

The Spirit and the Bride say “Come” (Revelation 22)

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The Spirit and the Bride say “Come” (Revelation 22)

Chapter 22 continues with John’s vision of Heaven which was the primary subject of chapter 21. When the scripture was written, it was done so without the chapter and verse divisions we have today. According to history, the first English translation of the Bible to contain both chapter and verse divisions was the Geneva translation of the Bible published in 1560. For some reason unknown to this Bible student, a division was placed within John’s vision of Heaven. The first five verses of Revelation 22 complete John’s vision of Heaven, the home of the soul.

Revelation 22:1

“And he showed me a river of water of life, bright as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb”

This is still the angel mentioned in Revelation 21:9 who carried John to a high mountain to see the holy city Jerusalem. This vision is still of the same city. John is shown the water of life flowing like a river. There is plenty of it available and it is in continuous supply coming from the throne of God. All life comes from the throne of God. This is the source from where everything good comes.

Notice here that we again see the lamb occupying the throne of God. There is one throne mentioned here and this throne is the seat of God and the lamb. The Holy Spirit is a part of this throne by necessary inference even though He is not directly mentioned here. Once again we see an incredible unity of the Godhead displayed in this vision as we see God and Jesus pictured as ruling from one throne.

Revelation 22:2

“in the midst of the street thereof. And on this side of the river and on that was the tree of life, bearing twelve (manner of) fruits, yielding its fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.”

The tree of life is pictured here as being in three places. On this side of the river, in the midst and on the other side of the river. The number three is a symbol of the perfect divine. This tree of life, like the river coming from the throne is of divine origin.

This is a figure of the tree of life that was in the garden of Eden from which Adam and Eve were barred because of their transgression. In this part of the vision, John takes us all the way back to the beginning when mankind sinned and was separated from the tree of life (Genesis 3:22-24). When mankind was separated from the tree of life, he lost his physical immortality. If sin had never come into the world, death would not have come and mankind could have lived forever on earth.

Revelation 22:3

“And there shall be no curse any more: and the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be therein: and his servants shall serve him”

When Adam and Eve sinned, God placed a curse on mankind that has endured since that time and will continue to endure for as long as earth remains. Woman’s pain at childbirth was increased, and her husband would rule over her from that time on. We see this arrangement in the church today where men are to be the head of their wives who is to be in subjection to them (Ephesians 5:23). In heaven, this is not how it will be at all. Jesus taught that in the resurrection we will all have spiritual bodies like the angels and will never more be married nor given in marriage (Matthew 22:30-32, Luke 20:35-36). Eve sinned and a curse was placed on women (Genesis 3:16). In heaven, this curse is no more.

Adam received a curse too. Genesis 3:17-19, “And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in toil shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread.”

Man has to work for a living. Before man sinned God provided every need in a physical paradise. Man’s curse was that from henceforth he would work to provide the basic needs of himself and his family. In heaven, this curse will be no more. God will again provide all that is needed.

And then the final curse on all mankind was that they would die. Genesis 3:19, “till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.” Man was driven from the paradise of Eden where was found the tree of life. Being no longer able to eat of its fruit, mankind would then begin to age and would eventually die a physical death. Our physical deaths are part of the curse of sin on earth. In heaven, all sin and darkness will be gone, there will be no more curse and we will live forever and serve God on His throne in a paradise once again.

Revelation 22:4

“and they shall see his face; and his name (shall be) on their foreheads.”

On earth we walk by faith and not by sight, (2 Corinthians 5:7), no man has ever seen the face of God (John 1:18). In heaven, no longer will we walk by faith and not by sight for we will see the face of God Himself. The separation between God and His children will be gone and they will be in his actual presence.

Revelation 22:5

“And there shall be night no more; and they need no light of lamp, neither light of sun; for the Lord God

shall give them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.”

This is a restatement of Revelation 21:23. In heaven there will be no night, no darkness of any kind. The glory of the Lord will lighten our lives from that point forward and into eternity without end.

This completes John’s vision of heaven. On earth the church is called the Kingdom of God and sometimes the Kingdom of Heaven (Matthew 16:18-19) but this is not the same as the heaven the saved look forward to after the resurrection. In the kingdom we live in now, there is pain, sorrow, tears and suffering. Night falls and there is death to face. And we are still living with the curse, the consequences, of sin all around us.

