

The Revelation to St. John

Collect Prayer - Thursday Morning Prayer

Heavenly Father, in you we live and move and have our being. We humbly pray you so to guide and govern us by your Holy Spirit: that in all the cares and occupation of this world we may not forget, but remember that we are ever walking in your sight, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

Are there questions or comments from the last session? For those of you following online you may email Fr. Bart at frfryanssc@frontiernet.net

Rev. 19:1-10

¹After this I heard what seemed to be the loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, crying, "Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God, for his judgments are true and just; he has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication, and he has avenged on her the blood of his servants." Once more they cried, "Hallelujah! The smoke from her goes up for ever and ever." And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who is seated on the throne, saying, "Amen. Hallelujah!" ⁵And from the throne came a voice crying, "Praise our God, all you his servants, you who fear him, small and great." ⁶Then I heard what seemed to be the voice of a great multitude, like the sound of many waters and like the sound of mighty thunderpeals, crying, "Hallelujah! For the Lord our God the Almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and exult and give him the glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and his Bride has made herself ready; it was granted her to be clothed with fine linen, bright and pure"—for the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints. ⁹And the angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb." And he said to me, "These are true words of God." ¹⁰Then I fell down at his feet to worship him, but he said to me, "You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brethren who hold the testimony of

Jesus. Worship God.” For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

I. We return to the liturgy

A. A voice from the Throne summons all God's People to Praise the Lord

B. Our prayer, Your Kingdom come...has been answered

C. The Victors (The faithful) are invited to the wedding of the Lamb

D. The imagery

1. The Bride - the church

2. The gown woven from the good works of her people

3. The guests are the members of the church - the Body of Christ

4. The Lamb is the shepherd

II. The Three women of the Revelation

A. The women clothed with the sun, chapter 12

B. The women clothed in scarlet in chapter 17

C. The women attired with fine linen - the church Chapter 19

IV. John is overcome the Divine authority of the vision

A. He falls to worship

B. John admonishes him not to worship angels - John is against any idolitry

V. Our future is the blessedness of the Messianic Banquet

A. This vision connects the church on earth with the heavenly church

B. Our understanding the church militant, expectant and triumphant is developed in part from this passage

Rev. 19: 11-21

¹¹Then I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse! He who sat upon it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. ¹²His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems; and he has a name inscribed which no one knows but himself. ¹³He is clad in a robe dipped in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God. ¹⁴And the armies of heaven, arrayed in fine linen, white and pure, followed him on white horses. ¹⁵From his mouth issues a sharp sword with which to smite the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron; he will tread the wine press of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. ¹⁶On his robe and on his thigh he has a name inscribed, King of kings and Lord of lords.

¹⁷Then I saw an angel standing in the sun, and with a loud voice he called to all the birds that fly in midheaven, "Come, gather for the great supper of God, ¹⁸to eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and their riders, and the flesh of all men, both free and slave, both small and great." ¹⁹And I saw the beast and the kings of the earth with their armies gathered to make war against him who sits upon the horse and against his army. ²⁰And the beast was captured, and with it the false prophet who in its presence had worked the signs by which he deceived those who had received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped its image. These two were thrown alive into the lake of fire that burns with sulphur. ²¹And the rest were slain by the sword of him who sits upon the horse, the sword that issues from his mouth; and all the birds were gorged with their flesh.

I. The end of evil

A. This event has already been described in chapter 14 - 16 and 17 now we see it happen

B. The Son of Man comes as a warrior

C. His robe is dipped in blood

1. From Isaiah God's victory of Edom and the stain of the wine press

2. More clearly is the image as Jesus both sacrifice and victor

D. The Name of the Son of Man is "God's Word"

II. The Son of Man leads the army of heaven - the faithful the called and chosen

A. Note the paradox - they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb

B. Here is the one spoken through the prophet and the psalmist and now is time when he will rule with an iron rod

C. His royal title, King of Kings and Lord or Lord is prominently displayed.

III. The victory is almost anticlimactic

A. The victory is immediate - there is no battle

B. God's word is the only weapon - evil can not stand against it

C. The violence is not violence at all. It is simply that immediate death of evil - the imagery is part of the Apocalyptic Form

Revelation 20: 1-10

¹Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, holding in his hand the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain. ²And he seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years, ³and threw him into the pit, and shut it and sealed it over him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years were ended. After that he must be loosed for a little while.

⁴Then I saw thrones, and seated on them were those to whom judgment was committed. Also I saw the souls of those who had

been beheaded for their testimony to Jesus and for the word of God, and who had not worshiped the beast or its image and had not received its mark on their foreheads or their hands. They came to life, and reigned with Christ a thousand years. ⁵The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended. This is the first resurrection. ⁶Blessed and holy is he who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and they shall reign with him a thousand years.

