**Part 1**

*v. 1, 3, 4, 6 -* ***Hallelujah!*** *= “praise Yahweh (the LORD)” - appears only here in the entire New Testament, although several times in the Psalms (see Psalms 104-106, 111-113, 115-117, 135, 146-150.*

*Here, the threefold* ***Hallelujahs*** *contrast with the three* ***Woes*** *against Babylon in Chapter 18 (the* ***Hallelujah*** *in v. 4 is a response to the* ***Hallelujah*** *in v. 3, and kind of completes it). They celebrate God’s actions in clearing the way for the marriage feast of the Lamb (v.9).*

*v. 2 - The first* ***Hallelujah*** *praises our God for his* ***judgments****, His* ***condemnation*** *of the great prostitute, and His* ***vengeance****. As a result of these, all of heaven can truly say that* ***“Salvation and glory and power belong to our God!”***

*v.3 – The second* ***Hallelujah*** *praises our God because all the saints can see that the punishment of the great prostitute lasts* ***forever and ever*** *(the smoke of it is like a trash fire that people can see for miles).*

*v. 4 –* ***God*** *– literally, “****the*** *[that is, the one and only] God.”*

19:1After 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!**”

**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:

*v.6-7 – The third* ***Hallelujah*** *praises our God for two reasons: (1) even though the dragon and the beasts are still wreaking havoc on the earth, it is our God who* ***reigns Almighty****; and (2) even though the Groom (Jesus) still has some work to do (removing the beasts and the dragon) before bringing in the new heavens and earth (Chapters 21 & 22), the* ***bride herself*** *(the church)* ***is ready*** *for the wedding feast.*

*See notes on the Divine Marriage in the Bible.*

*v.8 -* ***righteous acts*** *– actions or deeds that are performed by people who have been made righteous by Christ. These actions are also the gifts of God in Christ.*

*v.9 -* ***those who are invited -***  *See Matt 22:1-14; Luke 14:15-21. These are the ones who are attending the wedding feast because they were invited and have received the message.*

*v.10 –* ***At this I fell at his feet to worship him -*** *a curious incident here. There’s no good explanation as to why John would be moved to do this, as he knows that everyone in Revelation (except the dragon and his minions) worship God and the Lamb. The angel corrects him, though, and reminds him that the* ***Spirit of prophecy*** *calls him and all of God’s people to* ***bear testimony to Jesus*** *(and to no one else).*

“**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.)

**9**Then the angel said to me, “Write this: Blessed are **those who are invited** to the wedding supper of the Lamb!” And he added, “These are the true words of God.”

**10At this I fell at his feet to worship him.** But he said to me, “Don’t do that! I am a fellow servant with you and with your brothers and sisters who hold to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For it is the **Spirit of prophecy who bears testimony to Jesus**.”

**Part 2**

*v. 11 -* ***rider is called Faithful and True –*** *not the white-horse –rider of Revelation 6, who was called “Conquest.” This rider has names like* ***Faithful, True****, and* ***Word of God*** *(v. 13), which means this one is Jesus (see Rev. 3:14; John1;1-14)*

***With justice he judges*** *– “ἐν δικαιοσύνῃ κρίνει” = “He judges with justification”*

*v.12 -* ***many crowns –*** *The Father has given Him these “many” (=ALL) crowns because of His work on the cross; unlike the dragon’s false claims on seven crowns in Rev. 12:3.*

*v. 13 -* ***a robe dipped in [or splashed with] blood*** *– probably, some of it is His blood (shed on the cross) and some of it is the blood of His enemies (Is 63:1-6)*

*v.14 -* ***The armies of heaven were following him*** *- most likely, angels who accompany Him to execute God’s final judgment on the world; NOT the saints in the Church Triumphant (although they are also dressed in fine, white linen Rev.7:14), who always serve as witnesses rather than agents of God*

*v.15 -* ***a sharp sword****- Before the Shepherd gathers His sheep, He first strikes down their enemies (the beasts and dragon and all who worship them).*

*v. 16 -* ***on his thigh*** *- perhaps to signify that Jesus is the True Israel (Gen. 32:22-32; Mt.2:15)*

**11**I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose **rider is called Faithful and True**. **With justice he judges** and wages war. **12**His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are **many crowns**. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. **13**He is dressed in **a robe dipped in blood**, and his name is the **Word of God**.**14The armies of heaven were following him**, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. **15**Coming out of his mouth is **a sharp sword** with which to strike down the nations. “He will rule them with an iron scepter.” [Psalm 2:9] He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. **16**On his robe and **on his thigh** he has this name written:

**king of kings and lord of lords**.

Brighton, p. 516: “Any view of God which eliminates judgment and his hatred of sin in the interest of an emasculated doctrine of sentimental affection finds no support in the strong and virile realism of the Apocalypse.” (quoting Mounce’s commentary on Revelation, p. 347).

**17**And I saw **an angel standing in the sun**, who cried in a loud voice to all the birds flying in midair, “Come, **gather together for the great supper of God**, **18**so that you may eat the flesh of kings, generals, and the mighty, of horses and their riders, and the flesh of all people, free and slave, great and small.”