In heaven, all of this is gone. Heaven is opposite of Hell and is the final, glorious triumphant separation of mankind from sin and complete and total reconciliation with God. No more tears, no more pain, sorrow and death, no more do we live under the curse of sin. No longer will we suffer because of the sins of others. No more will we live with the temptation of sin. No more will we be separated from God, being reunited with Him in person where we shall live and reign with Him and in service to Him forever and ever and ever.

What a beautiful picture John portrays of the hope all Christians have. This vision of heaven is for all Christians who ever lived, suffered and died on earth. All Christians can look at this blessed vision and find hope and encouragement to persevere, to stay the course, to fight the fight and to patiently endure to the end.

Revelation 14:12

“Here is the patience of the saints, they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.”

1 Peter 1:7-9

“that the proof of your faith, (being) more precious than gold that perisheth though it is proved by fire, may be found unto praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ: whom not having seen ye love; on whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice greatly with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of your faith, (even) the salvation of (your) souls.”

How beautiful and wonderful heaven must be.

And now we come to the final farewell and closing admonitions of this last inspired book of the holy record. What a fitting conclusion to the new testament of God. The gospel accounts of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John reveal Christ. The book of Acts teaches the believer how to get “into Christ”. The general epistles teach the Christians how to live “in Christ”. Revelation teaches Christians how to die in Christ and ends up with a glorious vision of the reward given to the patient and the faithful. Revelation 21:7 sums it up, “He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.”

Revelation 22:6

“And he said unto me, These words are faithful and true: and the Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets, sent his angels to show unto his servants the things which must shortly come to pass.”

The angel showing John the vision of Heaven now proclaims that the things he has been shown are faithful and true. This means the Christians of the Roman persecution and all Christians thereafter can depend on them. Christians can commit themselves to these words with confidence and assurance. Christians can know beyond any doubt that they can base their hopes and their destinies in the hands of Christ and be victorious in the end no matter what.

These visions were introduced in the first sentence of Revelation as shortly coming to pass. And indeed they were. Many of the natural disasters which God used to punish the Roman Empire were already in progress. At the writing of the Revelation, the Christians were already living under great persecution and a number of the things which we saw in the opening of the seals and the bowls of wrath were already well in progress. People today with little understanding of Revelation see some of the natural disasters or perhaps the heinous acts of some individual and instantly associate them with the disasters or the evil characters illustrated within the Revelation. How much more so would the people to whom the Revelation was written associate it with their circumstances? The first readers of the book knew it was written to them in the first sentence and then throughout the book they saw vision after vision of the very circumstances under which they lived and their evil enemies who were bent upon their destruction.

The only elements of the visions in Revelation that have anything to do with future events are the ones which speak of the coming day of the Lord, the final casting of the unrighteous into the lake of fire and the receiving of the eternal home of the Christians. The beast, the false prophet, the harlot and the dragon were all characters being dealt with by the people to whom the book was addressed in their time period. Two millennia or more after the letter was written is under no circumstances to be understood as “shortly coming to pass”. Not only was it going to happen relatively soon, it was already in progress.

Revelation 22:7

“And behold, I come quickly. Blessed is he that keepeth the words of the prophecy of this book.”

Jesus is coming with blessings for the ones who keep the word of God. Jesus says “Behold” or “look now”. “I come quickly” signifies an action being executed speedily or swiftly. Call to mind that Jesus used these same words to the church in Philadelphia. He is coming speedily and surely to the aid of the first readers of the book.

“Blessed is he that keepeth the words of the prophecy of this book”. The sixth beatitude of the Revelation and is a reinforcement of the first one found in the third verse of chapter 1. Jesus is restating a number of the things here in the closing remarks of the Revelation that were introduced in the opening statements of the book. The readers are being reminded of key elements which they must not lose sight of. This is no different than a parent repeating things of great importance to their children in order to make sure they understand. The entire theme of the Revelation has been to persevere and overcome and remain faithful to God even unto death. The Revelation is bookended front and back with similar opening and closing statements. Inspiration is stressing the importance of keeping the words of this book by repeating it for the readers.

Revelation 22:8-9

“And I John am he that heard and saw these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship

before the feet of the angel that showed me these things. And he saith unto me, See thou do it not: I am a fellow-servant with thee and with thy brethren the prophets, and with them that keep the words of this book: worship God.”

