



Chapter 22

Verse 1- *And he showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb,*

a river of the water of life- This reminds us of Eden in Genesis 2:10:

“Now a river flowed out of Eden to water the garden; and from there it divided and became four rivers.”

In Genesis, the river flowed from Eden, but here it flows from the throne of God and the Lamb.

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Verse 1- *And he showed me a river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming from the throne of God and of the Lamb,*

clear as crystal- The ancient world had a problem with pure water. This is water of life. This picture is found in the Old Testament (*Ezek. 47:1-9, Zech. 14:8*) and this supports the *inclusio* (bookends) of what we see in Genesis.

This water is not just H₂O; It is representative of eternal life.

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Verse 2- *in the middle of its street. On either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.*

the middle of its street- Does this river of life runs somewhat like the canals of Venice?

either side of the river- Is this one great tree (singular here but plural in *Ezek. 47:7*) that blooms and grows on either side of the river, or is it more of an orchard of trees growing on either side? Probably a single tree.

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Verse 2- *in the middle of its street. On either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.*

yielding its fruit every month- There is no time in heaven (Rev. 10:6) and there is no moon to reckon time. The idea is that it will always be available to eat.

healing of the nations- Is there sickness in heaven? No, the picture is what they have left behind- no hunger or sickness in eternity. It is an idea of eternal health.

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Verse 3- *There will no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His bond-servants will serve Him;*

no longer be any curse- These ideas are connected. There is no hunger or sickness because the curse of sin (Gen. 3:16-19) has been removed (Zech. 14:11).

the Lamb will be in it, and His bond-servants- The followers of the Lamb will always be where He is to serve Him. When we arrive in heaven, our only interest will be the One who saved us.

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Verse 4- *they will see His face, and His name will be on their foreheads.*

on their foreheads- The high priest in the Old Testament wore a gold plate on his turban that read "Holy to the Lord (Exod. 28:36–38). In Revelation 3:12, Jesus promised, "I will write on him the name of My God." This shows ownership- we belong to God, just as those who took the mark of the beast wore it on their hands and foreheads.

The Holy Spirit seals us on the inside while here on earth (Ephesians 1:13), and God will seal us on the outside in heaven. It confirms that we belong to Him.

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Verse 5- *And there will no longer be any night; and they will not have need of the light of a lamp nor the light of the sun, because the Lord God will illuminate them; and they will reign forever and ever.*

no longer be any night- This is a repetition of Rev. 21:25 and a reversal of the creative order in Genesis 1:4-5:

"God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light 'day,' and the darkness He called 'night. And there was evening and there was morning, one day."

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Verse 6- *And he said to me, “These words are faithful and true”; and the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent His angel to show His bond-servants the things which must soon take place.*

These words are faithful and true- This is a repetition of Rev. 21:5 and 19:9. The angel is referring to all of what has been revealed to this point (the entire book).

soon take place- (tachei)- John uses this word four times in this chapter (vv. 6, 7, 12, 20) and seven times in the book (2:5, 16, 3:11, 22: 6, 7, 12, 20) to show our need to be ready when He returns. Time in relation to eternity is just a vapor (James 4:14).

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Verse 7- *“And behold, I am coming quickly. Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.”*

I am coming quickly- There is an evident sense of urgency in the message given to John. Almost as if he can't write it down fast enough.

Blessed is the one who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book- This is the sixth of seven beatitudes in Revelation. The seventh is in verse 14:

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#1. <u>Revelation 1:3</u>	<i>Blessed is anyone who reads the words of this prophecy, and blessed those who hear them, if they treasure the content, because the time is near.</i>
#2. <u>Revelation 14:13</u>	<i>Blessed are those who die in the Lord! Blessed indeed, the Spirit says; now they can rest forever after their work, since their good deeds go with them.</i>
#3. <u>Revelation 16:15</u>	<i>Blessed is anyone who has kept watch, and has kept his clothes on, so that he does not go out naked and expose his shame.</i>
#4. <u>Revelation 19:9</u>	<i>Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding feast of the Lamb.</i>
#5. <u>Revelation 20:6</u>	<i>Blessed and holy are those who share in the first resurrection; the second death has no power over them but they will be priests of God and of Christ and reign with Him for a thousand years.</i>
#6. <u>Revelation 22:7</u>	<i>I am coming soon! Blessed are those who keep the prophetic message of this book.</i>
#7. <u>Revelation 22:14</u>	<i>Blessed are those who will have washed their robes clean, so that they will have the right to feed on the tree of life and can come through the gates into the city.</i>

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Verse 8- *I, John, am the one who heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw them, I fell down to worship at the feet of the angel who showed me these things.*

am the one who heard and saw these things- The idea of “seeing and hearing” is the basis for a legal witness, as in 1 John 1:1-2: “*what we have heard, what we have seen with our eyes, ... we testify.*”

I fell down to worship- John is once again overcome. He falls down to worship (he did this before in 19:10) but is stopped again by the angel before he can do so.