*v. 16 -* ***king of kings and lord of lords –*** *see Deut 10:17; Psalm 136; Daniel 2:47; I Tim 6:14-15.*

*v.17 -* ***an angel*** *= “one particular angel” – maybe the same one as in 18:1-2 and 18:21. That he is* ***standing in the sun*** *gives him the commanding authority of Christ.*

***gather together for the great supper of God***  *- the redeemed are invited to the wedding banquet God has prepared for His Son, the Lamb; the carrion birds are invited to the dreadful feast God has prepared from the corpses of the two beasts and all their followers. (Ezekiel 39:17-20). Never again will they torment Christ’s followers (v.21)!*

*v.19-20 – the enemies of Christ are* ***the beast****(and “the kings of the earth” – all kinds of political and social structures) and* ***the false prophet*** *(who deludes people with false worship) and everyone who follows either or both of them, of whatever rank or file (v. 18).*

*v.20-21 –* ***the two of them . . . the rest*** *– the two beasts are immediately cast into hell; the corpse of their followers provide food for the carrion birds on the battlefield, but their final judgment awaits them (they will also be cast into hell at the return of Christ, Matt 25)*

**19**Then I saw **the beast** and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to wage war against the rider on the horse and his army. **20**But **the beast** was captured, and with it **the false prophet** who had performed the signs on its behalf. With these signs he had deluded those who had received the mark of the beast and worshiped its image. **The two of them** were thrown alive into the fiery lake of burning sulfur.**21The rest** were killed with the sword coming out of the mouth of the rider on the horse, and all the birds gorged themselves on their flesh.

**Divine Marriage in the Bible**

**Some notes on Divine Marriage in the ancient world, and in the Bible**

*Many pagan / polytheistic cultures had both male gods and female gods. In some mythologies, (Greek, for instance) a male god and a female goddess might be “husband and wife” like Zeus and Hera, while other male gods or goddesses might remain unmarried.*

*Many mythologies highlight the sexual exploits of their gods and goddesses to an astonishing degree, regardless of whatever else a particular god or goddess was supposed to be “in charge of” (Zeus was an exceptionally randy old goat –or bull or swan or even shower of gold coins, depending on what human or nymph he set his eye on at the moment). Probably this has to do with the agrarian nature of the societies, with their dependence on the fertility of the local soil (“Mother Earth”) and the appropriate amount and timing of rainfall. Some of these cultures (in Canaan, for instance) included a sexual component in their worship as an additional measure of god-appeasement – we can note the repeated condemnations of shrine prostitutes throughout the Old Testament.*

1. **Read Hosea 1:2-9; 2:1-5; 14-15; 19-23**
2. **Read Ezekiel 16, especially verses 59-63**
3. **Read Matthew 22:2-14**
4. **Matthew 9:15** (Mark 2:19;Luke 5:34) - **15**Jesus answered, “How can the guests of the bridegroom mourn while he is with them? The time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; then they will fast.
5. **John 3:28-29** - **28**You yourselves can testify that I said, ‘I am not the Messiah but am sent ahead of him.’ **29**The bride belongs to the bridegroom. The friend who attends the bridegroom waits and listens for him, and is full of joy when he hears the bridegroom’s voice. That joy is mine, and it is now complete.
6. **2 Corinthians 11:2** - **2**I am jealous for you with a godly jealousy. I promised you to one husband, to Christ, so that I might present you as a pure virgin to him.
7. **Ephesians 5:22-33** - **22**Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord.**23**For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. **24**Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.

 **25**Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her **26**to make her holy, cleansing[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians+5%3A22-33+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-29331a)] her by the washing with water through the word, **27**and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. **28**In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. **29**After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church— **30**for we are members of his body.**31**“For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.”[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians+5%3A22-33+&version=NIV#fen-NIV-29336b)] **32**This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church. **33**However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

*Although the God of the Hebrews (Yahweh) was always understood (revealed) to be male He never had a female counterpart.*

*Muslims believe that even to call Jesus “God’s Son” imputes to God a sexuality that they are unwilling to consider.*

*Still, for Jews and Christians there is no female counterpart to God (so it would be incorrect and even offensive to say “Father God and Mother Earth”). However, Christians have long considered two options as “Foster Mothers” (not that these are counterparts to God, but that in some spiritual ways they fulfill the roles / functions of a substitute / foster mother for God’s people: (1) Mary, the Mother of Jesus; (2) the Church.*

*If there is any sense in which God (Yahweh of the Old Testament) can be said to have a wife, it would be in His relationship to the ancient people of Israel (see readings 1-2); if there is any sense in which God (the Trinity of the Christians) can be said to have a wife, it would be in His relationship to the Church, the people who have believed in His Son Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit for their salvation (see readings 3-9).*

1. **I Corinthians 6:20** - **20**you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your bodies.
2. **I Peter 1:18-19** -  **18**For you know that it was not with perishable things such as silver or gold that you were redeemed from the empty way of life handed down to you from your ancestors, **19**but with the precious blood of Christ, a lamb without blemish or defect.