As in the beginning of the Revelation, John affirms to the readership that these visions are indeed coming through him. He is the one who is writing them down by inspiration. The last living eyewitness to the ministry, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ back into Heaven. There can be no greater assurance in the minds of the recipients of a letter than the knowledge that their author walked, talked, ate with, accompanied with and shared in the afflictions of Jesus Christ. The readers were given this assurance in the opening of the visions and received it again in the end.

And with this assurance of who penned the inspired letter, we are reminded of another extremely important factor upon which the entire book of Revelation hinges. John is so overwhelmed with the visions that he falls down at the angel's feet to worship him. In Revelation 19:10 John fell down at the feet of an angel and was forbidden to do it and was told to worship God. Now again, John is reminded that he must not worship anyone but God. Worship of false gods and idols was the crux of the problem upon which everything that happened to the Roman Empire revolved. They worshipped all kinds of gods, they worshipped men on earth as gods, men on earth tried to force worship of other men on earth as gods. The refusal of the Christians to bow down to false worship is what sparked the great persecution. All the persecution of the Christians, the suffering of the non-believers, the bowls of wrath, the natural disasters, the plagues everything bad that caused so much death and misery were the result of the worshipping of false gods. The Roman Empire was destroyed because of idol worship and their refusal to repent of it and for their persecution of the righteous.

The readers are given yet another reinforcement of something vitally important. Worship God and only God. Do not even worship an angel that comes in the name of God showing heavenly visions. John had to be reminded of that. Christians to whom the Revelation was addressed need to heed it's warning. Christians of all ages must recognize the importance of this. There are religious organizations to this day who fail to recognize this great truth. In the name of Jesus Christ, they set up manmade images of Mary and of various saints and they offer prayers to these “fellow servants” of Christ. In Revelation 4 we are given a scene of worship before the throne of God. Even the 24 elders removed their crowns, cast them at the feet of the throne and bowed to God. When God is worshipped, all eyes are on God and God alone. And those who claim Christ as saviour must give heed to this. Worship is to be offered only to the occupant of the throne of God. Jesus is pictured as occupying the throne with the Father. Revelation 4:5 places the Holy Spirit there as well and in a place of prominence before the throne. All three are God and are unified as God and must be worshipped as one. when we offer our worship to God, all three members of the Godhead are glorified. Worship God.

Revelation 22:10

“And he saith unto me, Seal not up the words of the prophecy of this book; for the time is at hand.”

This prophecy does not need to be kept shut up. It needs to be distributed far and wide for the time of its fulfillment is now. Once again the reader is given the idea that now is the time for the events in the book

to be transpiring. Christians are suffering now. Christians need comfort, reassurance and hope now. Christians are being killed for their faith now. Christians need to overcome now, for the time is at hand.

The application for us today is that Christians are still suffering for their faith in many areas of the world and this persecution is getting worse, not better. The time for perseverance is still at hand and will remain so until the vision of the great city descending from above is realized. Then and only then will the evil influences of Satan be forever cast down and the faithful who overcame will live without sin and temptation in the presence of God the Father, the Lamb and the Spirit for all eternity in complete safety and security. We are again reminded of this great truth in the closing statements yet to come. How beautiful Heaven must be.

Revelation 22:11

“He that is unrighteous, let him do unrighteousness still: and he that is filthy, let him be made filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him do righteousness still: and he that is holy, let him be made holy still.”

Here we see two classifications of people, the unrighteous and the filthy and the righteous and the holy. This is one of the most powerful statements supporting the free will choice of man to choose his destiny in all of scripture, second only to the one yet to come in verse 17. God gave man free will in the garden of Eden and has not revoked that privilege since. to those who persecuted the Christians, let them be unrighteous and filthy. Let them do their unrighteousness. Let them be what they choose to be.

Unfortunately, the unrighteous, in their freedom to be unrighteous can afflict the righteous. Christians throughout the ages have suffered horrendous hardship, persecution and death at the hands of the unrighteous. This consequence is by no means confined to the Roman Empire. This summation in verse 11 is one of the main primary messages taught in Revelation. There are going to be unrighteous people who will not turn from their evil ways. Let them be unrighteous. The goal of the righteous is to be righteous and holy regardless of the actions of others. How fitting are the words here of Paul writing to the Christians who lived in Rome:

Romans 12:19-21

“Avenge not yourselves, beloved, but give place unto the wrath (of God): for it is written, Vengeance belongeth unto me; I will recompense, saith the Lord. But if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him to drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire upon his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.”

