

Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit.

THE MARRIAGE SUPPER OF THE LAMB.

A Sermon

INTENDED FOR READING ON LORD'S-DAY, SEPTEMBER 1ST, 1895,

DELIVERED BY

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“And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.”—Rev. xix. 9.

You will perceive that there was an exhortation to John to “Write.” Why was he specially to write these words down? I conceive that it was, first, because the information here recorded was valuable: “Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.” It was worth while that this new beatitude should be recorded, so the angel of God said to the apostle, “Write.” It was also to be written because of its absolute certainty: “These are the true sayings of God.” This blessedness was not a thing to be spoken of once, and then to be forgotten; but it was to be recorded where future ages might see that it is surely so, assuredly so beyond all question. God has bidden this record to be written in black and white, yea, graven as with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever, “Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.”

It was to be written, no doubt, to bring it under our consideration as a thing worthy of being weighed, a text to be read, marked, learned, and inwardly digested; not merely spoken to John by the angel of God, but written by the apostle at the express order of the Spirit of God. Lord, didst thou say to John, “Write it,” and shall I not read it? Didst thou bid the beloved disciple write it, and dost thou not thereby virtually bid me consider it and remember it? Lord, by thy Spirit, write this message on my heart, “Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb.”

I find that my text is succeeded as well as preceded, by something
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remarkable: "He saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God." Lest any doubt should arise in our minds about the marriage supper of the Lamb, or about the fact that many are called to that supper, or about the blessedness of such as are called, the angel says, "These are the true sayings of God." Some things appear to be too good to be true. We frequently meet with sinners, under a sense of guilt, who are staggered by the greatness of God's mercy. The light of the gospel has been too bright for them; they "could not see for the glory of that light," as Paul said in describing the appearance of Christ to him when on the road to Damascus. So, "to make assurance doubly sure," that we may not question its truth because of its greatness, we have this solemn declaration specially certified by order of the Lord, under the hand and seal of the Spirit of God: "These are the true sayings of God." O sirs, the Lord Christ will come again, he will come to gather together his people, and to make them for ever blessed; and happy will you be if you are among that chosen company! If you shall meet the King of kings with joyful confidence, you shall be blessed indeed.

You noticed that I read parts of two chapters before I came to my text; and I did it for this purpose. The false harlot-church is to be judged, and then the true Church of Christ is to be acknowledged and honoured with what is called a marriage supper. The false must be put away before the true can shine out in all its lustre. Oh, that Christ would soon appear, to drive falsehood from off the face of the earth! At present, it seems to gather strength, and to spread till it darkens the sky, and turns the sun into darkness, and the moon into blood. Oh, that the Lord would arise, and sweep away the deadly errors which now pollute the very air! We long for the time when the powers of darkness shall be baffled, and the pure everlasting light shall triumph over all. We do not know when it shall be;—

"But, come what may to stand in the way,
That day the world shall see,"

when the truth shall vanquish error, and when the true Church shall be revealed in all her purity and beauty as the Bride of Christ, and the apostate church shall be put away once for all and for ever. Time rolls wearily along just now, apparently, and some hearts grow heavy and sad; but let us take courage. The morning cometh as well as the night; and there are good days, not so far off as we have sometimes fancied; and some of us may yet live to see times which shall make us cry, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servants depart in peace, for our eyes have seen thy salvation." Whether we live till Christ comes again, or whether we fall asleep in him, many of us know that we shall sit down at the great wedding feast in the end of the days, and we shall partake of the supper of the Lamb in the day of his joy and glory. We are looking across the blackness and darkness of the centuries into that promised millennial age wherein we shall rejoice with our Lord with joy unspeakable and full of glory.

I. I will not longer delay you from the text; and in meditating upon this august marriage festival, I want you to notice, first of all,
THE DESCRIPTION OF THE BRIDEGROOM.

There is no marriage without a bridegroom. There is no marriage of the Church without the appearance of Christ; and therefore he must be manifested. He must come out of the ivory palaces wherein he hideth himself to-day, and he must appear in his glory; and when he shall appear, what shall be his title? Notice it: "Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb."

This term—"the Lamb"—seems to be the special name of Christ which John was accustomed to use. I suppose he heard it first from that other John, called the Baptist, when he said, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Isaiah had compared the Christ to a lamb brought to the slaughter; but he had not really called him "the Lamb of God." This beloved John, who knew the Master better than anyone else did, seemed to love constantly to call him by this most expressive name.

