

# 32

## The Great Supper of God

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 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.

And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army.

And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.

And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh (Rev. 19:17-21).

Revelation chapter nineteen presents *two suppers* which will occur following the close of the Tribulation (*deipnon*, the Greek word translated “supper” in both instances, refers to the principle meal of the day, usually observed toward evening).

In the first part of the chapter, immediately following the shouts of hallelujah and praise *in heaven* at the end of the Tribulation (vv. 1-6) — a jubilation, mainly because of Israel's repentance and the Son's impending reign — *the marriage supper of the Lamb* occurs (vv. 7-9). Then, immediately afterwards the heavens are opened, and Christ, as "King of kings, and Lord of lords," comes forth with His armies to tread "the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God." And this treading of the winepress on *earth* allows "the supper of the great God [*lit.*, 'the great supper of God']" to occur (vv. 11-21).

Thus, two successive *suppers* are seen in chapter nineteen — *one in heaven preceding Christ's return, and the other on earth following His return*. And the two suppers are completely different in nature, though both are inseparably connected with the Son's impending reign over the earth.

(The adjective, "great" [Gk., *meGas*] in Rev. 19:17, describing a *supper* [describing *God* in the KJV] is used eighty-two times in the Book of Revelation, describing numerous things [*e.g.*, 1:10; 2:22; 5:2, 12; 6:4, 10, 12, 13, 17]. The word *meGas* though is never used to describe God in this book, unless this verse in ch. 19 is the exception.

A couple of Greek manuscripts do have the word *meGas* describing "God" rather than "supper" in this verse [including the Textus Receptus, the main Greek text used for the KJV, accounting for the KJV translation]. However, the vast majority of manuscripts have the word *meGas* describing "supper," accounting for the translation, "the great supper of God," in almost any English translation since the 1901 ASV.

The word *meGas* appears one-hundred fourteen times throughout the rest of the N.T. [Matthew through Jude], and the word is used only seven times throughout this part of the N.T. to describe *Deity* — three times to describe Christ in *Messianic passages* [Matt. 5:35; Luke 1:33; Titus 2:13], twice to describe Christ as *High Priest* [Heb. 4:14; 10:21], once to describe Christ as *the great Shepherd of the sheep* [Heb. 13:20], and once by the Jewish people to describe Christ as *a great Prophet* [Luke 7:16].

The Septuagint [Greek translation of the O.T.] uses *meGas* mainly for a translation of the Hebrew word *gadol*. This word is used some five hundred times in the O.T., but, as in the N.T., the word is used only sparingly to describe *Deity* [*e.g.*, Ex. 18:11; Deut. 7:21; 10:17; Ps. 47:2; 99:2; 138:5].)

In connection with Christ returning through an opened heaven as “King of kings, and Lord of lords” to tread *the winepress*, an angel is seen *standing in the sun* (v. 17). And this angel cries out with a loud voice to all the birds of the air (land animals as well in the same scene from Ezek. 39:17) to come, gather together, and partake of “the great supper of God” — a supper which will consist of “the flesh of captains...mighty men...horses...all men, both free and bond, both small and great...the kings of the earth, and their armies” (vv. 18, 19a).

(In both Ezek. 39:17 and Rev. 19:17, the cry is to “*all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven*,” not just the carrion birds. And the same is true of the land animals in Ezek. 39:17 — “*every beast of the field*.”)

According to the scene presented when the third and fourth seals have been broken in Rev. 6:5-8, depicting conditions during the latter part of the Tribulation, particularly near the end, hunger existing among animal life at that time may be such that even noncarnivorous animals will be found partaking of this “great supper.”)

The angel *standing in the sun*, uttering this cry, stands within that used in a metaphorical sense in the Book of Revelation to symbolize *the center of governmental power* (cf. Rev. 6:12; 8:12; 12:1; 16:8). And the symbolism use in Rev. 19:17 is introduced by and reflects back on the previous six verses, depicting Christ returning through an opened heaven as “King of kings, and Lord of lords.”

The right to take the sceptre and rule the earth at this time will have previously been given to the Son by the Father (Dan. 7:13, 14; Rev. 11:15; cf. Dan. 4:17, 25; 5:18-21; Matt. 20:23). And the angel standing in the sun — standing in that symbolizing *the central governing authority* — is seen *announcing this fact*.

(A similar scene occurring at the time of Christ’s return was depicted earlier in the book, in Rev. 10:1, 2 — the angel with the seventh trumpet, whose “face was as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire,” coming down from heaven and placing “his right foot upon the sea, and his left foot on the earth.”)

Refer to Chapter XIX, pages 235, 236, in this book for comments on the actions of this angel.)