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Verse 9- *And he said to me, “Do not do that; I am a fellow servant of yours and of your brothers the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God!”*

Do not do that;- Both John and the angel knew that only God was to be worshiped.

Commandment 1- “You shall have *no other gods before Me.*” Exodus 20:3

Commandment 2- You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath, or in the water under the earth. *You shall not worship them nor serve them; for I, the Lord your God,* am a jealous God, inflicting the punishment of the fathers on the children, on the third and the fourth generations of those who hate Me.” Exodus 20:4-5

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Verse 9- *And he said to me, “Do not do that; I am a fellow servant of yours and of your brothers the prophets, and of those who keep the words of this book. Worship God!”*

fellow servant of yours- Only one angel allowed himself to be worshipped (Lucifer), and he fell from heaven.

Worship God!- God is enough and is the sole Person of our worship. We need to be careful not to worship the things that lead us to worship, but only God.

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Verse 10- *And he said to me, “Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near.*

Do not seal up- This is the opposite of what Daniel was told to do (Daniel 12:4, 9) because it could not be fully understood until John’s time of writing. Within the context of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus, Daniel and John’s visions can be understood and should be revealed to the churches.

the time is near- This reminds us of the first beatitude of the book in 1:3- *“Blessed is anyone who reads the words of this prophecy, and blessed those who hear them, if they treasure the content, because the time is near.*

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Verse 11- *Let the one who does wrong still do wrong, and the one who is filthy still be filthy; and let the one who is righteous still practice righteousness, and the one who is holy still keep himself holy.”*

Let the one who does wrong still do wrong- This is not an encouragement to do wrong, but a statement that regardless of what people decide to do, God’s will and ways do not change. Those who are saved in life will be saved in death, and those who are lost in life will be lost in death.

“Yet knowing how way leads on to way...” The Road Not Taken (Robert Frost)

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Verse 12- *“Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to reward each one as his work deserves.”*

I am coming quickly- Again, “quickly” has more to do with *how* Jesus is coming back than *when* He is coming back. His return will be sudden and unpredictable.

Matthew 24:36- *But about that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone.*

to reward each one- Believers can anticipate rewards, but unbelievers will await punishment.

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Verse 13- *I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.”*

Alpha and the Omega- This is the fourth time Jesus has referred to Himself this way in the book (Revelation 1:8, 2:8, 21:6, 22:13). Twice at the beginning of the book and twice at the end. These three titles have appeared in the book, but this is the first time they are all together:

- The Alpha and the Omega (1:8; 21:6)
- The First and the Last (1:17; 2:8)
- The Beginning and the End (21:6)

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Verse 14- *Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they will have the right to the tree of life, and may enter the city by the gates.*

Blessed are those who wash their robes- This is the final of seven beatitudes in Revelation. This verse reminds us of 7:14:

*“I said to him, ‘My lord, you know.’ And he said to me, ‘These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and **they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.**”*

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Verse 14- *Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they will have the right to the tree of life, and may enter the city by the gates.*

wash their robes- Present tense- “keep washing” Not only have we been saved, we are being saved, and we will experience final and ultimate salvation. We need to keep our garment white by confessing sin and staying in right relationship with the Lord.

Salvation is not “fire insurance” to keep us out of the lake of fire (easy believe-ism). It is a continual commitment and dedication to serving the Lamb on the Throne until He perfects us and takes us to heaven.

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Verse 14- *Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they will have the right to the tree of life, and may enter the city by the gates.*

enter the city by the gates- Jesus' atoning work on the cross has given us the right to enter the city properly through its gates and to eat from the tree of life (possess eternal life). We don't sneak in, barge in, or demand to be allowed entry. It's only by what He has done that we have the right to the tree of life and entrance into the city.

Next week...

Chapter 22-
"The River and Tree of Life
and a Final Message"