Now, if in any Book of the Bible we might have expected that our Lord would not have been called the Lamb, it would have been the Book of the Revelation; it might seem as if the name "the Lion of the tribe of Judah" might appropriately have been used every time, and the name of "the Lamb" have been dropped. The name "the Lamb" seemed suitable for Jesus here below, despised and rejected of men, led to the slaughter, dumb and patient beneath the hands of cruel men. The name "the Lamb" seemed suitable for Gethsemane, and Gabbatha, and Golgotha; but John calls the Saviour by this name very many times all through this Book of the Revelation. He writes constantly about the Lamb, the Lamb in the midst of the throne, the Lamb leading his people to living fountains of water; and now the angel tells him to write about the marriage supper of the Lamb.

This is the more remarkable because, at first sight, it may seem incongruous to blend these two things together,—the Lamb and a marriage supper. But the incongruity of figures must sometimes be allowed in order to make more apparent some master-truth which must not and cannot be veiled for the sake of correct rhetoric. It sometimes happens that language becomes a burden to thought; great thoughts will break the backs of words, and crush them into the dust. So it happens that comparisons and metaphors crack and break, like rotten wood in the wind, under the stress of some great master-thought which rules the writer's mind. It matters not whether it is congruous in figure, it is congruous enough in fact that the wedding at the last should be the marriage of the Lamb.

What do I infer from this? I gather, in a word, just this, that Christ anywhere, even in his highest glory, still wishes us to regard him as the sacrifice for sin. He desires to be viewed by us in his character as the Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world. This is a character which he never lays aside, and it is as the Lamb that he will manifest himself in the consummation of all things when his Church is perfected.

First, as the Lamb, he is the one everlasting sacrifice for sin. Where is the lamb that God has provided for a burnt-offering? It is Jesus. Where is the morning and evening lamb to take away Israel's guilt? It is Jesus. Where is the lamb that bleeds and dies, that with its

blood the lintel and the two side posts may be smeared to secure the inmates of the house from the destroying angel in Egypt? It is Jesus. In the whole of his life, and in his death, he was no lion, no beast of prey; but he was the gentle, suffering, sacrificial Victim, dying that we may not die, presenting himself a sacrifice acceptable unto God.

Now, because Christ was the Lamb, suffering for sin, and because he delights to remember that he was our sacrifice, therefore *he is seen in that capacity in the day of the gladness of his heart*. He links the memory of his grief with the manifestation of his glory; and as he was a Lamb to redeem his Church, so does he appear as a Lamb in the marriage supper of his glory. One reason why he does this is because he is specially glorious in the character of the Lamb of God. I cannot conceive of our Lord Jesus Christ as ever being less than infinitely glorious; but, dear friends, if there is ever a time when we can appreciate the splendour of his character more fully than at other times, it is when he is on the cross, when he dies, "the Just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." Tell me not of all the glory which surrounds him now in the midst of the throne; I cannot conceive any glory exceeding in brightness the glory of his self-denial, the glory of his taking upon himself the form of a servant, and, being found in fashion as a man, becoming obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. The glory of men consists in what they are prepared to suffer for others; the glory of a king must lie, not in the crowns he wears, but in what he does for his subjects; and Christ's glory is most seen in his sacrifice for sinners. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends;" but Christ laid down his life for his enemies. When the Lord Jesus Christ put on the bloody shirt in Gethsemane, when he bedecked himself with the five bright rubies of his wounds, when he was adorned with the crown of thorns, and, last of all, when he was decorated with that robe of blood as the soldier pierced his side, then it was that he was more illustrious than at any time before or since in the eyes of those who think aright. This is the star in his sky, nay, the sun that eclipses all the stars, that Jesus loved, pitied, and had compassion even to the death upon the sons of men. So, in the day of his marriage, he comes out again in this highest and noblest of characters; glorious specially as a Lamb, it is as a Lamb that he celebrates the marriage supper with his Bride, the Church.

Brethren, I think that it is very appropriate for Christ to appear in glory as a Lamb, because *it is as the Lamb that he has most fully displayed his love to his Church*, to which he is espoused, and to which he is to be married at that last great day. Beloved, the marriage supper is a feast of love; there, love is at home. So Jesus, that he may reveal himself in his love best of all, appears as a bleeding sacrifice on the day of his love's triumph. I do not know how to talk about this great theme; but this truth rests in my heart, and makes me feel more glad than I can tell. It lies like a cake of sweet perfume upon the altar of my soul, and burns there with the soft lambent flame of love; and I rejoice to know that, in the day when Jesus takes his Church by the hand, and leads her home to his Father's house,

he will appear in that character in which he most of all has shown his love to his beloved. You see most of his love when you see most of his griefs, and most of his condescension; and therefore in that character does he appear at his marriage supper.

