

REVELATION CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

BOOK OF THE REVELATION

What follows represents the unedited lecture notes of Pastor Merritt's teaching of the book of the Revelation. Please feel free to reproduce all or part for the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. The teachings of the Revelation represent a compilation of things learned from such men as Col. R. B. Thieme, Lewis Sperry Chafer, Charles Ryrie, Arno C. Gabelein, John Walvoord, Hal Lindsay, Dwight Pentecost, along with an exegesis of the Greek and Hebrew texts.

Revelation

Lesson 163

4-2-2003

1. Tonight we will continue our analysis of the book of the Revelation. Last week I completed a study of Rev 21:22-24.
2. I am teaching a description of the New Jerusalem which, after the destruction of the old earth and the old heaven, will rest on the New Earth extending into the New Heavens.
3. When time expired we were about to begin an exegesis of the last three verses of chapter twenty-one. Before resuming that study I want to give you an expanded translation of the three verses covered last week.

Rev 21:22 I, John looked but did not see a Temple in the city, it was made clear to me there was no need for a Temple because the Father and the Son are its Temple; in the city they are both omnipresent. The ritual has been replaced by the Reality.

Rev 21:23 The eternal New Jerusalem did not need the light of the sun or the moon for the glory of God, the Lord Jesus Christ gave it its light; the Lamb of God was its perpetual lamp.

Rev 21:24 The gentiles could be seen walking by His light, and those who had positions of prominence on planet earth, they brought their reputations and productions into it.

Now let's see what we can glean from verses twenty-five, twenty-six and twenty-seven.

KJV

Rev 21:25 And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.

Rev 21:26 And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it.

Rev 21:27 And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

NIV

Rev 21:25 On no day will its gates ever be shut, for there will be no night there.

Rev 21:26 The glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it.

Rev 21:27 Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

1. Verse 25 makes clear the gates of the city are never shut; the city has continuous day, no night or darkness.

1.1 Gates at the time of John's writing were always shut at night for security purposes. With the lack of the curse comes the lack of need for protection given all sin and evil is gone.

2. Here again is a contrast to the millennial situation in which day and night continue as the norm for the entire earth. The brilliant light of the city, however, dispels any possible darkness.

3. Believers in glorified bodies do not need rest, their lives are full of continuous activity even like the holy angels. We on earth today need sleep in order to recuperate; again with the curse gone we have no need for recuperative therapy.

4. As if in repetition of the thought of verse 24, that the kings of the earth bring their glory and honor into the holy city, verse 26 indicates that the glory and honor of the ordinary gentile believer comes into it.

Rev 21:24 The nations will walk by its light, and the kings of the earth will bring their splendor into it.

Rev 21:26 The glory and honor of the nations will be brought into it.

5. Walvoord writes "The word nations (ethnos) should be translated "Gentiles," referring to the gentile glory in contrast to the glory of Israel or of the church. Expositors too often have forgotten that God has a purpose for the Gentiles as well as for Israel, and He glorifies Himself through them also."

6. The gentile production bringing honor and glory to the Lord, will enter with them into the eternal state. Recall there were two ages on the dispensation chart in which there were no Jews.

7. In verse twenty-seven we find it plainly said that nothing will ever enter the city which is evil, as only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life are eligible for entrance.

Rev 21:27 Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

8. All who are in the eternal city have entered the city as the objects of God's grace, otherwise they too would be excluded.

9. Let's take a look at where we find the term Book of Life in Scripture.

Phi 4:3 And I entreat thee also, true yoke fellow, help those women which laboured with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and with other my fellow labourers, whose names are in the book of life.

To The Church At Sardis - Us Today

Rev 3:5 He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.

Rev 13:8 And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

A Description of Ecclesiastical Rome

Rev 17:8 The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.

The Great White Throne

Rev 20:12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works ...

Rev 20:15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

Ingress To The Eternal City Is Limited

Rev 21:27 And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

Our Hope Cannot Be Removed

Rev 22:19 And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

10. Our positional perfection is a direct result of our acceptance of the promise found in the book of the Revelation: reward and victory in eternity future because of faith alone in Christ alone.

10.1 Unbelievers don't believe in the reward and victory that comes from those who exercise faith alone in Christ alone therefore effectively they are taking away the great theme of the book of The Revelation.

11. For perfect environment there must be perfect people; this in contrast to the centuries of human sin which plagued the old earth; we will enjoy this perfect situation for all eternity. The inhabitants of the city will be characterized by eternal life and absolute moral purity.

12. Before we start Revelation chapter twenty-two, I want to give you an expanded translation of Revelation chapter twenty-one.

Rev 21:1 Then I, John saw a new heaven and a new earth, the first heaven and the first earth had passed away and unlike that which had passed away there was no sea. God was making clear that in eternity future there will be no more nations to operate outside God's protocol.

Rev 21:2 I was then given a panoramic view of the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, it came down out of heaven, a gift from God to His family, the city was beyond description, like a gorgeous bride prepared for her right man; adorned in the finest attire - the quintessence of pulchritude.

Rev 21:3 And I John heard a loud voice; the voice came from the area around the throne "Now the dwelling of God is with mankind, and I will live with them forever. They will be My people, and I will be with them and I will be their God.

Rev 21:4 I will wipe away every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death, there will be no more mourning nor crying nor pain, for the old order of things is now gone."

Rev 21:5 Christ who was seated on the throne said, "I am now making all things new and different!" He then said to John, "Write what I am about to say: My words are trustworthy, faithful and true."

Rev 21:6 Christ then looked directly at me and said: "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To those who are thirsty I will freely give them water to drink; from the spring of the water of life they shall drink freely." The water represents the fulfillment of all the promises of Christ which are now complete.

Rev 21:7 The person who believes on the Lord Jesus Christ shall inherit all things and I will in the future be his God and he shall be my son.

Rev 21:8 But in contrast the cowardly, those who are unconvinced of God's truths, those polluted with idolatrous practices, those who murder, those practicing fornication and adultery, those dabbling in the occult and those who lie, they shall receive their part in the lake of burning sulfur which is called in the Scripture "the Second Death."

Rev 21:9 The seventh angel who had dumped the seventh plague on planet earth near the end of the Tribulation came over to me and said, "Come here John and I will show you the bride, the wife of the Lamb of God."

Rev 21:10 And I was taken away in the Spirit to a great and high mountain where he pointed out the Holy City of Jerusalem, coming down from God out of Heaven.

Rev 21:11 The city glowed with the glory of God, its brilliance was like that of a single giant precious jewel, bright and clear like a transcendent prism.

Rev 21:12 The New Jerusalem had a high wall more than 200 feet; it had twelve gates and an angel sat atop each gate. On the gates were written the names of the twelve tribes of Israel in the following pattern: from the northwest corner, going from west to east, Levi, Judah, and Reuben; from the northeast corner, going from north to south, Joseph, Benjamin, and Dan; from the southeast corner, going from east to west, Naphtali, Asher, and Gad; from the southwest corner, going from south to north, Simeon, Issachar, and Zebulun.

Rev 21:13 There were three gates on the east side, three on the north, three on the south and three on the west side.