Then, from this point, the call goes out to all the birds of the air to come and feast upon that which is about to remain of Gentile world power when it comes against the King in Jerusalem, seeking to prevent Him from taking the sceptre and assuming the throne, seeking to prevent Him from assuming that which will then be rightfully His.

Following this call, both the Beast and the False Prophet are taken and cast alive into the lake of fire. Then the Gentile armies of the earth — which will have dared to follow the Beast, as he led them against the King in Jerusalem, along with restored Israel in the land — will be trodden under foot as Christ treads *the winepress* (vv. 19-21; cf. Rev. 14:14-20; 16:13-16).

These armies will consist of such vast numbers in that day — *myriads of myriads*, referring to large indefinite numbers (Rev. 9:16; ref. Chapter XVIII in this book) — that blood will flow in places to a depth coming up to a horse's bridle. And this slaughter will extend over a distance of about one hundred and eighty miles (Rev. 14:20).

This is how the Times of the Gentiles will be brought to a close when Christ returns — centrally because of *the outworking of the principles set forth in Gen. 12:1-3 and Israel's God-appointed position among the nations in Gen. 9:26, 27; Ex. 4:22, 23*. And the manner in which this will occur results in that which Scripture refers to as “the great supper of God,” with trampled Gentile world powers left on the mountains and plains of Israel for the birds of the air and the beasts of the field to devour.

### **The Succinct Account in the Book of Revelation**

It may appear strange to some reading Rev. 19:17-21 that no more space or detail has been given at this point in the book to that which will occur relative to Gentile world power when Christ returns. After all, this is *the grand climax* of some 2,600 years of Gentile rule, with Israel about to take the sceptre and realize her God-appointed position among the nations, which was made known through Moses almost 3,500 years ago (Gen. 9:26, 27; Ex. 4:22, 23). But the whole of the matter at this climactic place in

the Book of Revelation is stated in *a very succinct manner* — five verses, or a total of eleven verses if one begins with Christ returning through the opened heavens in verse eleven.

Previously in this book, the same subject was dealt with several times after somewhat *the same succinct manner* (ref. 9:13-21; 14:14-20; 16:12-16). Just the bare facts are given any place in the book, with very little added detail. Again, the lack of space and detail given to this climactic end of the Times of the Gentiles in a book which brings Scripture to a close, completing God's revelation to man, may appear strange to some. But that should not be the case at all.

The space and detail concerning the matter *has already been given throughout numerous passages in the Old Testament, passages covering whole chapters at times*. In fact, this is the direction toward which everything moves throughout all ten chapters of the Book of Esther, or all twelve chapters of the Book of Daniel, with Israel emerging in the end as the nation holding the sceptre once again.

The whole of the matter is *a major subject of Old Testament prophecy, and everything about how the Times of the Gentiles will end has already been covered by prophet after prophet in minute detail*. If all the Scriptures written about this subject in the Old Testament were brought together, one would have a word picture so complete and detailed that it would *defy description*.

Thus, when arriving at this closing place in the Book of Revelation — the book closing the complete canon of Scripture — nothing needs to be given beyond a simple announcement and description, *connecting that stated with the Old Testament Scriptures*.

The same thing could be said about the 1,000-year reign of Christ in the following chapter. The whole of the matter — from events which will occur following the binding of Satan at the beginning of the Millennium to events which will occur preceding the loosing of Satan at the end of the Millennium (vv. 1-3, 7ff) — is stated in three verses (vv. 4-6).

Why only three verses to cover events during 1,000 years of time which the whole of creation has been moving toward since the restoration of the earth and man's creation and fall 6,000

years ago?

The answer is the same as that previously seen concerning the lack of detail in this book surrounding the end of the Times of the Gentiles. All of the events surrounding the coming 1,000-year reign of Christ *have already been covered by prophet after prophet in minute detail throughout the Old Testament*, beginning in the opening two chapters of Genesis. And all that needs to be stated in this closing book of Scripture is simply an announcement that *the time which the prophets had previously spoken about has now come*.

And exactly the same thing could be said concerning a word picture drawn from the Old Testament Scriptures pertaining to Christ's millennial reign that was previously said about a word picture drawn from the Old Testament Scriptures pertaining to the end of the Times of the Gentiles. If all the Scriptures in the Old Testament bearing on Christ's millennial reign were brought together, one would have a word picture so complete and detailed that it would *defy description*.

Thus, if details are needed about the end of the Times of the Gentiles, as well as Christ's millennial reign, *the Old Testament* is the place to go, not the Book of Revelation. By the time John wrote the Book of Revelation, *the prophets had already spoken and provided all of the details which God wanted man to know*. And, accordingly, the Spirit of God simply moved John to provide, in a *very brief manner, comments on that which had already been provided in great detail*.