There is one other thought before I leave this first point. *It is as the Lamb that Christ is best loved of our souls.* At any rate, you feel your affections most drawn out toward him who suffered in your stead; tell me, ye who know him most, ye who love him best, is it not so? You have seen him on his throne, but you have fallen at his feet as dead, for the sight has been too much for you; but when you have seen him on the cross, oh, then your heart has melted while your Beloved has spoken to you, and you have said, "He has won my heart; now he has completely mastered me; I must love him now." So then, you see, on the day of his marriage, when he would be best loved, Christ comes unto his Church robed in that garment in which he appears most lovely in her sight; and he draws out at that marriage supper, more fully than ever he did before, all the love of all his redeemed for whom he laid down his life.

Now, ye who care not for my Lord as a Substitute and a Sacrifice, will you be at the marriage supper when he appears as the Lamb? It is as the Lamb of God that you reject him; you are willing to take him, you say, as a Teacher, or as an Exemplar, but as the Sacrifice for sin you will not have him. Then, neither will he have you. In that great day, as you have disowned the vicarious sacrifice, he who was that sacrifice will disown you. There will be no marriage between your soul and Christ if you will not have him as the Lamb, for that marriage feast is to be the marriage of the Lamb, and of none else. As long as this tongue can move, and these lips can speak, I will preach nothing to you but Jesus Christ and him crucified; that he, who knew no sin was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. I know no Saviour but that Christ, "who his own self bore our sins in his own body on the tree," and who, "when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high," and now in the glory bears the marks of the great propitiation by which his people are saved.

II. But now, secondly, I have to speak a little upon THE MEANING OF THE MARRIAGE SUPPER: "Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb." What will that marriage supper be?

There will come a time when all God's redeemed shall be saved. There will come a day when all who have died shall have been raised again from the tomb, and those who remain alive shall have been changed, so that their corruption shall have put on incorruption, and mortality shall have put on immortality. *Then will the Church be perfect and complete; no one member will be missing.* There will be no spot or wrinkle remaining in her. Then it shall come to pass that Christ will celebrate this marriage supper, which will be *the bringing of the people of God into the closest and happiest union with Christ their Lord in glory.* Even now, the Lord Jesus Christ is no stranger to some of us, and we are not strangers to him; yet there shall come a day when we shall see him face to face, and then we shall know him with a clearer and fuller knowledge than is possible to us to-day. What that bliss will

be, I cannot tell. Oh, the ineffable brightness when we shall see the face of Jesus! Oh, the unspeakable sweetness when we shall hear his voice! Oh, the amazing bliss when he shall manifest himself to us in all his glory! And there will come such a day for all whom he has redeemed, for all who trust him, and rest in his atoning sacrifice. That will be the marriage supper of the Lamb.

That feast will be, like most other marriage suppers, *the fulfilment of long expectation*. Our Lord has waited long for his perfected Church. He espoused himself to her before ever the earth was; but there was much to be done ere she was prepared for the marriage. The Bridegroom, too, had to leave his Father, and become one with his Bride by taking upon himself our humanity. For our sake, he did quit the thrones and royalties of heaven that he might be bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh; and here was he born, and here he lived, and here he died. But still the Bride was not ready; and it is not till you come to this chapter that you read, "The marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready." Souls have to be saved, new-created, blood-washed, sanctified, perfected, and the whole of them must be gathered to make up the body of Christ's Spouse; and when that is done, and she is all complete, the expectations of the Christ will be fulfilled at that marriage supper. O beloved, you do not know the longings of the heart of Christ for that day of glory! For this he lived; for this he died; for this he continually pleads that all for whom he shed his precious blood might be his in that day. That day is fast coming, and when it arrives, then will be the wedding feast above.

Then will be also the day of *the open publication of the great fact of mutual love and union*. At this moment, Christ loves his Church, and he is one with her; but the world as a whole does not know it. It does not know either him or her, nor does it care about them; but the day shall come when Christ will bring his hidden people into the light of day. "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the Kingdom of their Father;" and then shall the Christ himself also be manifested, though long hidden. Oh, what a day that will be when the eyes of the entire universe shall be turned in one direction, and the glorious Christ, in the splendour of his manhood and of his Godhead, shall take the hand of his redeemed Church, and before men and angels and devils declare himself to be one with her for ever and for ever! That will be the beginning of the marriage supper of the Lamb; it will be the publication to all of the great fact of mutual love and union.