Rev 21:14 The wall of the city had twelve foundations stationed under each gate, and on each foundation were the names of the twelve original disciples minus Judas Iscariot plus Paul.

Rev 21:15 The seventh angel who took me away in the spirit had a measuring rod of gold with which he measured the city, its gates and its walls.

Rev 21:16 The city was cube shaped. He measured the city with the rod and found it to be 1,342 miles on all sides.

Rev 21:17 He measured the wall of the city as being 216 feet high.

Rev 21:18 The walls were made of a clear jasper stone cut and polished to the grade of a perfect diamond, and the city itself was made of pure gold, so pure that it gave the appearance of glass.

Rev 21:19 The foundations of the city were made of various precious stones. The first foundation was jasper, the second sapphire, the third chalcedony, the fourth emerald, Rev 21:20 the fifth sardonyx, the sixth carnelian, the seventh chrysolite, the eighth beryl, the ninth topaz, the tenth chrysoprase, the eleventh jacinth, and the twelfth amethyst.

Rev 21:21 The twelve gates were each made of a giant single pearl. There was a special street which ran down the center of the city which was made of pure gold, giving the appearance of transparent glass.

Rev 21:22 I, John looked but did not see a Temple in the city, it was made clear to me there was no need for a Temple because the Father and the Son are its Temple; and they are then and now omnipresent. The ritual had been replaced by the Reality.

Rev 21:23 The eternal New Jerusalem does not need the light of the sun or the moon for the glory of God, the Lord Jesus Christ gave it its light; the Lamb of God was its perpetual lamp.

Rev 21:24 The gentiles will walk by His light, and those who had positions of prominence on planet earth, they will bring their reputations and productions into it.

Rev 21:25 The gates of the city will always stand wide open; they will never be shut, for there will be no night and no reason to seal the city from those outside.

Rev 21:26 Even the glory and honor of the gentiles will enter with them; all gentiles who glorified God will enter with their divine good.

Rev 21:27 However nothing impure or any impure person will ever enter the New Jerusalem, only those who are positionally perfect; those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

13. Now let's see what we can learn from Revelation chapter twenty-two. You may remember from our outline, the description of the New Jerusalem continues through verse five of chapter twenty-two.

14. Before we begin an analysis of Rev 22:1, I want to review briefly what we will see in these first five verses. The best way to do this is to provide a short introduction. The verses in the NIV have been translated:

Rev 22:1 Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb

Rev 22:2 down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

Rev 22:3 No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him.

Rev 22:4 They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads.

Rev 22:5 There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever.

Introduction

1. It is strange that in chapter twenty-one we saw no descriptive details pertaining to natural phenomena like trees, rivers, etc. Certainly not like we have in Genesis chapter two.

2. In chapter twenty-two however we find details are now introduced.

Rev 22:1 Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb

Rev 22:2 down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

3. In Genesis two the details of the Garden are many and in Ezekiel forty-seven the details of natural phenomena found in the Millennium are also pervasive.

4. Notice in Eze 47:1-12 we have a description of water, rivers, trees etc. all of which abound in the Millennium and are described in ample detail. Let's take a look.

The River From the Temple

Eze 47:1 The man brought me back to the entrance of the temple, and I saw water coming out from under the threshold of the temple toward the east (for the temple faced east). The water was coming down from under the south side of the temple, south of the altar.

Eze 47:2 He then brought me out through the north gate and led me around the outside to the outer gate facing east, and the water was flowing from the south side.

Eze 47:3 As the man went eastward with a measuring line in his hand, he measured off a thousand cubits and then led me through water that was ankle-deep.

Eze 47:4 He measured off another thousand cubits and led me through water that was knee-deep. He measured off another thousand and led me through water that was up to the waist.

Eze 47:5 He measured off another thousand, but now it was a river that I could not cross, because the water had risen and was deep enough to swim in-- a river that no one could cross.

Eze 47:6 He asked me, "Son of man, do you see this?" Then he led me back to the bank of the river.

Eze 47:7 When I arrived there, I saw a great number of trees on each side of the river.

Eze 47:8 He said to me, "This water flows toward the eastern region and goes down into the Arabah, where it enters the Sea. When it empties into the Sea, the water there becomes fresh.

Eze 47:9 Swarms of living creatures will live wherever the river flows. There will be large numbers of fish, because this water flows there and makes the salt water fresh; so where the river flows everything will live.

Eze 47:10 Fishermen will stand along the shore; from En Gedi to En Eglaim there will be places for spreading nets. The fish will be of many kinds-- like the fish of the Great Sea.

Eze 47:11 But the swamps and marshes will not become fresh; they will be left for salt.

Eze 47:12 Fruit trees of all kinds will grow on both banks of the river. Their leaves will not wither, nor will their fruit fail. Every month they will bear, because the water from the sanctuary flows to them. Their fruit will serve for food and their leaves for healing."

5. Wycliffe in his commentary writes: "Sin drove man from one garden. Grace brings man to an eternal Paradise."

6. In the New Jerusalem in eternity future we have beauty, life in full abundance, the sovereignty of God, health, the absence of any curse (v. 3) on either man, or on the earth, or where he lives, or in the city of his habitation, or on any relationships prevailing among men - Christ has removed the curse and all the consequences of that curse.

Rev 22:3 No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him.

7. Here also is a picture of service, the perfect vision, which is to behold the face of our Lord, and to have his name stamped upon our foreheads (v. 4).

Rev 22:4 They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads.

8. Here are two more cancellations or final eliminations of things that have troubled and burdened man: the removal of the curse, and the elimination of night forever (vv. 3-4)

9. Here the blessedness that God has desired through the ages and made provision for is brought to a climax of perfection: in eternity future we shall be serving the Lord; we shall see his face; his name will be on our foreheads; we shall reign with him forever and ever (vv. 4-5).

Rev 22:5 There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever.

10. Here we find the ultimate fulfillment of such promises as those found in Mat 5:8; 1Jo 3:2; 1Co 15:49; etc.

Mat 5:8 Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

1Jo 3:2 Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

1Co 15:49 And just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man, so shall we bear the likeness of the man from heaven.

11. In other words, we shall bear the character of the Lord, we shall serve the Lord, reign with the Lord, and forever rejoice and forever be satisfied as we look upon his glorious face.

12. All the glorious purposes of God, ordained from the foundation of the world, have now been attained.

13. The rebellion of angels and mankind is finally subdued, as the King of kings assumes his rightful sovereignty.

14. Absolute and unchangeable holiness characterizes all within the universal Kingdom of God.

15. The redeemed, made so by the blood of the Lamb, are in resurrection and eternal glory.

16. Life is everywhere - and death will never intrude again. The earth and the heavens both are renewed.

17. Light, beauty, holiness, joy, the presence of God, the worship of God, service to Christ, likeness to Christ - all are now abiding realities.

18. Our vocabulary today is incapable of truly and adequately depicting what God has prepared for those who love Him.

19. Now let's take on verse one of chapter twenty-two.

KJV - New Sentence

The River of Life

Rev 22:1 And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

NIV

The River of Life

Rev 22:1 Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb.

