

LESSON 12

November 21, 2021

Unit III. Visions Of Praise

Family Restored

DEVOTIONAL READING: Revelation 5:1-14

BACKGROUND SCRIPTURE: Revelation 19

PRINT PASSAGE: Revelation 19:1-8

KEY VERSE

Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. (Revelation 19:7, KJV)

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“Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready.” (Revelation 19:7, NIV)

LESSON AIMS

As a result of experiencing this lesson, you should be able to do these things:

- Discuss the implications of God’s judgment for believers.
- Believe that God’s judgment is inclusive of His justice and mercy.
- Affirm, receive, and enjoy the love of Christ for all, and anticipate the completion of God’s plan at the end of this age.

KEY TERMS

Avenged (verse 2)—Greek: *ekdikeó* (ek-dik-eh’-o): vindicated; gave justice over.

God (verse 1)—Greek: *theos* (theh’-os): God, the Creator and owner of all things.

Hallelujah (verse 3)—Greek: *hallélouia* (al-lay-loo’-ee-ah): an adoring exclamation; “Alleluia” (KJV).

Heard (verse 1)—Greek: *akouó* (ak-oo’-o): having heard, listened, comprehended by hearing.

Praise (verse 5)—Greek: *aineó* (ahee-neh’-o): to give honor.

Righteous (verse 2)—Greek: *dikaíos* (dik’-ah-yos): correct; righteous; by implication, innocent; “just” (NIV).

PREPARING THE LESSON

- Refer to the *Townsend Press SS Commentary Teacher’s Edition* for an additional lesson plan—with word studies, insights on teaching adults, learner matrices, etc.
- Review last week’s student assignments (“Your Life” and Your World!).
- Thoroughly review your student book for your adult or young adult class.

WHY THIS LESSON MATTERS

God-fearing people often long to feel vindicated above the wicked people in their lives, especially when they have suffered or been mistreated. How will they find victory over the wicked? Our God, who is worthy of all praise, will execute the final judgment of the world.

THE LESSON IN FOCUS

Most Christians will acknowledge some degree of curiosity concerning end-time events. We believe the wicked should be punished when wrong is done on earth, and we believe that the wicked shall be punished when this life in this world ends. One of the great celebrations of life and

hope are those for weddings and wedding receptions. As we appreciate the decor and the atmosphere of the event, we anxiously await the arrival of the bride and associate her presence with that of beauty and purity. By contrast, we associate a prostitute with corruption and faithlessness. Sadly, this association is often a lasting perception that has the potential of staining even the holy and sacred celebration of a marriage ceremony. However, when families are forgiving and seek to restore one another, outsiders tend to “fall in line” or fade and fall away with their negativity. A celebratory family can turn potential tragedy into exceeding joy.

THE LESSON IN CONTEXT

When tragedy occurred in a family in Israel, a kinsman-redeemer could make things right again by redeeming property that would otherwise be lost and providing hope for a sustained future. In ancient times, widows risked falling into bankruptcy and possible servitude to cover any of their deceased husband’s unpaid debts to creditors. A kinsman-redeemer would clear the widow’s debt (see Leviticus 25:25; 47-49), remove the threat of a harassing enemy (see Deuteronomy 19:12), and marry the widow back into the family (see Deuteronomy 25:5-6). The book of Revelation shows Jesus as humanity’s kinsman-redeemer— who pays our sin debt (see Revelation 5), takes vengeance upon Satan (see Revelation 6–18), and fulfills His intention to marry us back into God’s family (see 19:7-8). The twenty-four elders join in praise as celebration songs are sung throughout the three acts of Revelation (see 7:9-17; 11:15-19; 19:19). Some scholars understand the 24 as representing the twelve tribes of Israel and the twelve apostles (see 21:12-14). Interestingly, the kingdom of Satan and the kingdom of God are both represented by contrasting images of women—the kingdom of this world (Satan) pictured as a great prostitute (see Revelation 17–18), and the kingdom of Christ (God) pictured as a virtuous bride prepared for her husband (see 19:7-8). Like the last five psalms in the Psalter (see lesson 9), the victory song in Revelation 19:1-8 is punctuated with cries of “Hallelujah!” Both celebrate the defeat of the world’s kingdoms and proclaim the Lord’s universal reign, thus creating rejoicing in heaven.

