

Praise Our God! Rev. 19:5

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Rev. 19:1-4

- 1 After these things I heard a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, “Alleluia! Salvation and glory and honor and power *belong* to the Lord our God!
- 2 For true and righteous *are* His judgments, because He has judged the great harlot who corrupted the earth with her fornication; and He has avenged on her the blood of His servants *shed* by her.”
- 3 Again they said, “Alleluia! Her smoke rises up forever and ever!”
- 4 And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sat on the throne, saying, “Amen! Alleluia!”
- 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!”
- 6 And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, “Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns!

B. *Setting the Scene*

1. We’ve spent 4 months in our study of the Book of Revelation!
2. And as we’ve become embroiled in the visions of the last days John had, there’s a good chance we’ve lost touch with his personal condition as he wrote this.
3. He was elderly and imprisoned on the island penal colony of Patmos just off the coast of Asia Minor.
 - a. the Ruler of the Roman Empire was a man by the name of *Domitian*.

- b. Domitian presided over the most brutal period of persecution in the history of the Early Church.
 - c. he enforced a strict policy of *Caesar worship* – demanding that the subjects of Rome honor him with the title of “Lord & God.”
 - d. as a leader of the Christians, John had refused to attribute such titles to Domitian and had instructed other believers not to either.
 - e. for this he was arrested, tried, and then the tale goes, they attempted to execute him by placing him in a vat of boiling oil.
 - f. but God preserved him and when the Roman officials realized the hand of divine favor was upon him,
 - g. they sentenced him instead to Patmos where at least his influence would be greatly restricted.
 - h. there on Patmos, John worked in the quarry and eked out a living that was more *survival* than anything else.
4. Into the midst of this hardship God revealed Himself and His plan for the future to John.
 5. And now, as we come to ch. 19 and the last section of the Book of Revelation, John witnesses the very thing the saints have been praying for from the dawn of creation -
 6. And he personally has been *waiting* for ever since he *last saw Jesus*; when he stood on the Mount of Olives next to Jerusalem and watched as Christ ascend into heaven.
 7. It's here in ch. 19 that John has a vision of the *Second Coming*
 - a. all that's taken place in the book to this point has been *preparation*
 - b. it's God giving man one last chance to repent and be saved.
 - c. it's God giving man what he's been asking for all along – a world without the intervening influence of God.
 - d. and as mankind stands poised on the brink of annihilation, Jesus finally comes again.
 8. In the verses we've just read, John sees all of heaven rejoicing because the day of evil has finally come to an end!
 - a. the righteousness of God which has filled heaven since the beginning will now fill the earth as well.
 - b. the reign of terror and wickedness has been broken

II. TEXT

A. Two Thrones

1. Try to put yourself in John's place as you read these words.
2. Imagine what it would have been like when he first saw these visions!
3. Look at vs. 4-6 again –
- 4 And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sat on the throne, saying, "Amen! Alleluia!"**
- 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!"**
- 6 And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, "Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns!**
4. John is there on Patmos because a guy named Domitian thinks *he's* omnipotent and reigns.
 - a. there's a throne in Rome that thinks it's the center of the universe.
 - b. Domitian demanded the worship of his subjects and executed all who refused.
5. But John sees the True King and the Real Throne of the Universe.
 - a. the True King isn't Domitian – It's Jesus Christ!
 - b. and the Real Throne isn't in Rome – It's in Heaven!

B. "Praise Our God!"

1. As John had this vision of the throne of God and heard the heavenly praise that rose around it, I'm sure he did not sit back, dispassionately observing the spectacle.
2. As he sees the culmination of all history in the Return of Christ, I'm sure he was caught up in the paean of praise of the multitude.
3. In fact, he's *invited* to join in in v. 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!"

4. I can just see John, dressed in his tattered and dirty prisoner's frock
 - a. the sandals on his feet little more than a strip of leather
 - b. his hair is gray, stringy and matted
 - c. the dust cakes the creases of his furrowed and sun-burned face
 - d. but on that face is a smile of infinite joy lifted to the skies
 - e. his calloused hands are raised to the heavens
 - f. his mouth is open and his chapped lips are singing praises to the Lord!
 - g. He's giving to Jesus what Domitian demanded but would never get from him – Worship!
5. Look with me here at v. 1

After these things I heard a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven, saying, "Alleluia!"

6. V. 3 -

Again they said, "Alleluia!"

7. V. 4

And the twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God who sat on the throne, saying, "Amen! Alleluia!"

8. V. 6

6 And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude, as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty thunderings, saying, "Alleluia! For the Lord God Omnipotent reigns!"