1. The whole of the things described in the remaining portion of the book are subsequent to judgment, and descriptive of the consummation of the triumph and bliss of Christ's people.

2. As a provision for the saints and in keeping with the complete holiness and purity of the heavenly city John sees a pure river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming out the throne of God and of the Lamb.

3. This is not to be confused with the river issuing from the millennial Throne Room as we just noted in our introduction (Eze 47:1, 12) nor with the living waters going forth from millennial Jerusalem (Zec 14:8).

Eze 47:1 The man brought me back to the entrance of the temple, and I saw water coming out from under the threshold of the temple toward the east (for the temple faced east). The water was coming down from under the south side of the temple, south of the altar.

Eze 47:12 Fruit trees of all kinds will grow on both banks of the river. Their leaves will not wither, nor will their fruit fail. Every month they will bear, because the water from the sanctuary flows to them. Their fruit will serve for food and their leaves for healing."

Zec 14:8 On that day living water will flow out from Jerusalem, half to the eastern sea and half to the western sea, in summer and in winter.

Zec 14:9 The LORD will be king over the whole earth. On that day there will be one LORD, and his name the only name.

4. These millennial streams only anticipate, the future river which is in the new Jerusalem.

5. The river of our verse one speaks of the power, purity, and eternal life manifest in the heavenly city. This river corresponds in part to our present experience of living our very own spiritual life as we use our spiritual assets.

6. Seated on the throne is both God and the Lamb; this confirms that Christ is still on the throne in eternity future though His rule is of a different character than His mediatorial rule today.

7. Before we move to verse two and a description of the tree of life, I want to give you an expanded translation of Rev 22:1.

Expanded Translation

Rev 22:1 Then the seventh angel showed me the river of the water of life, its waters were as clear as crystal flowing from the Throne of God where both the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ reside.

KJV

Rev 22:2 In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

NIV

Rev 22:2 down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

1. Rev 22:2 has caused some difficulty to several expositors. The verse declares that the tree of life straddles the river of the waters of life.

2. The street mentioned is clearly the main street of the city; given the syntax i.e. the feminine gender (Greek *aites*) translated "it" in the KJV; we have a reference to the city mentioned in Rev 21:23.

Rev 21:23 The eternal New Jerusalem does not need the light of the sun or the moon for the glory of God, the Lord Jesus Christ gave it its light; the Lamb of God was its perpetual lamp.

3. The visual picture presented is of the river of life flowing through the middle of the city, and the tree is large enough to span the river, so that the river is in the midst of the street and the tree spans both sides of the river.

4. It would appear that the pure river of the water of life is not a broad body but a clear stream sufficiently narrow to allow for what is described.

5. Swete writes in his book *The Apocalypse of St. John* "The picture presented is that of a river of the water of life flowing through the broad street which intersects the city, a row of trees on each side."

6. Swete interprets the word tree as a collective reference and finds a millennial parallel in Eze 47:12.

Eze 47:12 And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall bring forth new fruit according to his months, because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary: and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine.

7. The tree of life has several characteristics similar to the tree of life found in the Garden of Eden (Gen 3:22-24).

Gen 3:22 And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever:

Gen 3:23 Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken.

Gen 3:24 So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.

8. Walvoord writes concerning Gen 3:22 and our passage.

"Its character is revealed in Gen 3:22 as being such that if Adam and Eve had eaten of the tree of life, physical death would have been an impossibility. The tree in the new Jerusalem seems to have a similar quality and a similar intent ..."

9. Many have asked the natural question, "Why should healing be necessary in eternity to come?"

10. The word for "healing" is a translation from the Greek word Therapeuo, from which the English word therapeutic is derived, it is almost a direct transliteration from the Greek.

11. Rather than specifically meaning "healing," it should be understood as "health-giving," as the word in its root meaning has the idea of serving or ministering.

12. The leaves of the tree promote the enjoyment of life in the New Jerusalem, and are not for correcting ills which do not exist.

13. This would seem to be demanded by the fact that there is no more curse as indicated in verse three.

Rev 22:3 No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him.

14. Erich Sauer interprets the healing of the nations as referring to full deliverance from the ills of life which characterized their condition before eternity began and not a reference to illness. Let's review several related passages:

Rev 22:2 down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

Gen 2:9 And the LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground--trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food. In the middle of the garden were the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Rev 2:7 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God.

End Lesson Taught 4-3-2003

Revelation

Lesson 164

4-9-2003

1. Tonight we will continue our analysis of the book of the Revelation.
2. Last week I completed a study of Revelation chapter 21 and the first verse of Revelation chapter 22. When time expired I was about to give you several summary points relating to verse twenty-two.
3. Before resuming that study I want to give you an expanded translation of Rev 22:1.

Rev 22:1 Then the seventh angel showed me the river of the water of life, its waters were as clear as crystal flowing from the Throne of God where both the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ reside.

4. First I want to review Rev 22:2 in the KJV and the NIV.

KJV

Rev 22:2 In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

NIV

Rev 22:2 down the middle of the great street of the city. On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations.

5. In summary:

5.1 Its leaves are for the "healing of the nations," which again indicates blessing of some sort. Since there is no more curse (verse 3), what is meant by healing the nations?

5.2 Thieme in his Revelation Series believes the tree has therapeutic properties to sustain health in the same way as the tree of life did in the garden.

5.3 The word "healing" (therapeuo) also has the meaning of "caring for."

5.4 Thus, the phrase may well mean that the leaves of the tree enhance the quality of life in a positive way, not that they heal illnesses; for there will be no illnesses when there is no longer any curse.

5.5 Therapeuo can be found twice where it is translated home or household, a place of comfort. Mat 24:45 and Luk 12:42.

Mat 24:45 Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household, to give them meat in due season?

KJV

Luk 12:42 And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season?

NIV

Luk 12:42 The Lord answered, "Who then is the faithful and wise manager, whom the master puts in charge of his servants to give them their food allowance at the proper time.

5.6 The nations as Walvoord has translated is better rendered peoples and the tree itself which spans the river will provide not medicinal therapy but a special unique enhancing of our quality of life.

5.7 Paradise excludes the curse (verse 3) and all darkness (verse 5). Paradise includes the privilege of serving God and the Lamb (v. 3), of seeing His face, and of having His name on our foreheads - a proof of complete devotion to God's service.

Rev 22:3 No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him.

Rev 22:4 They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads.

Rev 22:5 There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever.

5.8 The word for "serve" is *latreuo*, a priestly service. Paradise is not only the absence of evil but the privilege of serving God in His presence forever. We will reign and serve with Him forever.

5.9 We will glorify, praise and honor Him while also rejoicing in our new status.

5.10 The word nations is to be translated "Gentiles" as in Rev 21:24 and 21:26, or possibly more generally "peoples."

5.11 The intimation of this passage is that while it is not necessary for believers in the eternal state to sustain life in any way by physical means, they can enjoy that which the tree provides.

6. Now let's take a look at an expanded translation of Rev 22:2:

Expanded Translation

Rev 22:2 The river ran down the middle of the city's main street. On each side of the river grew the trees of life, the trees bore twelve delicious varieties of food, one for each month. The leaves of the trees when eaten provided a renewed appreciation for life in the New Jerusalem.