Moreover, the picture of a marriage supper is intended to set forth *the overflowing of mutual delight and joy*. There is too much joy for two; they are so happy, that they invite others to come in, and share the banquet. So, in those days, how delighted this blessed Christ and his Church will be with one another! How the Church will rejoice in him! How he will rejoice in the Church! What hallelujahs will they raise to him; and oh, with what delight will he look upon all his people, and see in them neither spot, nor wrinkle, nor any such thing, because his blood has cleansed them, and his Spirit has perfectly sanctified them! Of old it was written, "The Lord thy God

in the midst of thee is mighty; he will save, he will rejoice over thee with joy; he will rest in his love, he will joy over thee with singing." But what will that rest of love be, and what that singing of the Christ over his blood-bought ones, when they are all before him, and all made like unto himself to reflect the glory of God!

Brethren, to add just one other thought, that marriage feast will be *the grandest display of Christ's magnificent munificence in a banquet*. If people do ever make a little more show than on other occasions, it is usually at a marriage feast; and oh, what a show Christ will make that day! Depend upon it, there will be no little show when he shall come in the glory of his Father, with all the holy angels with him, and with the very clouds of heaven to be the dust of his feet. Then shall his Church come before him in all the glory he has given to her. Her raiment shall be of wrought gold. There is no lustre, no beauty, no excellence, that can be compared with that which Christ will put upon his Church. She will admire him, and he will admire her. She will bless him, and he will bless her. Oh, I talk but feebly about lofty things that need a poet's eye and a poet's tongue! Nay, put away your poetry; the soberest language that can be uttered might better fit a theme in which the highest sublimities must be simplicities. I do want you all to believe that there is to be a day when all the chosen seed, blood-bought and saved, will make one body, and Christ shall come, and glorify them with himself in a union that shall never know an end, though the ages roll along for ever and for ever.

III. Now, thirdly, I must speak a little about THE PERSONS WHO ARE CALLED TO THIS SUPPER. Who are the people who are called to this great marriage feast?

In one sense, you are all called to it. O my hearers, there is a call of the gospel to every one of you! We are bidden to preach it to every creature under heaven, and we do preach it, leaving none of you out. "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." "Whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." The call, "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh," is to the foolish virgins as well as to the wise; and if you do not come, it is not because you were never invited and never entreated to come to Christ. By the Spirit of the living God, I do implore you men and women to seek the Saviour's face. I may never address you all again, as perhaps I have never addressed some of you before; but by him that cometh in the clouds of heaven I do entreat you to fly to Jesus the great and only Saviour. Seek his grace now, that you may see his face with joy in the great day of his appearing.

But this is not exactly what the text means, for, although there is a blessedness in being called, it curdles into a curse if, being called, sinners refuse to come to the Saviour. Who, then, are they who are specially called to this marriage feast? Well, first, they are *those who are so called as to accept the invitation*. Have you come to Jesus? Are you trusting him? Will you have him? Does your heart say, "Ay"? Then, he is yours. There was never any unwillingness in Christ to receive the guilty. The unwillingness is in you; and if the unwillingness has gone from you, since it never was in him, take him, and have him for ever. Take him and have him to-night. When Abraham's

servant wanted to take Rebekah to Isaac, her mother and brother said to her, "Wilt thou go with this man?" So would I say to any young man or woman I may be addressing, "Wilt thou go with Christ? Wilt thou have Christ?" If so, he will have thee. If thou art willing to have him, thou art among those who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb.

To help thee to judge thyself, here is another test. *Those who are called to that marriage supper love the Bridegroom.* He will have no enemies at his banquet. Dost thou love Jesus? Does thy heart leap at the sound of his name? Timid trembling woman, dost thou love him? Thou canst not speak for him, but thou couldst die for him. Ah, well, if thy heart goes after him, his heart has long ago gone after thee, and thou shalt be at the marriage supper! I tell thee more, thou shalt be a part and parcel of his Bride in the day of his appearing.

Again, *those who are called to this supper are made ready.* Are you made ready? You remember that the man who came to the wedding feast was bidden to put on a wedding garment; hast thou put on the righteousness of Christ? Has Christ put on thee his sanctification? Art thou changed in heart? Without holiness no man shall see the Lord. Has the grace of God renewed thee? Then thou art one of those who shall come to the wedding, among the blessed who are called to that great marriage feast.