These comments would be comparable to placing a *brief epitaph on a tombstone* on the one hand (the end of the Times of the Gentiles) and placing a *brief caption on a picture of a sunrise* on the other hand (the beginning of the Son's millennial reign).

The Old Testament closes in Malachi chapter four after a manner covering the same subject in essentially *the same succinct way* that it is covered in the Book of Revelation. And this would be for *the same reason* seen in the Book of Revelation. When one arrives at this chapter in Malachi, *the prophets have already spoken, and nothing further needs to be added*.

The first verse of this final chapter reflects on the end of Gentile

world power, and the second verse reflects on Christ's subsequent reign, with the remaining four verses dealing with both, but ending with the latter.

And that is exactly what is seen in chapters nineteen and twenty of the Book of Revelation, preceding the eternal ages beginning in chapter twenty-one.

### The Detailed Account in the Old Testament

The picture concerning Israel presented by Moses, the Psalms, and the Prophets throughout the Old Testament is that of *a nation separated and set apart* from all the other nations for purposes having to do with these nations. And these purposes had to do with *the salvation and blessings* of those comprising all the other nations, as Israel became God's witness to these nations and exercised the rights of the firstborn, within a theocracy, in the land covenanted to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (*cf.* Gen. 12:1-3; 13:14-18; 15:5-21; Ex. 4:22, 23; 19:5, 6; Isa. 43:1-10).

All of this was in the offing under Moses and Joshua as Israel was led out of Egypt and established in the land within a theocracy. This is how Israel was to "*serve*" God as His firstborn son (Ex. 4:23).

And that which occurred over centuries of time (about eight hundred years) — a refusal to be God's witness (*e.g.*, Jonah in the type, refusing to go to Nineveh), further disobedience, harlotry — resulted in God eventually uprooting His people from their land, driving them out among the nations to effect repentance, and removing the sceptre from Israel's hand and giving it to the Gentiles.

This is *one major subject* seen throughout the Old Testament. But there is *another major subject* seen throughout the Old Testament as well, having to do with Israel's repentance and restoration, followed by a realization of the nation's calling as set forth in the beginning. And this, of course, necessitates the end and destruction of Gentile world power, with the theocracy being restored to Israel and the sceptre being returned to Israel.

All of the different facets of this whole overall story — past, present, and future — can be seen different places throughout

Moses, the Psalms, and the Prophets. Each writer presents different things about different parts of a word picture which can be seen in its completeness, exactly as God desires man to see it, only by comparing Scripture with Scripture. No one book presents the complete picture. This is seen *only* by bringing together that which the Spirit of God moved all of the Old Testament writers to record (*cf.* II Peter 1:20, 21).

This is what the Old Testament is about, and there is an *emphasis* throughout the Old Testament on the latter part of the story — *Israel's restoration, the nation realizing her calling, and the Gentile nations of the earth subsequently being reached by and blessed through Israel.* And this emphasis, of necessity, involves a *previous end to the Times of the Gentiles and the destruction of Gentile world power.*

This is seen in typology beginning as early as the Flood during Noah's day in Genesis chapters six through eight, or the destruction of Nimrod's Babylonian kingdom in Genesis chapter eleven, or the battle of the kings during Abraham and Melchizedek's day in Genesis chapter fourteen. That seen in later Scripture in Psalms chapters two and eighty-three would be two other accounts, presented in a different manner; and that seen in Isaiah chapter fourteen would be another.

An almost endless list of other similar references could be cited. But that which has already been stated, along with sections of Scripture about to be dealt with from four different books having to do with the end of the Times of the Gentiles and the destruction of Gentile world power, should suffice to show the extensive nature of this subject in the Old Testament.

### 1) *As Seen in the Book of Exodus*

The removal of the Israelites from Egypt under Moses is a type of the future removal of the Israelites from a worldwide dispersion under the One greater than Moses. And the destruction of the Egyptian Pharaoh and his armed forces in the Red Sea once the Israelites had been removed from Egypt is a type of the future destruction of Gentile world power under the One greater than Moses once the Israelites have been removed from a worldwide dispersion (Ex. 14:13-15:4).

Then, the giving of the old covenant [the Law] and the establishment of the theocracy at Sinai is a type of God making a new covenant with the house of Israel and restoring the theocracy to the nation.

In the type, following events in the Book of Exodus, the Israelites were ready to enter into the land and realize the rights of the firstborn. And exactly the same thing will occur yet future when a new covenant has been made with Israel and the theocracy has been restored to the nation.

(The O.T. theocracy began at Sinai through the giving of the Law, the building of the Tabernacle, and the glory of God indwelling the Tabernacle [Ex. 20-40]. At the moment the Glory of God indwelled the Tabernacle [Ex. 40:33-38], God Himself dwelled in the midst of *His first-born son, a kingdom of priests* [Ex. 4:22, 23; 19:5, 6]. And *the theocracy*, with its people [Israel] and its rules and regulations [the Law], was brought into existence at this time and was to subsequently be established in the land covenanted to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.