OPENING INQUIRY (Choose from the questions below.)

1. Pause and think about the family relationships that have been impacted by death or other crises.
2. What are some additional reasons for fractured family relationships?
3. Name some ways that families can restore and reunite.

INSIGHTS

Christians celebrate the fact that although God’s justice demands that sin must be punished, His justice includes a generous measure of undeserved grace and mercy. By faith, believers trust that God’s love and mercy make a way for every repentant sinner to be forgiven, and that, together, the Old and New Testaments reveal God’s plan of salvation and restoration for humankind.

EXPLORATION

Every believer must willingly submit to a relationship with God that is deep, transparent, and intimate. This week’s lesson should rekindle every student’s desire to reach people of every nation with the Good News of Jesus Christ. The believer’s walk and witness on the earth has the potential to touch lives for the kingdom, win new souls for Christ, and, thus, have a lasting, positive impact on the world.

ADDITIONAL EXPOSITORY INSIGHTS FOR THE TEACHER

Commentary on Revelation 19:1-4

KJV

AND AFTER these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God:
2 For true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.
3 And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever.
4 And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia.

NIV

AFTER THIS I heard what sounded like the roar of a great multitude in heaven shouting:
“Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power belong to our God,
2 “for true and just are his judgments. He has condemned the great prostitute who corrupted the earth by her adulteries. He has avenged on her the blood of his servants.”
3 And again they shouted: “Hallelujah! The smoke from her goes up for ever and ever.”
4 The twenty-four elders and the four living creatures fell down and worshiped God, who was seated on the throne. And they cried: “Amen, Hallelujah!”

While Revelation 19 is generally given the heading “The Battle of Armageddon,” the first half of the chapter is actually devoted to a scene in heaven that features the last three songs of the Apocalypse. First, the text presents a large multitude singing “Hallelujah; Salvation, and glory, and power,” because judgment upon the great harlot has been completed (verses 1-2). The first verse gives a glimpse of the worship attitude of those who belong to God as they respond in grateful acceptance of God’s authority and mighty deeds. Worship is the core of any people’s acknowledgment of God as their God. The second verse gives us a reason for this first song of praise. Not only should God’s people praise Him for who He is, but they should also celebrate God’s just nature. God has judged and condemned the manipulator of earth that caused humanity to commit sin against God. In verse 3, they again say, “Hallelujah” as the praise continues. Repetition is used to emphasize God’s victory. The repetition of the words “Forever and ever” is used to emphasize the idea of completeness and permanence in God’s doing. The word *hallelujah* is an expression composed of two Hebrew words: *hallel*, meaning “praise,” and *jah* (a shortened version of the holy name of God: Yahweh). Hallelujahs occur at the beginning of Psalms 111 and 112, at the beginning and end of Psalms 146 and 150, and others. The Hallelujah song is repeated a second time in heaven. This time, the twenty-four elders and the four living beasts fall down before God and also shout, “Amen, Hallelujah” (verse 4). The word beast is often viewed in a satanic way. The fact that they are worshipping God should dispel this thought, especially since the word used can also be translated as “creatures” or “living beings.” They are literally singing “So be it. Praise God.” With a resounding “Hallelujah,” they rejoice and praise the Lord.

DISCUSSION STARTERS

(Please review the appropriate student book’s related biblical exposition section.)

Adult Question:

Why do you think many believers are hesitant to praise God openly?

Young Adult Questions:

1. Praise is such a common activity in heaven. Specifically, what are some ways that Christians become more active in praising God in their personal life?
2. Even when worship leaders call for everyone in church to worship God, in many churches it rarely happens. What are some reasons for why Christians hold back from worshipping God freely? Do you think they believe God is undeserving of their praise, or do you think they have other reasons for withholding praise?

COMMENTARY ON REVELATION 19:5-8

KJV

5 And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great.

6 And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

7 Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.

