene of Isaiah 63 finds its antitype in the Second Advent of Christ.

Isaiah 63:1-6.

1. “Who is this that comes from Edom.
2. “With dyed garments from Bozrah”. Bozrah means vintage. The dyed garments reveal that the one coming was involved in treading grapes.
3. “That is glorious in his apparel, traveling in the greatness of his strength.”
4. “I that speak in righteousness.”
5. “Mighty to save.”
6. “Wherefore [why] art thou red in your apparel and thy garments like him that treads in the wine vat” [wine press].
7. “I have trodden the winepress alone and of the people there was none with me.”
8. “I will tread them in mine anger and trample them in my fury.”
9. “Their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments and I will stain all my raiment.”
10. “The day of vengeance is in mine heart.”
11. “The year of my redeemed is come.”

Revelation 19:11-16.

1. Edom represents the enemies of God “The people against whom the Lord hath indignation forever.” Malachi 1:4.
2. The harvesting of the unsaved. “Thrust in thy sickle and gather the vine of the earth for her grapes are fully ripe.” Revelation 14:18.
3. “The Son of men coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.” Matthew 24:3.
4. “In righteousness he does judge and make war.”
5. “Thy people shall be delivered.” Daniel 12:1.
6. Unsaved likened to grapes who are trodden down in destruction by Christ in the worldwide winepress of this world. Revelation 14:19, 20.
7. “He [himself] treads the winepress.” Verse 15. “Vengeance belongs long to me, I will recompense.” Hebrews 10:30.
8. He treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God” Verse 15.
9. “He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood” [of the unsaved]. Verse 13.
10. “The day of vengeance of our God.” Isaiah 61:1, 2. He does judge [punish] and make war.” Revelation 19:11.
11. “The Lamb shall overcome them for he is Lord of lords and King of kings and they that are with him are called and chosen and faithful.” Revelation 17:14. “He (shall) appear the second time unto salvation.” Hebrews 9:28.

6. “His name is called the Word of God.” Verse 13

Christ is the living Word, the expression of the divine will, the revelation of the Father. He was the Word of God in creation [Psalm 33:6, 9], the Word of God in redemption [John 1:1, 14] and he is the Word of God in judgment and destruction.

7. “Out of his mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations.” Verse 15.

By his word which is quick and powerful and sharper than any two edged sword [Hebrews 4:12] he smites or destroys the unsaved.

“Whom he shall destroy with the spirit of his mouth.” 2 Thessalonians 2:8.

“With the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked.” Isaiah 11:4.

The Word of God can create or destroy. This is true not only in a literal sense but spiritually in the life of the believer. The Word of God gives life to the believer (I Peter 1:23), and the Word of God destroys sin in the believer. (Psalm 119:11)

“And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses clothed in fine linen, white and clean.” Verse 14.

This imagery is borrowed from Isaiah 13:1-3 where the prophet describes the invading forces of the Medes and Persians and their allies to conquer literal Babylon. This description is typical of the destruction of spiritual Babylon.

Revelation 19:11-16

1. The conquest of spiritual Babylon.
2. "The armies of heaven" Verse 14. "The kings from the Sun rising" Revelation 16:12.
3. "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God." 2 Thessalonians 1:7, 8.
4. "The Lord shall roar from on high-as they that tread the grapes, against all the inhabitants of the earth. The Lord hath a controversy with the nations. He will give them that are wicked to the sword." Jeremiah 25:30-33.
5. "In righteousness he doth judge and make war, and the armies of heaven followed him." Verses 11, 14.
6. "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven. In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction." 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9.
7. "The day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night. Sudden destruction comes upon them as travail upon a woman with child and they shall not escape." 2 Thessalonians 5:2, 3.
8. "He shall smite the nations and he shall rule them with a rod of iron and he treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God." Revelation 19:15.

Isaiah 13:1-3

1. The burden of Babylon Verse 1. Literal Babylon.
2. "I have commanded my sanctified ones", [the soldiers sanctified or dedicated to war].
3. "My mighty ones for mine anger, even them that rejoice in my highness." Verse 3.
4. "The noise of a multitude in the mountains. The Kingdoms of nations gathered together." The allied nations supporting the Medes and Persians. Verse 4.
5. "The Lord of hosts mustered the battle." Verse 4.
6. "They come from a far country, from the end of heaven even the Lord and the weapons of his indignation to destroy the whole land." Verse 5
7. "Pangs shall overtake them as a woman in travail." Verse 8.
8. "The day of the Lord comes, cruel and with wrath to lay the land desolate and destroy sinners." Verse 9.