7. Now let's see what else we can learn from verses three and four.

KJV

Rev 22:3 And there shall be no more curse: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and his servants shall serve him:

Rev 22:4 And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads.

NIV

Rev 22:3 No longer will there be any curse. The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him.

Rev 22:4 They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads.

1. To emphasize the blessedness of the new situation, verse three states that there is no more curse. The curse has not only plagued us but all of nature.

Rom 8:18 I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us.

Rom 8:19 The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed.

Rom 8:20 For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope

Rom 8:21 that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God.

Rom 8:22 We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.

2. In the millennial scene, there is a lifting of the curse upon the earth, but not a total deliverance from the world's travail brought in by sin, for in the millennium, it is still possible for a "sinner" to be "accursed" (Isa 65:20) with resulting physical death.

Isa 65:20 There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days: for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shall be accursed.

2.1 Keep in mind there will also be capital punishment for certain ones in the Millennium before they can seriously and adversely affect perfect environment.

Isa 11:4 but with righteousness he will judge the needy, with justice he will give decisions for the poor of the earth. He will strike the earth with the rod of his mouth; with the breath of his lips he will slay the wicked.

Isa 11:5 Righteousness will be his belt and faithfulness the sash around his waist.

Isa 11:6 The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them.

Isa 11:7 The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox.

Isa 11:8 The infant will play near the hole of the cobra, and the young child put his hand into the viper's nest.

3. In the new heaven and the new earth, there will be no curse and no possibility or need for divine punishment.

4. This broad statement is justified by the fact that the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in the New Jerusalem, and His servants will give themselves to serve Him unceasingly.

5. Walvoord writes: "Who would want to be perpetuated in eternal idleness and uselessness? Even if the new Jerusalem were viewed here in its millennial state, those who are in the new Jerusalem are either resurrected or translated saints; and if it is fitting for them to be servants it is also fitting that they can be servants in eternity. This is a picture of blessedness in service rather than of arduous toil."

6. The blessedness of the servant's state is further declared in verse four where we find "they shall see his face." Immediate access to the glory of God will characterize the saints in the eternal state.

7. Further, His name is declared to be on their foreheads indicating that they belong to Him (compare Rev 7:3; 14:1; 2:17 and 3:12 for related passages).

Rev 7:3 "Do not harm the land or the sea or the trees until we put a seal on the foreheads of the servants of our God."

Rev 14:1 Then I looked, and there before me was the Lamb, standing on Mount Zion, and with him 144,000 who had his name and his Father's name written on their foreheads.

Rev 2:17 He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes, I will give some of the hidden manna. I will also give him a white stone with a new name written on it, known only to him who receives it.

Rev 3:12 Him who overcomes I will make a pillar in the temple of my God. Never again will he leave it. I will write on him the name of my God and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which is coming down out of heaven from my God; and I will also write on him my new name.

8. The fact that we shall see His face demonstrates beyond question that these are glorified saints (1Jo 3:2).

1Jo 3:2 Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is.

9. Now let's see how verses twenty-three and twenty-four look by way of expanded translation.

Expanded Translation

Rev 22:3 There will no longer be a curse on planet earth. The throne of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ will be evident in the city, and all of the citizens of the New Jerusalem will serve Them.

Rev 22:4 No longer will we have to transform the mind to know Him, each of us will see Him, His presence will pervade the entire city.

10. Now let's see what we can learn from verse five.

KJV

Rev 22:5 And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.

NIV

Rev 22:5 There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever.

1. Once again in verse five John repeats the fact that there will be no night in our city and no need of a candle, that is, a lamp, nor the light of the sun, for God is the light of the city.

2. Those who are His servants have the blessed privilege of reigning forever. The eternal character of our reign as servants is another indication that this is the eternal state.

3. The concept that the reign of Christ must cease at the millennium, based on 1Co 15:24-25, is a misunderstanding. It is the character of His reign that changes.

1Co 15:24 Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.
1Co 15:25 For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.

4. Christ continues for all eternity as King of kings and Lord of lords, even as in the scene of His mediatorial and millennial rule, so also shall it be in the new heaven and the new earth.

5. There is no contradiction, therefore, in calling us servants and at the same time recognizing us as those who will reign with Him.

6. So much for a description of our ultimate eternal home. Now let me provide an expanded translation of Rev 22:5.

Expanded Translation

Rev 22:5 In the New Jerusalem I could see there was no more need for light bodies. The citizens of the city will not need that kind of light, for the Lord Himself will provide abundant light. And we as believers will reign there forever.

7. And now for THE CERTAINTY OF THE BLESSED HOPE (Rev 22:6-7)

KJV

Rev 22:6 And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done.

Rev 22:7 Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.

NIV

Rev 22:6 The angel said to me, "These words are trustworthy and true. The Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent his angel to show his servants the things that must soon take place."

Rev 22:7 "Behold, I am coming soon! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy in this book."

1. In reinforcement of the wonderful revelation given, the angel now states to John, "These sayings are faithful and true."

2. The comment of A. T. Pierson as cited with variations by Smith, in summary of the wonderful blessing of verses 3-5, brings out clearly the marvelous and comprehensive character of the gracious divine provision for us as saints:

"And there shall be no more curse perfect restoration. But the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it perfect administration. His servants shall serve him perfect subordination. And they shall see his face perfect transformation. And his name shall be in their foreheads perfect identification. And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord giveth them light perfect illumination. And they shall reign forever and ever perfect exultation."

3. Wilbur M. Smith summarizes the state of blessedness in the holy city in these words.

"All the glorious purposes of God, ordained from the foundation of the world, have now been attained. The rebellion of angels and mankind is all and finally subdued, as the King of kings assumes his rightful sovereignty. Absolute and unchangeable holiness characterizes all within the universal Kingdom of God. The redeemed, made so by the blood of the Lamb, are in resurrection and eternal glory.

"Life is everywhere - and death will never again invade. The earth and heavens both are renewed. Light, beauty, holiness, joy, the presence of God, the worship of god, service to Christ, likeness to Christ - all are now abiding realities. The vocabulary of man, made for life here, is incapable of truly and adequately depicting what God has prepared for those that love Him."

4. The angel goes on to remind John, in words similar to Rev 1:1, that the God of the holy prophets has sent His angel to show His servants through the Apostle John the events which will shortly occur.

Rev 1:1 The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants what must soon take place. He made it known by sending his angel to his servant John,

5. The descriptive phrase "shortly be done" found in Rev 22:6 is literally translated "what it is necessary to do quickly." Here in Rev 22:6 the noun is used. In Rev 22:7, the adverb of the same root is translated "quickly."

Rev 22:6 The angel said to me, "These words are trustworthy and true. The Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent his angel to show his servants the things that must soon take place."

Rev 22:7 "Behold, I am coming soon! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy in this book."

6. The thought seems to be that when the action comes, it will be sudden. Also it is to be regarded as impending as if it is meant to be fulfilled at any time. In either case, it constitutes a message of warning that those who believe should be alert.

7. From the standpoint of the divine program, the events of the age were impending even at the time John wrote this message though some of them were thousands of years future.