9. 4 times in 6 verses we find the hosts of heaven singing "Alleluia!"
 - a. this is the only time the word is found in the NT and it is repeated 4 times
 - b. it's the saints and angels in heaven who sing it.
10. *Alleluia* is the Greek form of the Hebrew word "*Hallelujah.*"
 - a. which means "*Praise to Yah*"
 - b. "Yah" means "He Who Is"
 - 1) it's related to the name *Yahweh*; sometimes rendered as *Jehovah.*
 - 2) *Yahweh* means, "*The One who Was, Is and Will Be.*"
 - 3) *Yah* emphasizes the *presence* of the One Who Is.

- 4) This is the name God uses to comfort His own with the knowledge that where they *are*, He *is*; and what they *need*, He *becomes*.
11. Hallelujah means “Praise to the One Who Is Here Now!”
“Praise to the One Who Is My All!”
 12. Let me ask you this question – Is God here now?
 - a. then what should we be doing?
 - b. praising Him!
 13. Is God our all - is He the source of all we truly need?
 - a. then what should we be doing?
 - b. praising Him!
 14. Should our outward circumstances affect whether or not we worship God?
 - a. no – because no matter what our circumstances – *God is here*
 - b. *and He is the Answer to our circumstances.*
 15. Actually, in Hebrew, the word “Hallelujah!” is a strong & urgent *command*.
 16. In v. 5, that command is spelled out for John and for us -

Then a voice came from the throne, saying, “Praise our God, all you His servants and those who fear Him, both small and great!”

C. Praise Is An Act of Faith

1. Praise is an act of faith!
2. It isn’t reserved just for the good times when God comes through with some amazing blessing.
3. We’re to praise God even when our circumstances are less than ideal and blessing seems absent.
4. I want to read from Matt Redman’s book, *The Unquenchable Worshipper*.

This world is full of fragile loves – love that abandons, love that fades, love that divorces, love that is self-seeking. But the unquenchable worshipper is different. From a heart so amazed by God and His wonders burns a love that will not be extinguished. It survives any situation and lives through any circumstance. It will not allow itself to be quenched, for that would heap insult on the love it lives in response to.

The Bible is full of unquenchable worshippers – people who refused to be dampened, discouraged, or distracted in their quest to glorify God. I love the heart attitude of the prophet Habakkuk, who decided he would choose to respond to God’s worth, no matter how bleak a season he found himself in. He wrote -

Though the fig tree may not blossom, Nor fruit be on the vines; Though the labor of the olive may fail, And the fields yield no food; Though the flock may be cut off from the fold, And there be no herd in the stalls—Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation. [Habakkuk 3:17-18]

5. Think of Paul and Silas in the Philippian jail.
 - a. they’d been unjustly beaten and thrown into the deepest part of the prison
 - b. their feet were in stocks, their backs bloody and oozing from the lash
 - c. and all for preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ
 - d. but instead of losing faith and crying out for God to explain Himself –
 - e. they began to sing praises to Him – confident that even this would work together for good.
 - f. refusing to let their souls be dampened, they worshipped with everything they had.
6. Most of us don’t have fig trees and haven’t been imprisoned for preaching Christ,
7. But the principle is the same for us as for Habakkuk & Paul.
8. We can always find a *reason* to praise.
9. Not in our circumstances, whether they be good or bad, but in God’s Worth, which never changes!
10. When Fanny Crosby was an infant, ill-informed medical treatment left her blinded for life.
 - a. yet despite this, she determined to trust her life to God
 - b. and resolved that she would hold fast to faith in Him and His good purposes
 - c. when she was only 8 years old, she wrote this song –

O what a happy soul I am! Although I cannot see,
--

I am resolved that in this world - Contented I will be.
How many blessings I enjoy, - That other people don't.
To weep and sigh because I'm blind, - I cannot and I won't.

11. Someone once asked her if she wished she'd not been blinded.
12. The reply came in her typical style – “Well, the good thing about being blind is that the very first face I'll see will be the face of Jesus.”
13. Many people might have chosen the path of bitterness and complaint –
 - a. in fact many do when circumstances seem to conspire against them and life deals them a bad hand.
 - b. but Fanny chose the path of contentment and praise.
 - c. she wrote some 8,000 hymns of praise and worship to her loving God.
14. Two paths lie before us.
 - a. one is the path of complaining bitterness
 - b. the other, the path of contented praise
 - c. every circumstance brings us to a fork in the road of life
 - d. which path will we take – bitterness or contentment? Complaint or praise?
15. Bitterness dampens and eventually destroys love for God.
16. It eats away at the truth that “God is love” and tells us He isn't to be trusted.
17. Contentment does the opposite: It fuels the heart with endless reasons to praise God. [\[1\]](#)
18. Now, this doesn't mean we're to all become bright, shiny, Teflon-coated Christians with perpetual smiles plastered on our faces.
 - a. being content and committed to praise doesn't mean living in a land of unreality - refusing to admit that things are wrong in our lives.
 - b. there's a place for brokenness and weeping in worship;
 - c. but there's a right and a wrong way to express it.
19. As Redman says, “When we pour out our heart-cries to God, they must never become a criticism of who He is.” [\[2\]](#)
 - a. “Praise the Lord!” ☺
 - b. “Praise the Lord!” ☹