"And he shall rule them with a rod or iron."

Some conclude that if Christ is to rule the nations, then they cannot be destroyed at the Second Advent, but the Greek reads:

"And he [himself] shall shepherd them with a rod of iron."

The shepherd's crook at its other end consisted of a piece of iron which was used as a weapon of defense by the shepherd to slay wild beasts and other enemies of the flock. The term denotes rule that destroys evil opposition. It is a fulfillment of the messianic prediction of the Psalmist:

"Thou shall break them with a rod of iron; thou shall dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." Psalm 2:9.

“He shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth.” Isaiah 11:4.

“And he treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. Verse 15.

This is an allusion to Isaiah 63 (see under Verse 13), and the punishment and destruction of the unsaved. This same symbolism is employed in Revelation 14.

“If any man worship the beast, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God.” Verse 9, 10.

“Thrust in thy sharp sickle and gather the cluster of the vine of the earth for her grapes are fully ripe [for punishment] And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth and gathered the vine of the earth and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trodden without [outside] the city [the church].” Revelation 14:18-20.

This passage refers to the outpouring of the wrath of God in the seven last plagues (15:1) which conclude with the return of Christ. The earth is likened to a worldwide winepress and the unsaved are likened to over-ripe grapes. The angelic horsemen are represented as treading down in slaughter the unsaved. The carnage is so enormous that the blood is symbolized in depth as reaching the bridles of the angel horsemen. The symbol is one of complete slaughter. It is Armageddon and Armageddon is a Hebrew term meaning “mount of slaughter.” (6)

“And he has on his vesture and on his thigh, a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords” Verse 16

This title denotes the universal supremacy of Christ at his return to the world. But what a contrast. At the First Advent he was born to be king, but now he has earned that kingship. The first time he came in humility. This time he comes in glory and power. This title is also employed in Revelation 17:14 in connection with the final battle between Christ and Satan and the church and Babylon. Christ in intervening on behalf of his people in the final conflict is titled “Kings of kings”. It denotes at least three things -

1. The supremacy of Christ.
2. He is victor even before the battle begins.
3. There are other ruling powers associated with Christ in the final conflict.

Is Revelation 19:11-16 a literal description of the Second Advent? No! Christ returns, not upon a white horse but upon a white cloud.

“Behold he comes with clouds and every eye shall see him.” Revelation 1:7.

“Behold a white cloud and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of Man having on his head a golden crown and in his hand a sharp sickle.” Revelation 14:14.

He returns in the same manner as he went to heaven at his ascension -

“This same Jesus which is taken from you into heaven, shall so come in like [the same] manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.” Acts 1:9-11.

Jesus left the earth as a man, visible to all, slowly ascending to heaven. He returns as a man, slowly descending the heavens and “every eye shall see him.” Revelation 1:7. He ascended publicly, he returns publicly, not secretly.

“All kingdoms of the earth shall wail because of him.” Revelation 1:7.

“Then shall appear the sign of the Son of Man and then shall all the tribes of the earth tremble and they shall see the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.” Matthew 24:30, 31.

The glory of the Second Advent is a triple glory -

“He shall come in his own glory and in his Father’s [glory] and of the holy angels.” Luke 9:26.

The holy angels in number amount to hundreds of millions, plus!

“The number of them was ten thousand times ten thousands [100 million] and thousands of thousands.” Revelation 5:11.

Undoubtedly this is what forms the great white cloud enveloping the Son of Man. (7)

Four mighty events transpire at the Second Advent:

1. The sleeping saints of all the ages are resurrected from their graves.

“For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God and the dead in Christ shall rise first.” 1 Thessalonians 4:16.

2. The living saints with the resurrected saints are changed.

“In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye at the last trump.” 1 Corinthians 15:51, 52.

They are then caught up or translated, to meet Christ in the air.

“The dead in Christ shall rise first, then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” 2 Thessalonians 4:16, 17.

“He shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.” Matthew 24:31.

As the saints rise in the air, the angels gather them into where Christ is “in the air”. This reveals that at the Second Advent Christ does not land upon the earth.

3. The unsaved are destroyed by the glory of Christ.

“The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance upon them that know not God and that obey not the gospel. Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power, when he shall come to be glorified in his saints.” 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10.

“The day of the Lord so comes as a thief in the night, [unexpectedly]. Then sudden destruction comes upon them the unsaved] and they shall not escape.” 1 Thessalonians 5:2, 3.

“Then shall that Wicked be revealed whom the Lord shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.” 2 Thessalonians 2:8.

4. The resurrected and living saints who are caught up with “the Lord in the air” then return with Christ to the kingdom of heaven.