8. In verse 7 the wonderful hope of the coming of Christ, especially as it relates to the believer in the present age, is stated:

"Behold, I come quickly." Here John seems to be referring to Christ's coming for the church rather than His second coming to the earth, though both are in the larger context in view."

10. The blessing of God is especially pronounced on the one who keeps the sayings of the prophecies of this book, a special promise repeated from Revelation 1:3, where also the note of immanency is emphasized in the expression "for the time is at hand."

Rev 1:3 Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.

11. This verse contains the sixth of the seven beatitudes found in the book of The Revelation. How ironical it is that this final book of the Bible, more neglected and misinterpreted than any other book, should carry these special notes of promised blessing to those who properly regard its promises and divine revelation.

12. Basically, the reason is not that this book contains more or varied revelations but rather that this book above all others honors and exalts the Lord Jesus Christ.

13. Now let's see how verses six and seven appear in expanded translation.

Expanded Translation

Rev 22:6 The seventh angel said to me, "The words and pictures provided to you are trustworthy and true. The Lord, the God of the angels and the prophets, sent his angel Gabriel to show you and those coming after you things which will one day come to pass. Once the eschatological events begin, the events will occur in rapid fire succession; Rev 22:7 therefore be alert, for events will occur quickly! Blessed are all of those who perpetuate the words found in this Book of The Revelation."

14. Now let's see what we can learn from verses eight and nine.

KJV

Rev 22:8 And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things.

Rev 22:9 Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God.

NIV

Rev 22:8 I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I had heard and seen them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who had been showing them to me.

Rev 22:9 But he said to me, "Do not do it! I am a fellow servant with you and with your brothers the prophets and of all who keep the words of this book. Worship God!"

Principles:

1. The tremendous impression given to John by these transcending revelations finally overwhelms him, and he records, "And I John saw these things, and heard them.

1.1 John writes, "I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which showed me these things."

2. John's response is natural, but he is rebuked by the angel who informs him, as he did on previous occasions, that he is John's fellow servant. (compare Rev 19:10).

Rev 19:10 At this I fell at his feet to worship him. But he said to me, "Do not do it! I am a fellow servant with you and with your brothers who hold to the testimony of Jesus. Worship God! For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

3. It should be noted here as in Rev 19:10 the one speaking, though an angel, is declared to be a fellow servant and related to human servants of the Lord.

3.1 The angel's command is direct and to the point: "Worship God" (aorist imperative); in all acts of worship, worship God only.

4. Angels are there to serve as are we; they are said to be ministering spirits.

Heb 1:13 But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool?

Heb 1:14 Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

5. Before we move to the angel's command to prophecy, I want to give you an expanded translation of Rev 22:8-9:

Expanded Translation

Rev 22:8 I, John, was overwhelmed that I had been selected to hear and see these amazing things. I was so amazed that I fell down to worship the seventh angel who had been showing me the things to come.

Rev 22:9 I was promptly rebuked, "Do not do that! I, like you, am a ministering spirit to you and your brothers, the prophets, and of all who keep the words of this book, You, like them, must Worship God!"

6. The command to proclaim the prophecy to all who will listen.

KJV

Rev 22:10 And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand.

Rev 22:11 He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.

NIV

Rev 22:10 Then he told me, "Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, because the time is near.

Rev 22:11 Let him who does wrong continue to do wrong; let him who is vile continue to be vile; let him who does right continue to do right; and let him who is holy continue to be holy."

Principles:

1. Since there is blessing for the one who keeps the sayings of the prophecies given Rev 22:7, John is commanded not to seal the sayings of the prophecies but rather to proclaim them.

Rev 22:7 "Behold, I am coming soon! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy in this book."

2. The justification for this urgent command is that the time is at hand. The word for "seal" (Greek sphragises) is in the aorist subjunctive with the Greek adverb me, the negative, meaning "do not seal" or "do not begin to seal" the prophecy.

3. John is especially commanded not to seal-up the sayings of the prophecy of this book because the time (from the Greek word Kairos, or proper season), is at hand from the Greek engus, meaning near.

4. The time period in which the tremendous consummation of the ages is to take place, according to John's instruction, will happen quickly after it starts.

4.1 The indeterminate period assigned to the church is the last dispensation before end-time events and, in John's day as in ours, the end is always impending because of the imminent return of Christ at the rapture with the ordered sequence of events to follow.

5. In view of this, in verse 11 a seemingly strange command is given which has proved to be an enigma to some, namely, that John states, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still."

Rev 22:11 Let him who does wrong continue to do wrong; let him who is vile continue to be vile; let him who does right continue to do right; and let him who is holy continue to be holy."

5.1 In effect, he advocates a status quo for both the wicked and the righteous. By this I do not think he means men should remain unmoved by the prophecies of this book, but rather that if the prophecies are rejected, there is no other message that will work.

5.2 If the warnings of the book are not sufficient, there is no more that God can say. The wicked must continue in their wicked way to be judged by the Lord when He comes.

6. The same rule, however, applies to the righteous. Their reaction to the prophecy, of course, will be different, but the exhortation in their case is to continue in righteousness and holiness.

7. It is an either/or proposition with no neutrality possible. There is a sense also in which present choices fix character; a time is coming when change will be impossible.

8. Present choices will become permanent in character.

9. Before we move to verse twelve I want to give you an expanded translation of verses ten and eleven.

Expanded Translation:

Rev 22:10 The seventh angel then said, "Do not seal up the words of this book. Why? Because the time is in fact near.

Rev 22:11 In fact let the unbeliever who has rejected God's protocol keep on doing wrong; the vile should continue to be vile. But as for the believer positive to the word, they should continue following God's protocol; so let those who are holy continue to be holy."

10. Now let's see what we can learn from verse twelve where we find the Lord Jesus speaking.

KJV

Rev 22:12 And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.

NIV

Rev 22:12 "Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done.

Principles

1. The second announcement alerting the reader concerning the coming of the Lord is found in verse 12 (also compare Rev 22:7) again introduced by the word behold and the same expression, "I come quickly," with the verb in the present tense indicating a futuristic but impending action.

Rev 22:12 "Behold, I am coming soon ..."

Rev 22:7 "Behold, I am coming soon! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy in this book."

2. Added here, but not in verse 7, is the promise that the Lord is bringing His reward when He comes, that is, that believers will be rewarded at that time. This verse has in view the judgment seat of Christ as it relates to the Christian (2Co 5:10 and 1Co 3:11-15).

2Co 5:10 For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

1Co 3:11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

1Co 3:12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble;

1Co 3:13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is.

1Co 3:14 If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.

1Co 3:15 If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.

3. The same standard is established for reward here in verse twelve as in Second Corinthians, namely, that of works.

Rev 22:12 "Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done.

4. It is noteworthy that all final judgments relate to works whether they are in connection with Christians who are being rewarded or the unsaved who are being punished.