20. It comes as a bit of a surprise to find that nearly 70% of the Psalms are *laments*!
 - a. they're songs of sorrow and crying out to God from a place of distress!
 - b. but they never challenge or question the worth of God or His loving plan.
 - c. rather, they're a confession that God's goodness and greatness are the only hope in the midst of a fallen world.
21. As John was there on Patmos, he was experiencing first-hand the down-side of living in a fallen world.
 - a. if anyone had a reason to be discouraged & depressed it was he.
 - b. if anyone had a reason to question the mercy and grace of God, it was John.
 - c. after all, like Paul in Philippi he was in prison for preaching the gospel; for being faithful to the Lord.
 - d. but this vision reminded John that above and beyond the circumstances of our lives is the overruling throne of God.
 - e. and the God who sits on that throne is the same One who because of love for us, became a Man so that He might go to the Cross and atone for our sins.
 - f. the Omnipotent God Who reigns, is the All-Powerful Savior Who loves!

III. CONCLUSION

A. The Sacrifice of Praise

1. In Hebrews 13:15 we find this –

15 **By Christ let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name.**

2. A sacrifice is something that *costs* us.
 - a. it's something we hold precious; it's treasured
 - b. praise as a response to blessing is natural and easy – “Praise the Lord!”
 - c. but praise in the midst of adversity is a sacrifice.
3. Joni Eareckson Tada wrote -
A sacrifice of praise will always cost you something.

It'll be a difficult thing to do. It requires trading in our pride, our anger, and most valued of all, our human logic. We will be compelled to voice our words of praise firmly and precisely, even as our logic screams that God has no idea what he's doing. Most of the verses written about praise in God's Word were penned by men and women who faced crushing heartaches, injustice, treachery, slander, and scores of other intolerable situations.

4. Joni is a person who knows what it means to make praise a *sacrifice* to God.
 - a. she became a quadriplegic as a bright, vibrant, and attractive teenager
 - b. she went through years of anger at God, questioning His purpose and power
 - c. but today she understands that God's ways are not our ways;
 - d. and though her paralysis is a difficult thing to bear, she praises God in the midst of it because it has opened thousands of doors for her to speak of the love and goodness of God.
 - e. her wheelchair has carried her to far more places than her legs every could have.
5. You know, there's an interesting thing I've discovered about sacrifices –
 - a. they're only difficult *before* you make them
 - b. it's the calculation you go through as you *think* about sacrificing something that's hard.
 - c. but I've learned that *when I make the sacrifice*, it's all joy!
 - d. and going away from the place of sacrifice is all peace.
 - e. looking back I can honestly say, I've never regretted a single sacrifice I've given to the Lord.
 - f. but coming to the place of sacrifice has often been a struggle.
6. And so it is with the sacrifice of praise.
 - a. there are times when I don't *want* to praise
 - b. things are not going as I expected or desired and I'm upset with God for not bending to my wishes
 - c. so like a petulant child I withhold my praise.
 - d. then I'm reminded – God is not *advanced* by my praise.
 - e. He does not *need* it – He's not benefited one bit by my praise.

- f. praise benefits me.
- g. though the focus is God, the one who gets the most benefit from praise is me.
- h. now, don't get me wrong – we don't praise God for selfish reasons.
- i. we praise Him *because* He is worthy, and that's what we were created for, to worship and praise Him!
- j. that's why we're blessed when we praise – because we are doing *what we were created for*.
- k. praise is the soil in which joy thrives.

B. Hitting The Mark

1. Most people live their lives aiming at happiness.
2. What they don't realize is if they aim at happiness, they'll never attain it.
3. Happiness is *not the goal* of living – God is.
4. Happiness is the fruit of pursuing and finding Him.
5. Others live to achieve success, however they define it:
 - a. wealth, power, fame
 - b. those who live for these things will find no satisfaction in acquiring them
 - c. because that is not what they were created for- they were created for God, to worship Him.
 - d. success is a life of constant praise.
 - e. it's only the unquenchable worshipper who's a success in life.
6. Erwin Lutzer wrote, "If we haven't learned to be worshipers, it doesn't really matter how well we do anything else."

[1] The above drawn from *The Unquenchable Worshipper* by Matt Redman, pgs. 18-21

[2] *ibid*, pg. 27