Revelation 22:12-13

“Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to render to each man according as his work is. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.”

Jesus speaks here and states again that he is coming surely and speedily. Jesus is looking ahead now to the final judgment of all the earth as the vision draws to a close. Jesus is the beginning and the end of the creation. At the end, each individual person will be given the rewards for their works, be they either the consequences of unrighteousness and filthiness or the rewards of righteousness and holiness. Let those who persist in evil and filthiness receive the recompense of their works.

Revelation 22:14

“Blessed are they that wash their robes, that they may have the right (to come) to the tree of life, and may enter in by the gates into the city.”

Let those who persevere, overcome and persist in righteousness, who wash their robes and keep them unspotted from the world receive their reward. How are their robes washed? Revelation 7:14, “These are they that come of the great tribulation, and they washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” Only those who have washed their robes are granted the right to enter in by one of the twelve gates in the city of heaven and can enjoy the blessing of eternal life. This is the reward that Jesus said He carried with Him that will be rendered to each man according to his works. This reward is the right to enter through the pearl gates into the city of life.

This reward is in no way earned or merited in any way. The gift of eternal life cannot be payed for with money or good works. God the Father was under no obligation to send His Son to earth to die for the sins of the world and God’s Son was under no obligation to offer His life as a freewill ransom for the souls of man. No amount of works on the part of man could ever repay that act of incredible love and sacrifice. This reward of eternal life is by the grace of God through faith. It can neither be earned nor deserved but this fact does not negate the Christians obligations to overcome and persevere to the end. The fact that one’s obedience to the will of God can never pay for their salvation does not in any way alleviate them from their responsibilities to God. Jesus is the author of salvation unto all who obey Him. Obedience to the will of God is a work of righteousness upon which our eternal destinies ride. Jesus said in Matthew 7:21 that “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven.”

Revelation 22:15

“Without are the dogs, and the sorcerers, and the fornicators, and the murderers, and the idolaters, and every one that loveth and maketh a lie.”

The reward for the Christian life faithfully lived to the end is entrance into the holy city where is the throne of God and the tree of life. And the reward for those who insist on being unrighteous is denial into the great city. No one who practices unrighteousness will be allowed into the holy city. No one who hurts, or causes pain, or suffering will ever set foot inside. They are on the outside and will never pass through those gates of pearl and will never harm anyone righteous again.

Revelation 22:16

“I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things for the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright, the morning star.”

This is another restatement of what we read in Revelation 1:1. These visions John saw were shown to him by an angel who was sent by Jesus Christ. The visions were directed to the churches of the first century and thereafter who were under the influence of the evil Roman Empire.

We have all seen that last bright start in the morning before the sun comes up. Shining in the heavens, this star is the final herald of the day before the sun bursts forth from beneath the horizon. Jesus Christ claims to be that bright morning star which ushers in the glorious and bright holy city when it’s glory

bursts forth for all to see. Those on earth who are faithful can keep their eyes on that morning star, watch it and follow it and they will see the glory of that great city burst forth like the rays of the sun in the morning. What a beautiful mental image this paints on one's imagination. How glorious heaven must be.

Revelation 22:17

“And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And he that heareth, let him say, Come. And he that is athirst, let him come: he that will, let him take the water of life freely.”

The Holy Spirit says come. The redeemed say come. This is the invitation extended to all mankind. The word of God, inspired by the Holy Spirit is calling to the lost. The church on earth is calling to the lost. The call to God is extended to all mankind on earth. None are denied who freely seek Him. Peter wrote that God is “longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance” (2 Peter 3:9). Paul wrote that God would “have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth” (1 Timothy 2:4). Eternal life is something offered freely and indiscriminately to all. No one who truly seeks it will be turned away. No one ever need think for a moment that they are not good enough or that God wouldn't save them. No one ever think that God is a respecter of persons because He claims He is not (Romans 2:11, Colossians 3:23-25).

The water of life pictured here runs in a river from the throne of God, (V1) and is big enough for all and is available to all. “He that is righteous, let him do righteousness still: and he that is holy, let him be made holy still” (V 11). In the end there will be only two groups of people. The saved and the lost. Jesus taught as recorded in Matthew 25:31-32, “the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the angels with him, then shall he sit on the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all the nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats”. And the unrighteous “shall go away into eternal punishment: but the righteous into eternal life” (V 46).