Rev 20:11 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

Rev 20:12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

End Lesson Taught 4-9-2003

Revelation

Lesson 165

4-16-2003

1. Tonight we will continue and perhaps complete our analysis of the book of the Revelation.

2. Last week I taught Rev 22:2-11 and when time expired I was about to complete an analysis of Rev 22:12.

3. Before resuming that study I want to give you an expanded translation of Rev 22:1-11.

Rev 22:1 Then the seventh angel showed me the river of the water of life, its waters were as clear as crystal flowing from the Throne of God where both the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ reside.

Rev 22:2 The river ran down the middle of the city's main street. On each side of the river grew the trees of life, the trees bore twelve delicious varieties of food, one for each month. The leaves of the trees when eaten provided a renewed appreciation for life in the New Jerusalem.

Rev 22:3 There will no longer be a curse on planet earth. The throne of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ will be evident in the city, and all of the citizens of the New Jerusalem will serve them.

Rev 22:4 No longer will we have to transform the mind to know Him, each of us will see Him, His presence will pervade the entire city.

Rev 22:5 In the New Jerusalem I could see there was no more need for light bodies. The citizens of the city will not need that kind of light, for the Lord Himself will provide abundant light. And we as believers will reign there forever.

Rev 22:6 The seventh angel said to me, "The words and pictures provided to you are trustworthy and true. The Lord, the God of the angels and the prophets, sent his angel Gabriel to show you and those coming after you things which will one day come to pass. Once the eschatological events begin, the events will occur in rapid fire succession;

Rev 22:7 therefore be alert, for events will occur quickly! Blessed are all of those who perpetuate the words found in this Book of The Revelation."

Rev 22:8 I, John, was overwhelmed that I had been selected to hear and see these amazing things. I was so amazed that I fell down to worship the seventh angel who had been showing me the things to come.

Rev 22:9 I was promptly rebuked, "Do not do that! I, like you, am a ministering spirit to you and your brothers, the prophets, and of all who keep the words of this book, You, like them, must Worship God!"

Rev 22:10 The seventh angel then said, "Do not seal up the words of this book. Why? Because the time is in fact near.

Rev 22:11 In fact let the unbeliever who has rejected God's protocol keep on doing wrong; the vile should continue to be vile. But as for the believer positive to the word, they should continue following God's protocol; so let those who are holy continue to be holy."

4. Now let's review some of that learned in our study of verse twelve and then we will begin with new material and an analysis of Rev 22:13-16.

KJV

Rev 22:12 And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.

NIV

Rev 22:12 "Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done.

Principles:

1. The second announcement alerting the reader concerning the coming of the Lord is found in verse 12 (also compare Rev 22:7) again introduced by the word behold and the same expression, "I come quickly," with the verb in the present tense indicating a futuristic but impending action. In the Greek this is called a futuristic present.

Rev 22:12 "Behold, I am coming soon ..."

Rev 22:7 "Behold, I am coming soon! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy in this book."

2. Added here, but not in verse 7, is the promise that the Lord is bringing His reward when He comes, that is, that believers will be rewarded at that time. This verse has in view the judgment seat of Christ as it relates to the Christian (2Cor 5:10; 3:11-15).

3. The same standard is established for reward here in verse twelve as in Second Corinthians, namely, that of works.

4. It is noteworthy that all final judgments relate to works whether they are in connection with Christians who are being rewarded or the unsaved who are being punished.

5. God, the righteous judge, will deal with all men's works in the proper time and order.

6. Before we look at Rev 22:13-16, I want to give you an expanded translation of Rev 22:12:

Expanded Translation

Rev 22:12 "Now listen up and pay attention, I am coming soon! I am bringing My rewards with me to be given to those who have produced divine good in time; production which survives the fiery judgment of the Bema shall receive eternal rewards.

7. Now let's see what we can learn from verses thirteen, fourteen, fifteen and sixteen as the Lord continues His discourse.

KJV

Rev 22:13 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.

Rev 22:14 Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.

Rev 22:15 For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.

Rev 22:16 I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.

NIV

Rev 22:13 I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.

Rev 22:14 "Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city.

Rev 22:15 Outside are the dogs, those who practice magic arts, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idolaters and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.

Rev 22:16 "I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this testimony for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright Morning Star."

Principles:

1. Though the means of earlier communication was the angel, it is Christ who is speaking here; as in Rev 22:7 and 12, the first person pronoun is used.

Rev 22:7 Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.

Rev 22:12 And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.

2. Christ again repeats that He is the Alpha and Omega (the first and last letters of the Greek alphabet) which means the beginning and the end, the first and the last.

3. For various combinations of these phrases, see Rev 1:8, 11, 17; 2:8 and 21:6.

Rev 1:8 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

Rev 1:11 Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.

Rev 1:17 And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last:

To the Church in Smyrna

Rev 2:8 And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write; These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive;

Rev 21:6 And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

Rev 21:7 He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

4. When the One who exists from all eternity states, "Behold, I come quickly," it means that from the divine point of view, end-time events are impending.

5. The three pairs of titles given in Rev 22:13 all communicate the same truth, Christ is the beginning and source of all things as well as the goal and consummation of all, in a word, the eternal God.

Rev 22:12 And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.

Rev 22:13 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.

Rev 22:14 Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.

6. Here is the seventh and last beatitude of the book of the Revelation. (For previous beatitudes see Rev 1:3; 14:13; 16:15; 19:9; 20:6 and 22:7.)

Rev 1:3 Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near.

Rev 14:13 Then I heard a voice from heaven say, "Write: Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Yes," says the Spirit, "they will rest from their labor, for their deeds will follow them."

Rev 16:15 "Behold, I come like a thief! Blessed is he who stays awake and keeps his clothes with him, so that he may not go naked and be shamefully exposed."

Rev 19:9 Then the angel said to me, "Write: 'Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!'" And he added, "These are the true words of God."

Rev 20:6 Blessed and holy are those who have part in the first resurrection. The second death has no power over them, but they will be priests of God and of Christ and will reign with him for a thousand years.

Rev 22:7 "Behold, I am coming soon! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy in this book."

7. The final beatitude is obscured by a debate concerning the text, several manuscripts differ from the KJV for they read "that do his commandments" instead of "that wash their robes."

8. "Good authorities can be cited for both readings" writes Walvoord. "Walter Scott much prefers the reading for verse 14 'Blessed are they that wash their robes,' rather than Blessed are they that do his commandments.' Scott observes, 'Every critical scholar of note rejects the reading in our English Bibles. Obedience to commandments is not the ground on which eternal life is bestowed. It is God's gift to all who believe.'" (Joh 5: 24)

Joh 5:24 "I tell you the truth, whoever hears my word and believes him who sent me has eternal life and will not be condemned; he has crossed over from death to life.

9. In either reading, the reference is to those who qualify for entrance, and the resultant meaning is much the same.

9.1 In one case, attention is being directed to the keeping of the commandments, which is commanded and hopefully characteristic of believers, and in the other case to their cleansing by the blood of Christ with its emphasis upon the grace of God.

10. On the basis of both facts, believers have access to the tree of life and the right to enter through the gates of the city.

11. Walvoord writes, "This is hardly sufficient, however, to determine the textual reading; scholars will continue to differ. The right to the tree of life and the right to enter through the gates of the city are one and the same as the right to eternal salvation."

12. By contrast, unbelievers are characterized as being excluded and are described as "dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie."