⁷And when the thousand years are ended, Satan will be loosed from his prison ⁸and will come out to deceive the nations which are at the four corners of the earth, that is, Gog and Magog, to gather them for battle; their number is like the sand of the sea. ⁹And they marched up over the broad earth and surrounded the camp of the saints and the beloved city; but fire came down from heaven and consumed them, ¹⁰and the devil who had deceived them was thrown into the lake of fire and sulphur where the beast and the false prophet were, and they will be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

I. The Imagery Comes from Daniel Chapter 7

II. The Three Sections

A. Satan Bound

1. The Ancient Serpent made prisoner for 1000 years
2. The 1000 years is not chronological but serves to link with the Blessedness of the Reign of Christ

B. The Reign of Christ

1. Coterminous with the binding of the serpent
2. The Martyrs now reign with Christ

This is the first Resurrection and John is careful to differentiate this Resurrection from the general Resurrection

3. The 1000 years has its origin in Hebrew Messianic Expectation

1000 yrs is linked to the "day" and a full day's reign is a satisfactory time for events to occur

C. The End of the Dragon

1. The 1000 years of binding has no chronological meaning it is only linked with the reign of Christ so we need not struggle to analyze beyond this point. The serpent is released when it is time for final destruction.

2. Gog and Magog comes from the prophet Ezekiel chapter 39

3. Gog is particularly vicious type of Barbarian who will launch an attack on Jerusalem only to be defeated by Yahweh

4. The assault is on the beloved city - the historical Jerusalem - not the New Jerusalem

III. The deceiver of the whole world is not killed but thrown into the Lake of Fire

A. The Lake of Fire accommodates not only the deceiver, but the two beasts the political and the religious systems that have supported the deceiver.

B. John is also trying in this passage to prepare the faithful for the suffering of the trials

1. Defying the political authorities (Rome) of this world may lead to punishment - even death

2. Martyrs will have this exclusive reward in reigning in the Millennial Kingdom

Rev. 20:11-15

¹¹Then I saw a great white throne and him who sat upon it; from his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. ¹²And I saw the dead, great and small, standing before the throne, and books were opened. Also another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged

by what was written in the books, by what they had done. ¹³And the sea gave up the dead in it, Death and Hades gave up the dead in them, and all were judged by what they had done. ¹⁴Then Death and Hades were thrown into the lake of fire. This is the second death, the lake of fire; ¹⁵and if any one's name was not found written in the book of life, he was thrown into the lake of fire.

Revelation 21:1-8

¹Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. ²And I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband; ³and I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, the dwelling of God is with men. He will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself will be with them; ⁴he will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain any more, for the former things have passed away."

⁵And he who sat upon the throne said, "Behold, I make all things new." Also he said, "Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true." ⁶And he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give from the fountain of the water of life without payment. ⁷He who conquers shall have this heritage, and I will be his God and he shall be my son. ⁸But as for the cowardly, the faithless, the polluted, as for murderers, fornicators, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars, their lot shall be in the lake that burns with fire and sulphur, which is the second death."

I. The final section of Revelation - The New Heaven and the New Earth

A. The former creation has passed away - all evil has been destroyed

B. Jerusalem is tangible sign of the covenant

1. The New Jerusalem means a new covenant - new people

2. The images of city and bride are interposed freely

3. God now fulfills for all time Emmanuel - God is with His people

II. God is the one who speaks the creative WORD now for the second time and the new creation comes into being

A. The divine WORD is effective, true and trustworthy

B. The WORD is effective and we trust in His work and promise "It is done"

1. The promise of Noah is renewed - never again will I destroy

2. The promise of the Cross - it is finished

C. God is the beginning and the end - we are surrounded, loved cared for...

III. The New Creation is not a restoration but a new work - Cosmic Consequences

A. Paul's writing - redemption of the whole creation Romans 8:18

B. This connection between humanity and the cosmic creation is radically anti-dualistic - there is no separation between any portion of the created order

IV. Good News and Challenge

A. Our Challenge - to make ready the reality of the Kingdom - to care for all the created order and to live as Kingdom people

B. The vision of Eternal life with God

Genesis 2:15 - "The Garden of Eden"

corporeal 2. There is heavenly City, but filled with human beings - reality - tired with the Bodily Resurrection

3. Part of the radically different reality is man without sin - there is no place for evil or sin in Heaven - it has been destroyed

Revelation 21:9 - 22:5

⁹Then came one of the seven angels who had the seven bowls full of the seven last plagues, and spoke to me, saying, "Come, I will show you the Bride, the wife of the Lamb." ¹⁰And in the Spirit he carried me away to a great, high mountain, and showed me the holy city Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God, ¹¹having the glory of God, its radiance like a most rare jewel, like a jasper, clear as crystal. ¹²It had a great, high wall, with twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and on the gates the names of the twelve tribes of the sons of Israel were inscribed; ¹³on the east three gates, on the north three gates, on the south three gates, and on the west three gates. ¹⁴And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

¹⁵And he who talked to me had a measuring rod of gold to measure the city and its gates and walls. ¹⁶The city lies foursquare, its length the same as its breadth; and he measured the city with his rod, twelve thousand stadia; ¹⁷its length and breadth and height are equal. ¹⁷He also measured its wall, a hundred and forty-four cubits by a man's measure, that is, an angel's. ¹⁸The wall was built of jasper, while the city was pure gold, clear as glass. ¹⁹The foundations of the wall of the city were adorned with every jewel; the first was jasper, the second sapphire, the third agate, the fourth emerald, ²⁰the fifth onyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, the twelfth amethyst. ²¹And the twelve gates were twelve pearls, each of the gates made of a single pearl, and the street of the city was pure gold, transparent as glass.