*The same theocracy* is to be restored to Israel yet future, which, according to the type, will occur following a new covenant being made with the house of Israel and following the Glory indwelling the Temple which Messiah Himself will build [Ezek. 43:2ff; Zech. 6:12, 13].)

## 2) As Seen in the Book of Ezekiel

Ezekiel deals extensively with the restoration of Israel (chs. 36, 37), the destruction of Gentile world power (chs. 38, 39), and Israel in the land during the Messianic Era (chs. 40-48).

The latter part of chapter thirty-six (vv. 17-38) deals with the reason for the dispersion of the Jewish people, their national conversion, and their restoration to the land. All of chapter thirty-seven then provides more information concerning their national conversion and restoration to the land. Then chapters thirty-eight and thirty-nine have to do with the destruction of Gentile world power once they have been restored to the land, with these two chapters ending at the same place as the previous two chapters — Israel in the Messianic Era, as seen more in detail in chapters forty through forty-eight.

That events in chapters thirty-eight and thirty-nine can occur

only after Israel has been restored to the land, following the Tribulation, is *evident* from things stated in these chapters. For example, conditions seen in 38:8, 11, 12; 39:12 (*cf.* 38:23; 39:21-23) *cannot possibly exist before that time*. These conditions don't exist today; nor can they exist anytime before or during the Tribulation.

And, in the parallel account in Rev. 9:15-18 (*cf.* Ezek. 39:4-20), the slaying of "the third part of man" at the hands of the two myriads of myriads would undoubtedly have to do with *the armies themselves* rather with mankind in general (*ref.* Ezek. 38:21; *cf.* Judges 7:22; I Sam. 14:20).

Then chapters forty through forty-eight present Israel in the land during the Messianic Era, following their restoration to the land and the destruction of Gentile world power.

(The use of "Gog" [referencing a *prince*] and "Magog" [referencing a *land*], used together in Ezek. 38:2, cannot possibly refer to *Russia, with Russia leading armies of subsequently named nations against Israel during the Tribulation*, as usually taught. Contextually, it is evident that the reference must be viewed in line with *the same type reference seen in Rev. 20:8*, where "Gog and Magog" refer to "the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth.")

Note that there is nothing in the N.T. that is not found after some fashion in the O.T., with the N.T. drawing from the O.T. in this respect. And Rev. 20:8 can only draw from Ezek. 38:2, though the time element and battle are different.

Ezekiel 38, 39 has to do with *the princes [kings, captains, mighty men] leading armies from the nations of the earth against the regathered Jewish people, with the "King of kings, and Lord of lords" in their midst*. The fact that only a few Middle East nations are mentioned is immaterial [38:5, 6, 13]. That is also true relative to a mention of "the kings of the east" in Rev. 16:12, which, if one keeps reading, he finds that "the kings of the earth and of the whole world" [v. 14] are in view in a larger respect.)

### 3) As Seen in the Book of Daniel

The Book of Daniel, in its overall scope, deals with the Times of the Gentiles, from beginning to end. And through the use of imagery, metaphors, types, and direct statements, Daniel places

an emphasis on that which will occur at the end of the Times of the Gentiles — *the total destruction of Gentile world power, with the kingdom of Christ then being established.*

Note, for example, *the great image in chapter two and the four great beasts in chapter seven* (which deal with exactly the same thing, from different perspectives). And the remainder of the book is simply commentary on that depicted by the great image and the four great beasts, with an emphasis on that depicted by the final form of the great image and the fourth great beast.

(For further information on *the kingdom of this world becoming the kingdom of our Lord and His Christ, as seen in the Book of Daniel*, refer to Chapters XII, XXIV in this book.)

#### 4) *As Seen in the Book of Joel*

The same sequence of events as seen in Ezekiel chapters thirty-six through thirty-nine is also seen in the Book of Joel. And these events in Joel have to do with *the Jewish people regathered to the land, Messiah present in their midst, and the subsequent destruction of Gentile world power* (Joel 2:27-3:21).

Further, in Joel, these events are seen occurring *beyond Man's Day, in the Lord's Day* (1:15; 2:1, 2; 3:14). Man's Day lasts until the end of the Tribulation, with the Lord's Day beginning when Christ returns at the end of Man's Day.

Joel is just one of the numerous prophets which have spoken, and their words signal *the end of any discussion on the matter*. That which is about to occur relative to Israel and the nations will turn out *exactly as outlined in prophet after prophet. And nothing can change or alter anything which the prophets have stated.*