12.1 This is the third description of unsaved people in this general passage. (compare Rev 21:8 and 27)

Rev 21:8 But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practice magic arts, the idolaters and all liars-- their place will be in the fiery lake of burning sulfur. This is the second death."

Rev 21:27 Nothing impure will ever enter it, nor will anyone who does what is shameful or deceitful, but only those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

13. The main emphasis in each is on the deceitfulness and lying of those who are unsaved. The reference to dogs refers not to the animal but to men of low character. (compare Phi 3:2)

Phi 3:2 Watch out for those dogs, those men who do evil, those mutilators of the flesh.

14. As in the former description of the unsaved, the issue is not that they have at some time committed sins of this character but rather that these are the settled characteristics of their lives from which they were potentially delivered, through and by means of the grace of God.

15. In verse sixteen the term "I Jesus" is used. Joseph A. Seiss in his book *The Apocalypse* writes of the phrase "I Jesus":

"Thus the very God of all inspiration, and of all inspired men, reiterates and affirms the highest authority for all that is herein written. Either, then, this Book is nothing but a base and blasphemous forgery, unworthy of the slightest respect of men, and specially unworthy of a place in the Sacred Canon; or it is one of the most directly inspired and authoritative writings ever given."

Rev 22:16 "I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this testimony for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright Morning Star."

16. As you can see He calls Himself "the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright Morning Star."

17. Christ is also called "the root and offspring of David" in Isa 11:1 and "the bright and morning star" in Num 24:17 and Rev 2:28.

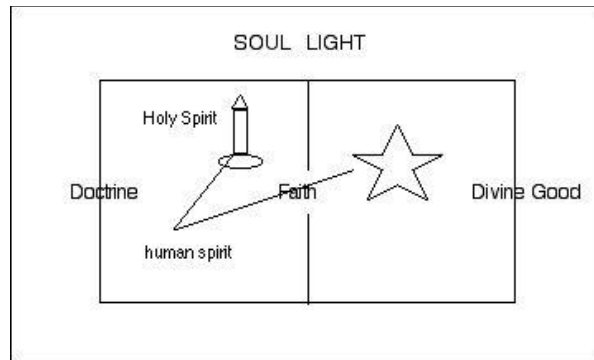
Isa 11:1 And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots:

Num 24:17 I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth.

To the Church in Thyatira

Rev 2:28 And I will give him the morning star.

18. Christ, as the morning star, heralds the coming day in His role as the One who comes for the church at the rapture.



19. It is, of course, also true that His coming precedes the millennial kingdom. The reference to the churches of Asia is also significant. Wilbur Smith points out, "This is the first time the word church (ekklesia) has occurred since the letters to the seven churches."

Rev 22:16 "I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this testimony for the churches ..."



20. Seiss observes how similar the conclusion of the book is to the beginning:

"Its derivation from God, the signifying of it by the angel, the seeing, hearing, and writing of it by John, the blessing upon those who give due attention to it, the nearness of the time for fulfillment of what is described, the solemn authentication from Christ, the titles by which he describes himself, and even the personal expressions of John, recur in the Epilogue, almost the same as in the Prologue."

21. Before we move to the invitation, I want to give you an expanded translation of Rev 22:13-16.

Expanded Translation

Rev 22:13 "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.

Rev 22:14 Blessed and happy are those who by faith alone in Christ alone have washed their robes, and thus may eat from the tree of life and enter into the city.

Rev 22:15 Outside the city are the dogs, those who practice the occult, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idolaters and everyone who loves and practices lies and deceit.

Rev 22:16 I, Jesus, have sent my angel Gabriel to give you this testimony for the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright Morning Star."

22. And now for the "THE INVITATION OF THE SPIRIT AND THE BRIDE."

KJV

Rev 22:17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

NIV

Rev 22:17 The Spirit and the bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!" Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life.

1. As the Book of The Revelation comes toward its close, a special invitation is given by the Spirit and the bride.

2. This refers to the Holy Spirit and the church. John is now reverting to the relevance and practical meaning of his prophecy for the age of which he is a part.

3. In the light of the prophetic word, the invitation to all is given: "Come." The threefold invitation is then enforced, addressed first to the one that hears, then to the one who is thirsty, then to anyone who will.

4. For all willing to accept the invitation, there is an offer of the water of life without cost. A similar invitation is extended in Isaiah 55:1.

Isa 55:1 "Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost.

5. The invitation to come is an urgent command, for the day will arrive when it is too late to come. Now is the day of grace. The hour of judgment is impending.

6. Before moving to Rev 22:18-20 I want to give you an expanded translation of verse seventeen.

Expanded Translation

Rev 22:17 The Holy Spirit and the Raptured Church say, "Come!" Let him who hears say, "Come!" All who are thirsty, let those who are ready come and take the free gift of salvation - the water of life.

7. Now let's see what we can learn from verses eighteen, nineteen and twenty.

KJV

Rev 22:18 For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:

Rev 22:19 And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

Rev 22:20 He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

NIV

Rev 22:18 I warn everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to him the plagues described in this book.

Rev 22:19 And if anyone takes words away from this book of prophecy, God will take away from him his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.

Rev 22:20 He who testifies to these things says, "Yes, I am coming soon." Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

1. The urgency of the final command is supported by the solemn testimony of Christ Himself in verse eighteen concerning the sacred character of the prophecy which has been given.

Rev 22:18 I, Christ warn ... If anyone adds anything to the words of this Book of The Revelation, God will add to him the plagues described in this book.

2. A warning is extended if any man add to these things, God will inflict upon him the plagues in the book, and if any man take away from the prophecy of the book, God will take away his part out of the book of life and the wonderful promises in this book.

2.1 This warning certainly to include the right to enter the New Jerusalem.

3. Though frequently in the Bible there are other warnings against tampering with the Word of God, this is among the most solemn. (compare Deu 4:2; 12:32; Pro 30:6 and Rev 1:3)

Deu 4:2 Do not add to what I command you and do not subtract from it, but keep the commands of the LORD your God that I give you.

Deu 12:32 See that you do all I command you; do not add to it or take away from it.

Pro 30:6 Do not add to his words, or he will rebuke you and prove you a liar.

Rev 1:3 Blessed is the one who reads the words of this prophecy, and blessed are those who hear it and take to heart what is written in it, because the time is near.

4. No one can dare add to the Word of God except in blatant unbelief and denial that the Word is indeed God's own message to man.

5. Likewise, no one should dare take away from the words of the Book, since to do so is to deny the inspiration of the Word of God.

6. What a solemn warning this is to critics who have tampered with this book and other portions of Scripture in arrogant self-confidence.

7. They assume that they are equipped intellectually and spiritually to determine what is true and what is not true in the Word of God.

8. Though not stated in detail, the point of these two verses is that a child of God who reveres Him will recognize at once that this is the Word of God.

9. To use these verses, however, as a proof that a child of God once saved and born into the family of God can lose his salvation is, of course, applying this passage out of context.

10. This passage assumes that a child of God will not tamper with these scriptures. It is the contrast of unbelief, the blinded, fallen intellect of man in contrast to the enlightened Spirit-taught believer.