²²And I saw no temple in the city, for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty and the Lamb. ²³And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine upon it, for the glory of God is its light, and its lamp is the Lamb. ²⁴By its light shall the nations walk; and the kings of the earth shall bring their glory into it, ²⁵and its gates

shall never be shut by day—and there shall be no night there; ²⁶they shall bring into it the glory and the honor of the nations. ²⁷But nothing unclean shall enter it, nor any one who practices abomination or falsehood, but only those who are written in the Lamb's book of life.

¹Then he showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb ²through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life[£] with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. ³There shall no more be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and his servants shall worship him; ⁴they shall see his face, and his name shall be on their foreheads. ⁵And night shall be no more; they need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they shall reign for ever and ever.

I. The Church Triumphant - The Heavenly Jerusalem - the Kingdom of God

A. The images - Bride and Harlot paradox etc. comes from IV Ezra

B. The presentation of Jerusalem and the Temple comes from Ezekiel

C. In antiquity the wall was an important feature of a city - to repel
Here the Wall is to attract

D. In Ezekiel the gates are used to exit the city by the twelve tribes -
here they are points of entry

E. The gates like the foundations are inscribed with the names of the twelve Tribes - the foundation sections are the twelve Apostles - connecting the O.T. and the N.T.

F. The 12,000 also connect these two lists of 12

II. The Temple - In Jerusalem the Temple was the crown jewel so to in the New Jerusalem, but now not a building, but the Lord - God dwelling with His people

A. Christian must now prepare for citizenship in the New Jerusalem

B. We are again reminded of the messages to the church - we are to strive for Salvation, but the work is accomplished by the Lamb

C. Night and Darkness have no place in the New Jerusalem

D. Christ has made us a Kingdom of priests to serve our God

E. God is in the midst of His people - not the God we perceive as Aloof or far away

III. The Good News

A. There is only one answer to evil and sin - it is not violence, but the Cross

B. I remind you of our issue that the visions are not of God punishing, but showing us what the result of our deeds brings

War - Famine - Pestilence all leading to death = Man's evil reality

Peace - plenty - health and healing all are God's desire for us leading to eternal life

Rev. 22:6-21

⁶And he said to me, "These words are trustworthy and true. And the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, has sent his angel to show his servants what must soon take place. ⁷And behold, I am coming soon."

Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.

⁸I John am he who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed them to me; ⁹but he said to me, "You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you and your brethren the prophets, and with those who keep the words of this book. Worship God."

¹⁰And he said to me, "Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near. ¹¹Let the evildoer still do evil, and the filthy still be filthy, and the righteous still do right, and the holy still be holy."

¹²*“Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense, to repay every one for what he has done. ¹³I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.”*

¹⁴*Blessed are those who wash their robes,[£] that they may have the right to the tree of life and that they may enter the city by the gates. ¹⁵Outside are the dogs and sorcerers and fornicators and murderers and idolaters, and every one who loves and practices falsehood.*

¹⁶*“I Jesus have sent my angel to you with this testimony for the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright morning star.”*

¹⁷*The Spirit and the Bride say, “Come.” And let him who hears say, “Come.” And let him who is thirsty come, let him who desires take the water of life without price.*

¹⁸*I warn every one who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if any one adds to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book, ¹⁹and if any one takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.*

²⁰*He who testifies to these things says, “Surely I am coming soon.” Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!*

²¹*The grace of the Lord Jesus be with all the saints.[£] Amen.*

I. The Epilogue - balances the Prologue

A. Christ authenticates the words of this book

B. The author, John claims again the fact of this vision

II. Conventionally Prophecy is sealed - Daniel, Ezekiel ,et.al.

A. This prophesy is not sealed

B. The intention is to proclaim and not just read

III. The final Benediction, "Good News"

A. Those who wash their robes in the blood of the Lamb will have access to the city of God - the tree of life - (Baptism)

B. The whole revelation is the revelation of Jesus Christ - there is nothing new - rather God's WORD is confirmed

C. Are we to understand that this confirmation extends to all of God's Holy Word - the actions of Jesus being effective and the Bible as testimony to the action of the WORD

IV. Conclusion and Greetings

A. The Warning - John is very firm in this warning, because he does not regard himself as the author of the book - It is God's Revelation to His people.

B. Behold I am coming Soon!

1. As we wait - we celebrate the Holy Eucharist - Remember and look forward

2. The final victory is won by losing - life is realized by dying - death has no power only God the final Victor, the Lamb has prevailed through the Book of the Cross

Consider this final victory - evil has not been defeated, it has ceased to exist - earthly victories create winners and losers - God's Victory creates the New Jerusalem where all His people live with Him forever