Thou mayest help to judge thyself by answering one more question. *Hast thou any desire to go to that marriage feast?* Dost thou look for Christ's coming? There are some who are altogether unconcerned about it; they do not care about Christ or his coming, it is all nothing to them, an airy nothing. O my hearer, I trust that thou art not of that opinion! But if thou art looking for and hastening unto the coming of the Son of God, if thy faith is resting on his first coming, and thy hope is in his second coming, if thou seest thy sin put away by his coming as a sin-offering, and then thy sorrow put away by his coming as thy Bridegroom, then, dear heart, be sure that thou wouldst not have these drawings towards him unless he had drawn thee to himself. He is drawing thee; therefore, run after him.

IV. Now, lastly, let us think of THE BLESSEDNESS WHICH IS ASCRIBED TO THOSE WHO ARE CALLED TO THIS MARRIAGE SUPPER.

I know that I am speaking to many who are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb; and I want you, my dear hearers, now to enjoy yourselves, for *you have a prospect which blesses you even now.* If you are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb, the text says that you are blessed; and truly blessed you are: "Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb." If you had an invitation to see the Queen to-morrow, some of you who are wonderfully loyal would think a great deal of it, and you would be saying to yourselves, "Well, we are going home to-night to a very narrow room in a very poor cottage; but we have something great in prospect to-morrow." And oh, do think of this, you who are poor, you who are pained, you who are very weak, you who are cast down, within a short time your eyes "shall see the King in his beauty, and the land that is very far off." It may be only a few days, or weeks, or

months, certainly only a few years at most, and we shall share all the glory that awaits the Church; and the glory of our dear Lord, who loved us, and gave himself for us, will be ours, and ours for ever. I know that you put this great event far away, and say that it is a long way off; but it is not, it is close at hand. Suppose it were not to come for a thousand years; yet what is that but the twinkling of an eye, very soon over? The older men get, the shorter time seems to be. When I was a child, a week seemed to be a very long time. You who have grown old know that a year seems to come and go before you are aware of it. You can say with Job, "My days are swifter than a post: they flee away." Yet what matters it if we have to wait fifty thousand years for our bliss? We who have believed in Christ have the absolute certainty that we shall one day stand in the midst of the splendour of Christ's wedding feast. The nuptials of a king are usually something very grand; but what will the marriage supper of the King of kings and Lord of lords be,—when he who is the Son of the Highest shall take to himself his fit companion,—when it shall no more be said of the man Christ Jesus that there was found no help meet for him, but when he shall take his Church, made out of his own flesh, and shall welcome her unto himself to go from him no more for ever?

I shall be a part of that Church, and you who believe will be a part of that Church; *and we shall all have great honour in being called to such a future.* What bliss to be there! What joy to be there, not as spectators, but as part of the Bride that shall then be taken by her Husband! My soul, thou shalt swim in felicity, thou shalt dive in seas of inconceivable delight by reason of thy union with Christ, and thy delight in him, and his delight in thee. I know no better idea of heaven than that, to be eternally content with Christ, and Christ to be eternally content with me; and all this will happen within a very little time. Therefore, lay aside your cares, dismiss your fears, murmur no more. Such a destiny awaits you that you may well be content. I have heard that, when Queen Elizabeth once carried the crown, while she was a young princess, she found it heavy as she bore it before her sister; but one said to her, "You will like it better when you wear it yourself." So, we have to carry every day a weight for Christ; but oh, when the crown is put upon our own heads, and we are in paradise with him, we shall forget the light afflictions which were but for a moment, as we enter into the enjoyment of the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. I want you, if you can, just to enjoy yourselves while you think of the honour which is to be put upon all Christ's people in being married to him.

"One with Jesus,
By eternal union one,"

partakers of his name, his estate, his glory, himself, he shall make us to sit with him upon his throne, even as he has overcome, and sits down with his Father upon his throne.

Recollect, too, we shall be blessed at the marriage supper because *no fear will mingle with our enjoyment.* It has been well observed that, if men and women could know all that will happen to them in the

course of their married life, they might, perhaps, not think a wedding day such a happy day after all. So soon may love grow cold, so often may promises be broken, and unkindness take the place of affection, that it is but a dubious joy that surrounds the wedding feast; but once with Jesus at the banquet above, there will be no such fear. Here, I may have a fear lest my love to him should not be true, lest, after all, my following of him should be but temporary, and not the consequence of the new life within; but once up there, we shall raise no more questions, we shall be exposed to no more dangers, we shall no more dread backsliding and apostacy. Once there, we shall be—

“Far from a world of grief and sin,
With God eternally shut in.”