8 And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

NIV

5 Then a voice came from the throne, saying: "Praise our God, all you his servants, you who fear him, both great and small!"

6 Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting: "Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns.

7 "Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready.

8 "Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear." (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of God's holy people.)

Before the third song is heard, John hears a voice coming out of the throne exhorting all servants, great and small, that fear the Lord to praise Him. The "throne" in this context refers to the presence and authority of God (see also Psalms 9:7; 11:4; Hebrew 1:8). It is important to pay close attention to what the voice from the throne commands. Specifically, the voice issues a direct call to the faithful to "praise our God." Understanding God's true nature should make it easy for believers to offer Him their best and highest praise. John also hears voices that he does not specifically identify other than to compare them to "the voice of many waters" and "the voice of mighty thunderings." This could also be a description of the intensity of the moment as they "all" gather to praise God. The faithful praise God for His omnipotent, all-powerful nature, as demonstrated in the overwhelming and final victory over the enemy. This clarifies the noise John hears—the voice of a great multitude is loud and thunderous, lifted in praise to God. John observes that the praises are lifted to God not solely because of His judgment on Babylon, but because "the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready" (verse 7). The voices are thunderously loud, but how can the sound of so many praising God together be otherwise? At this point, John receives the command to write the last of the beatitudes of the Revelation, announcing that the supper of the Lamb has come. The relationship of the Lord to His people is described using marriage language in both the Old and New Testaments. The bridal attire is noticeably different from the attire for the great harlot, for the holy bride wears glistening white and pure linen (verse 8). These descriptions are symbols of the righteous acts of the saints. All that the New Testament speaks of as relating to Christ the bridegroom (kinsman-redeemer), and the bride (the church), are now consummated.

DISCUSSION STARTERS

(Please review the appropriate student book's related biblical exposition section.)

Adult Question:

What blessings have you received for which you would want to rejoice?

Young Adult Questions:

Have you ever been deeply moved by or overcome with praise for God? Are you more likely to praise God for an individual blessing or for the totality of what you have seen Him do?

LIFE APPLICATION

Refer to Adult Book

(See student lesson's "Your Life" section.)

—This week, pause and consider unsaved or backslidden family members or church members. Commit to praying for them. Consider ways that you can reach them with the love and message of Jesus Christ.

(See student lesson's "Your World!" section.)

—As you identify lost and backslidden family members, friends, and church members, plan and partner with a small group of Christians to celebrate their salvation or restoration in the Lord.

Refer to Young Adult Book

(See student lesson's "Your Life" section.)

—No matter the circumstances, situations, or challenges we may find ourselves in, as believers we know that if we trust God, He will make everything right in the end.

(See student lesson's "Your World!" section.)

—As believers, we must always be careful not to fall for the subtle evil in this world. To do this, we must always keep a close relationship with God.

NEXT WEEK'S LESSON

The lesson topic for Sunday, November 28, 2021, is "No Difference." The Devotional Reading text is Acts 15:6-18, the Background Scripture text is Acts 10:34-47, and the Printed Text is Acts 10:34-47.

CLOSING PRAYER

Lord God, we celebrate You as our forgiver, provider, and protector. As we grow in Your grace, give us the boldness we need to give You the praise You so richly deserve. It is in the name of Jesus we pray. Amen.

HOME DAILY BIBLE READINGS

GOOD NEWS FOR ALL

(November 22-28, 2021)

MONDAY, November 22: "God Speaks to a Pagan King" (Genesis 20:1-7, 14-16)

TUESDAY, November 23: "An Angel Speaks to Cornelius" (Acts 10:1-8)

WEDNESDAY, November 24: "A Vision of Inclusion" (Acts 10:9-22)

THURSDAY, November 25: "The Queen of Sheba Blesses God" (1 Kings 10:1-9)

FRIDAY, November 26: "A Centurion Comes to Jesus" (Luke 7:1-10)

SATURDAY, November 27: "Peter Enters Cornelius's House" (Acts 10:23-33)

SUNDAY, November 28: "God Shows No Partiality" (Acts 10:34-47)