

Marriage Supper Joy

After Revelation 19

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Analysis

Preamble

An interpretation of Revelation 19 in the Bible of a marriage supper in the heavenly places.

Themes and motifs

The most noticeable theme is the 9-note sequence in bar 1. [A]

Its pattern is repeated in bar 7, L.H., but here suggesting E major harmony, while that in bar 1 is B^b.



Figure 1 Bar 1



Figure 2 Bar 7 L.H.



Figure 3 Bars 3-4 R.H.

What is in bars 3-4, right hand, acts as a “decoil”, a fake mirroring, or a misleading step. The harmony is strongly Bb; if anything, a hint of its related minor, G minor, but reverts back to Bb in 4. [B]

Is [B] really a decoil, or a development? The L.H. in bars 8-11 is a very near quotation of [B].



Figure 4 Bar 8 L.H.



Figure 5 Bar 11 L.H.

Another possible theme appears in bar 12. However, no, this is more an “excitement device”, with implied C minor harmony. More to do, the G major harmony in bar 11 is held to the second crotchet beat of 12, making the transition to C “minor” a perfect cadence. [C]



Figure 6 Bar 12 R.H.

When [C] recurs in bars 13 and 20, they are in chromatic steps. There is no harmonic structure designed or implied here: if anything, the Eb-Gb in bar 14 nullifies any tonic centre at that point.

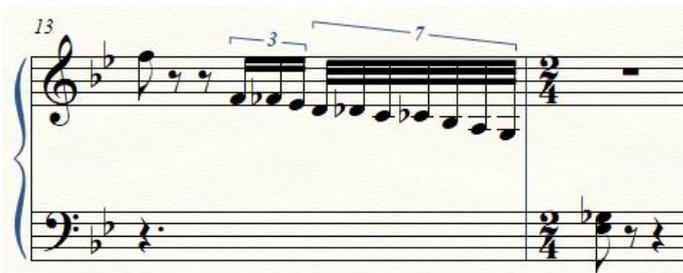


Figure 7 Bars 13-14 lack of tonal centre

A similar approach is taken in bars 20-21. While there is a hint of Ab (or F minor) for the last note of bar 20 going into bar 21, the 5-note sequence (bar 21) removes any intention of tonal centre.

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Figure 8 Bars 21-22

How about the large intervals starting in 24, 26-27? This material hints of what is to come, not so much in the increasing use of large intervals, but that the pattern of interval jumps is here to stay. For example, see the interval jumps in the R.H. in bars 49-53. Also, the pattern returns in bars 93-98, somewhat to assert that "it has gone well". [D]



Figure 9 Bars 24-27 Large intervals



Figure 10 Bars 49-53 - large intervals in the R.H.

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Figure 11 Return of the large interval pattern, also in bars 93-94.

Immediately following bar 99 (the last bar in Figure 11) is a calmer, slower-paced section; the music feels as if it stops abruptly and attempts to resume. This section bridges into a relatively livelier section in bars 113, though abruptly, leading to a passage with largely chordal notes with very few large interval jumps. And, limited to semiquavers with no tuplets. [E]

Figure 12 Predominant use of (near) adjacent notes

Harmony

Structure

Bars	1-21	22-43	44-61	62-79	80-112	113-130
Length	21	22	18	18	33	18
Tonality	E(b) – G(b)	D - Bb - Eb	Bb	E	E(m) / D(m)	Em

Further hints

There is much more about the harmonic and motivic structure as shown above. An account, such as a marriage supper, is one in which myriad human emotions, intentions, and imagination are played out over time and space, multiplied by the rise and ebb of relationships between individuals.

What's more, a marriage supper can be a very unusual occasion where hitherto unknown people might have been long-lost friends. The formality and serenity of the marriage can also quickly change to something of a free-for-all, where the last thing on anyone's mind is the rules of behaviour. The marriage supper account in Revelation 19 takes a further twist, with heavenly creatures described as ganging up on one another. Marriage Supper Joy, then, has many more within its music than hitherto presented.

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