“In my Father’s house are many mansions. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to myself that where I am, there ye maybe also.” John 14:2, 3.

“The Lord Jesus Christ has begotten us to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled reserved in heaven for you.” 1 Peter 1:3, 4.

“Many shall come from the east and west and shall sit down with Abram, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.” Matthew 8:11.

“Blessed are the poor in spirit [the humble] for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

“Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

“Rejoice and be exceeding glad for great is your reward in heaven.” (See also Matthew 5:20; 6:20; Revelation 2:7; 22:1, 2.)

God’s people at the Second Advent ascend together to the kingdom. This is the great reunion day.

Does God the Father accompany the Son at the Second Advent? There is no scripture to suggest this. Titus 2:13 is misinterpreted by some to try and teach that the Father also appears but this scripture is speaking of the deity of Jesus Christ. It refers to him as “the great God and our Savior.” Seeing the Father is the first person of the Godhead, surely, if He were present at the Second Advent, scripture would proclaim it? The silence of scripture declares that Jesus Christ is the supreme One at the Second Advent. The apostle Paul declares that to Christ has been delegated by the Father the responsibility of putting down all authority that is in rebellion against God. When Christ has accomplished this, he then subjects himself to the Father. It is at the Second and Third Advents that Christ puts down all rebellion. (1 Corinthians 15:24-28.) See Appendix 1.

THE SECOND SUPPER - FOR THE BIRDS

In Revelation 19:17, 18 we have another symbolic picture of destruction.

“And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together to the supper of the great God; That you may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains and the flesh of mighty men and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit upon them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond both small and great.” Revelation 19:17, 18.

This is not a literal scene, but a symbolic picture of destruction. It is drawn from Ezekiel 39:17-20 where it would have had a literal application or fulfillment had the conditions been fulfilled. It now has a symbolic application to the final destruction of the rebel hosts of Spiritual Babylon.

If one compares the classes of people in Revelation 19:17, 18 with those of Revelation 6:15, 16 who rush to the mountains and rocks to hide from Christ at the Second Advent, it is seen that they are exactly the same classes. Will there be literal birds after the Second Advent to devour the unsaved? No! There will be no life left on earth whatsoever. It is not a literal picture - it is a symbol of utter destruction. It is the fulfillment of the seventh trumpet, when “he will destroy them that destroy [or corrupt] the earth.” (Revelation 11:18.) This picture of being devoured by birds represents the terrible curse of God that will be pronounced upon the unsaved. When Moses, under inspiration pronounced the blessings and curses upon Israel, one of the curses was “thy carcass shall be meat to all fowls of the air and no man shall fray [frighten] them away.” Deuteronomy 28:26.

The graphic portrayal of the great feast of the birds upon the unsaved of Revelation 19:17, 18 denotes that the unsaved have received the curse of God and as a result are doomed to destruction.

THE TWO SIDES IN ARMAGEDDON

“And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth and their armies, gather together to make war against him that sat on the horse and against his army. Revelation 19:19.

This verse shows indisputably that Armageddon is not a conflict between earthly powers. While it is true that “there will be storm and war and variance”, (8) until the end, among the unsaved, yet Armageddon is a war between heavenly and earthly powers.

Verses 19-21 are a repetition and enlargement of Revelation 16.14-16.

| Revelation 16:14-16. | Revelation 19:19-21. |
|--|--|
| The Dragon | The kings of the earth (9) |
| The Beast | The Beast |
| The False Prophet | The False Prophet |
| “The whole [unsaved] world” | And their armies |
| Working miracles | That wrought miracles |
| To gather them.” “He gathered them” | Gathered together |
| The battle of the great day. | To make war [or battle] |
| Of God Almighty | “Against him that sat on the horse and against his army” |

Verse 20 also connects Armageddon with Revelation 13 and the image of the beast and his mark. This, again, shows what Armageddon is all about. It is the final conflict over worship, over the commandments of God. It is between Jesus Christ and Antichrist, the Remnant and the majority, commandment-keepers and commandment breakers, those who worship the Lamb and those who worship the beast.

“I saw the beast [Papacy] and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered to make war against Him [Christ] that sat on the horse and against his army.” Revelation 17:19.

This corresponds with Revelation 17:12-14.

“The ten horns with the beast shall make war with the Lamb and they that are with him.”

The “gathering” of verse 19 cannot be a literal gathering of the earthly forces of evil against Christ and his people. Like the “gathering” of Revelation 16:14, 16 it can only be a symbolic gathering. The Greek word may also be translated “unite” which is a more accurate interpretation.