Once there, every pain and tear and fear will have gone for ever; that will be a glorious wedding feast indeed.

My beloved hearer, *will you be there?* If there were no hell, the loss of heaven would be hell. If there were no Tophet, to have missed Christ's wedding feast were a Gehenna black enough. If there were no worm that dieth not, and no fire that never can be quenched, this were damnation deep enough—to have missed the kisses of Christ's mouth, and the joy of the everlasting oneness in his glory. Do not miss it; I charge you, do not miss it. When some of us shall be flying through the gates of the New Jerusalem, I trust that we shall hear you as we pass by, and pausing for a moment to ask, “Who is there?” you will answer, “I am here, brought to know Christ by your ministry.” That shall make another heaven to add to our own heaven; every one that we shall see there, converted by the preaching of the cross by our lips, or through the printed sermons, shall multiply our bliss, and make us yet happier, and for ever and ever happier still in your happiness and joy.

I have finished my discourse, but I do not like, somehow, to go home with this thought in my mind,—*perhaps some of you will miss this bliss!* The muster-roll will be read; but your name will not be there! Can you bear that thought? Remember that, if you are not blessed, you are cursed; if you find not heaven, you are lost for ever. You have often joined with God's people in singing,—

“I love to meet among them now,
Before thy gracious feet to bow,
Though vilest of them all:
But can I bear the piercing thought—
What if my name should be left out,
When thou for them shalt call?”

You cannot be left outside the wedding feast if you have trusted in Jesus; then, trust him at once; rest in that Lamb who will be your Bridegroom, and at whose marriage supper you shall be present to praise the glory of his grace for ever and ever. Amen.

Exposition by C. H. Spurgeon.

REVELATION XVIII. 20—24; AND XIX. 1—18.

May the Spirit of God take away the veil from our eyes while we read what was revealed to the beloved apostle John! Here we have the prophecy of the destruction of the great anti-Christian system of Babylon, which, being interpreted, is and can be none other than the apostate church of Rome.

Chapter xviii. Verses 20—24. *Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her. And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all. And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall he found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee; and the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived. And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.*

Now, after the false church is put away, the true Church of Christ shines out in all her glory and purity.

Chapter xix. Verses 1—4. *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: 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. And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever. And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia.*

Heaven and earth are equally glad, and they unite to adore the living God when the great apostacy, that has so long cursed the nations, is hurled into the sea.

5, 6. *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. 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.*

And his great power is never better seen than in crushing the powers of darkness, and putting the hosts of evil to the rout.

7—10. *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. 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. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God. And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.*

All worship, therefore, of saints and angels is a gross error, not to be tolerated for a moment. John was mistaken in falling down to worship the angel; but he was speedily rebuked, and his mistake was quickly corrected.

There is no doctrine that needs more to be preached just now than this message of the angel, "Worship God." Neither crosses, nor crucifixes, nor holy wafers, nor anything that can be seen or handled, must be worshipped: "Worship God." We need still to hear God's mighty voice proclaiming from mount Sinai the great law. "Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; and shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments."

11. *And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.*

Behold your Saviour, the Champion of the cause of truth! His war is not that of the carnal weapon and of garments rolled in blood. It is a spiritual warfare; but he wins a more glorious victory than ever sword or gun could gain.

12—14. *His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.*

All his true ones, all his faithful ones, all his saints, whether ministers or not, the heavenly armies, "followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean." Holiness is their armour, light is the panoply that they wear as they go forward to this holy war.

15. *And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword,*

He puts down vice, and evil of every kind, not with the sword of steel, but with his word: "Out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword,"—

15, 16. *That with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.*

For this Son of God whom we worship, this Jesus of Nazareth, is Master of all. All power is in his hand, he is, "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS."

17, 18. *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 unto the supper of the great God; that ye 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 on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great.*

By this highly figurative language, we are to understand that, when Christ goes forth to war in battling for the truth, and his true followers come after him, their victory will be certain, and the slain of the Lord will be many. We look not for carnage and bloodshed to establish the kingdom of Christ in the earth; but this revelation gives us a picture of the utter overthrow and destruction of all forms of error through the power of the everlasting gospel of Jesus Christ. Amen, so let it be! Would God that the King of kings would mount his white horse at once, and that all his people would follow him! He will do so at the right time, and then the victory shall be unto God, and to the truth, and to love, and to peace and holiness, for evermore.