11. Although the true child of God may not comprehend the meaning of the entire book of the Revelation, he will recognize in it a declaration of his hope and that which has been assured to him in grace by his salvation in Christ.

12. Our positional perfection is a direct result of our acceptance of the promise found in the book of the Revelation: reward and victory in eternity future because of faith alone in Christ alone.

13. Unbelievers don't believe in the reward and victory that comes from those who exercise faith alone in Christ alone therefore effectively they are taking away the great theme of the book of the Revelation - and thus are the recipients of the curse of damnation.

14. The final testimony of the book is yet another repetition of the promise of Christ's soon return: "Surely I come quickly."

15. In contrast to the other announcement in this chapter (verses 7 and 12) this announcement adds the word surely (Greek, nai) a particle used to enforce an affirmation. It is followed by the word amen (Greek amen) often translated "verily."

16. When the One who exists from all eternity states, "Behold, I come quickly," it means that from the divine point of view, end-time events are impending.

Rev 22:7 "Behold, I am coming soon! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy in this book."

Rev 22:12 And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.

17. The announcement "I come quickly" in Rev 22:20 is therefore buttressed before and after by words used to emphasize the certainty of it.

18. With the word amen, however, John begins his own prayer response to this announcement: "Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

19. Though the Book of The Revelation concerns itself with a broad expanse of God's dealing with men in the Tribulation, the Millennium, and the eternal state, for John the important event is the coming of the Lord for him at the rapture of the church.

20. For this his heart longs, not only because he has been exiled on the bleak Island of Patmos but because of the glorious prospect which his eyes have beheld and his ears have now heard.

21. Seiss in his book *The Apocalypse* writes of a young lady waiting for her lover to return:

"Fiction has painted the picture of a maiden whose lover left her for a voyage to the Holy Land, promising on his return to make her his beloved bride. Many told her that she would never see him again.

“But she believed his word, and evening by evening she went down to the lonely shore, and kindled there a beacon-light in sight of the roaring waves, to hail and welcome the returning ship which was to bring again her betrothed. And by that watch fire she took her stand each night, praying to the winds to hasten on the sluggish sails, that he who was everything to her might come. Even so that blessed Lord, who has loved us unto death, has gone away to the mysterious Holy Land of heaven, promising on his return to make us his happy and eternal Bride. Some say that he has gone forever, and that we shall never see him. But his last word was, "Yea, I come quickly."

“And on the dark and misty beach sloping out into the eternal sea, each true believer stands by the love-lit fire, looking, and waiting, and praying and hoping for the fulfillment of his work, in nothing gladder than in his pledge and promise, and calling ever from the soul of sacred love, "EVEN' SO, COME, LORD JESUS." And some of these nights, while the world is busy with its gay frivolities, and laughing at the maiden on the shore, a form shall rise over the surging waves, as once on Galilee, to vindicate forever all this watching and devotion, and bring to the faithful and constant heart a joy, and glory, and triumph which nevermore shall end."

22. Before we look at the the BENEDICTION (Rev 22:21), I want to give you an expanded translation of Rev 22:18-20.

Expanded Translation

Rev 22:18 Let me warn those who have access to this Book of The Revelation. If anyone adds anything to the Revelation, God will place upon him the plagues described in the book.

Rev 22:19 Or if anyone takes away anything written in this book, God Himself will take away his share of the tree of life and his place in the New Jerusalem.

Rev 22:20 Jesus then announced, "Yes, I am coming soon. Amen." And I John responded "Come, Lord Jesus!"

23. Now let's close out our study of the book of the Revelation.

KJV

Rev 22:21 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

NIV

Rev 22:21 The grace of the Lord Jesus be with God's people. Amen.

1. As John closes this remarkable book of which he is the human author, he uses the phrase so familiar in Paul's epistles, a benediction that the grace of the Lord will be upon his readers.

2. The expression "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all" is probably rendered more accurately, according to the better manuscripts, "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with all the saints."

3. Nothing is clearer in the book of the Revelation than that God's blessing is on the saints but not on the wicked. Some manuscripts also omit the "Amen."
4. This final Book of the Scriptures which began with the revelation of Jesus Christ ends with a prayer that His grace might be with those who have witnessed the scene through John's pen.
5. Probably no book in the Bible presents a more stark contrast of the grace of God as seen in the lives and destinies of the saints as compared to the righteous judgment of God on the wicked.
6. In no other book are the issues made more specific. The book of the Revelation is the presentation in the Word of God as to what the saints will witness and experience in the glorious consummation of the ages.
7. With John we can pray, "Even so, come Lord Jesus."
8. Now for an expanded translation of our last verse - twenty-one.

Expanded Translation

Rev 22:21 The grace of the Lord Jesus, all God is free to do for you and for me on the basis of the cross, be with you now and forever more. Amen.

9. Let me close our study of chapter twenty-two by giving you an expanded translation of the entire chapter.

Rev 22:1 Then the seventh angel showed me the river of the water of life, its waters were as clear as crystal flowing from the Throne of God where both the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ reside.

Rev 22:2 The river ran down the middle of the city's main street. On each side of the river grew the trees of life, the trees bore twelve delicious varieties of food, one for each month. The leaves of the trees when eaten provided a renewed appreciation for life in the New Jerusalem.

Rev 22:3 There will no longer be a curse on planet earth. The throne of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ will be evident in the city, and all of the citizens of the New Jerusalem will serve Them.

Rev 22:4 No longer will we have to transform the mind to know Him, each of us will see Him, His presence will pervade the entire city.

Rev 22:5 In the New Jerusalem I could see there would be no more light. The citizens of the city will not need that light, for the Lord Himself will provide abundant light. And we as believers will reign there forever.

Rev 22:6 The seventh angel said to me, "The words and pictures provided to you are trustworthy and true. The Lord, the God of the angels and the prophets, sent his angel Gabriel to show you and those coming after you things which will one day come to pass. Once the eschatological events begin, the events will occur in rapid fire succession; Rev 22:7 therefore be alert, for events will occur quickly! Blessed are all of those who perpetuate the words found in this Book of The Revelation."

Rev 22:8 I, John, was overwhelmed that I had been selected to hear and see these amazing things. I was so amazed that I fell down to worship the seventh angel who had been showing me the things to come.

Rev 22:9 I was promptly rebuked, "Do not do that! I, like you, am a ministering spirit to you and your brothers, the prophets, and of all who keep the words of this book, You, like them, must Worship God!"

Rev 22:10 The seventh angel then said, "Do not seal up the words of this book. Why? Because the time is in fact near.

Rev 22:11 In fact let the unbeliever who has rejected God's protocol keep on doing wrong; the vile should continue to be vile. But as for the believer positive to the word, they should continue following God's protocol; so let those who are holy continue to be holy."

Rev 22:12 "Now listen up and pay attention for, I am coming soon! I am bringing My rewards with me to be given to those who have produced divine good in time; production which survives the fiery judgment of the Bema shall receive eternal rewards.

Rev 22:13 "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.

Rev 22:14 Blessed and happy are those who by faith alone in Christ alone have washed their robes, and thus may eat from the tree of life and enter into the city.

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