How then do the earthly powers make war, or battle, against Christ?

“In that ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren [says Christ] ye have done it unto me.” (10)

Armageddon begins with the attack upon the people of God.

“The dragon was wrath with the woman and went to make war [or battle] with the remnant of her seed.” Revelation 12:17.

This leads to the intervention by Christ and his angels in the sixth and seventh plagues under which “the beast and the false prophet”, (i.e. the clergy, the religious leaders), are brought to their end.

“These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.” Verse 20.

This parallels the descriptions in Revelation 17 and 18 of the destruction of the harlot -

“These shall hate the whore and shall burn her with fire.” Revelation 17:16.

“She shall be utterly burned with fire, for strong is the Lord God who judges [punishes] her.” Revelation 18:16.

The harlot - the religious leaders - are brought to their end by spiritual fire, (11) by the burning anger of their followers. The lake of fire of 19:20 is a spiritual lake of fire. As James White correctly concluded,

“So, if you please, there are two lakes of fire, one at each end of the thousand years.” (12)

The first lake of fire is spiritual, the second is literal.

“And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth and the fowls were filled with their flesh” Verse 21.

In Armageddon the first to fall are the clergy. (14) The second to fall are their supporters when they turn on one another in slaughter. The remnant are those of the unsaved who still remain alive. These are symbolized as being slain with the sword out of Christ’s mouth. This represents the word of Christ which will be one of the agents of destruction of the unsaved at the Second Advent.

“Then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.” 2 Thessalonians 2:8.

“And the fowls were filled with their flesh” Verse 21.

This harks back to the symbolic picture of destruction in verses 17, 18. Seeing all life on earth will cease at the Second Advent, (15) there will be no birds in existence to feed upon the unsaved. Therefore, it must be a symbolic expression denoting complete destruction. At the Second Advent there will be two remnants -

THE TWO REMNANTS

Revelation 12:17

1. The remnant of her seed [God’s woman]
2. Which keep the commandments of God
3. That worship the Lamb
4. That have the testimony of Jesus - a true prophet
5. That receive the Seal of God
6. In the Army of Christ
7. Are guests at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb
8. Receive the wrath of the Dragon
9. End in the Sea of Glass

Revelation 19:21

1. The remnant of the harlot [Satan’s woman]
2. Which keep the commandments of men
3. That worship the beast and his image
4. That are deceived by the false prophet
5. That receive the Mark of the Beast
6. In the Armies of the Beast and the Kings of the Earth
7. Are food for the Supper of the Birds
8. Receive the wrath of God
9. End in the Winepress of Blood

APPENDIX

“When comes the end when he [Jesus] shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he [Jesus] shall have put down all rule and authority and powers. For he [Jesus] must reign till he has put all enemies under his [Jesus] feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he [the Father]. Has put all things under his [Jesus] feet. But when he said, All things are put under, him [Jesus] it is manifest that he [the Father] is excepted, which did put all things under him [Jesus]. And when all things shall be subdued to him [Jesus] then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him [the Father] that put all things under him [Jesus] that God [the Father] maybe all in all.” 1 Corinthians 15:24-28.

These verses show that the Son reigns or is in charge of the work of ending the reign of rebellion. This is what is involved at the Second Advent. It is Christ the Son of God who is in charge - not God the Father. On these grounds, we conclude that the Father is not present or is not involved in the Second Advent, in cleansing this planet of rebellion. This is the work of God the Son.

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3. "Hence the Pope is crowned with a triple crown, as king of heaven and of earth and of the lower regions." F. Lucii Ferraris. "Prompta Bib. Can. Jurid. Morelis Theologica".
4. See the author's: "The Kings from the Sun rising".
5. See SDA Bible Commentary, Volume 7, pages 873, 874.
6. See the author's: "Grapes of Wrath or Harps of God."
7. See the author's: "A Glimpse of God on His Throne".
8. "The world is filled with storm and war and variance, yet under one head, the Papal power, the people will unite to oppose God in the person of his witnesses." Ellen G. White. "Testimonies", Volume 7, page 182.
9. Ellen G. White. "Testimonies to Ministers", page 39.
10. Matthew 25:40.
11. Ellen G. White. "The Great Controversy", pages 654-656.
12. James White. [Review & Herald, January 21, 1862], SDA Bible Commentary, Volume 7, page 876.
13. This is in accord with the principle of prophetic interpretation that prior to the Second Advent symbols apply, but after the Second Advent, the literal applies.
14. Ellen G. White. "The Great Controversy", page 656; "Early Writings", pages 289, 290.
15. See the author's: "The Final Wind-up of Human History".

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