Revelation 22:18

“I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, if any man shall add unto them, God shall add unto him the plagues which are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life, and out of the holy city, which are written in this book.”

These are some of the strongest and most sobering words in all of scripture. Given the diversity of opinions on what the Revelation is and how it should be interpreted, it can be easily seen that many many people are falling into the category of those who will fall into condemnation. It is with great care, caution and diligence that a student of the Bible should approach this volume. For those who add to the prophecies, they will suffer the plagues which are written in the book. There are many plagues mentioned in the Revelation, up to including being thrown into the lake of fire, and this inspired verse embraces them all indiscriminately.

For those who would diminish the words of the prophecy in this book, their fate is singular and severe. They will have their right to the tree of life revoked and lose their citizenship in the holy city, which is heaven. In short, those who lessen, or trivialize, or change, or deny any of the words in the Revelation lose their salvation. Who was the Revelation written to? Christians. Who does it pertain to? Christians.

Who will therefore lose their right to the tree of life and their place in heaven if they tamper with the prophecies in Revelation? Christians.

One cannot have their part in the tree of life removed unless they first had a part in it. Likewise one cannot have their part in the holy city taken away unless they first had one to begin with. This is not a picture of people who have never come to righteousness. This is an illustration of those who first had a part in the tree of life and the holy city and by their actions with the prophecies in the Revelation, forfeited it. There cannot be a more serious and sobering verse of scripture with which to end this wondrous book. We must beware the consequences of error and diligently strive for the truth.

This attitude of God's the handling of His holy word is by no means unique. A similar command and warning was given concerning the law of Moses in Deuteronomy 4:2 and 12:32. In the New Testament Paul pronounced the curse of God upon those who would teach another gospel than the one which was received (Galatians 1:6-9). Paul also wrote in 1 Corinthians 4:6 not to go beyond what was written. John had something to say about going beyond what was written to. He wrote that "Whosoever goeth onward and abideth not in the teaching of Christ, hath not God" (2 John 9). This means to go further than is right or proper and to transgress the limits of God's word.

It has been noted time and again that the key to unraveling the visions of the Revelation is found within and throughout God's holy word and this has indeed proven to be the fact. One cannot tamper with the prophecies of Revelation without adding to, or taking away from, or going beyond what is written elsewhere in scripture. The Revelation is inseparably connected with the rest of inspired scripture and as such cannot be added to or taken away from without altering the word of God elsewhere.

For example, Revelation makes the consistent claim throughout that the faithful Christian must overcome and remain faithful to the end or suffer eternal damnation. If one diminishes this, then they have done violence to verses of scripture such as Matthew 10:22 where Jesus told his twelve disciples named in Matthew 10:2-4 to go forth and preach the gospel to Israel and he gave this admonition, "And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved." James wrote this admonition in his epistle, "My brethren, if any among you err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know, that he who converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall cover a multitude of sins" (James 5:19-20). If one tampers with the consequences of sin in Revelation, they have tampered with them in the rest of scripture and therefore fall under the condemnation of going beyond, or not abiding in the doctrine of Christ. The only conclusion that can be reached is that God's commands regarding adding to or taking away from the prophecies of Revelation have an application to the rest of the word of God as well.

Revelation 22:20

"He who testifieth these things saith, Yea: I come quickly. Amen: come, Lord Jesus."

Jesus is the one who testifies the visions in Revelation. John was merely the man who wrote the testimony down under the direct supervision of the Holy Spirit who inspired all the scriptures. Jesus for the third time in this vision declared "I come quickly". When the time is right for His last coming, He will come and gather His saints unto Himself and then deliver the kingdom to the Father where all the saved will be

united eternally with God Himself in the holy city. John responds with a hearty Amen and echoes the hope and cry of every saint that ever lived on the earth in a final prayer to God:

Revelation 22:20-21

“Amen: come, Lord Jesus. The grace of the Lord Jesus be with the saints. Amen.”

This is a final plea for God to come and alleviate the sufferings of the Christians of the time and of His final coming at the end. This is the hope expressed by all Christians who live faithful and righteous life. This is what all Christians strive and persevere for. And so the final curtain drops on the Revelation and as it settles into our memories we are left with the answers to many of mankind’s questions.

Why am I here?

What is my purpose in life?

What is my destiny?

Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people. We were placed on this earth to prepare ourselves for eternal life with God. His purpose in all of this is to separate the wheat from the chaff by giving mankind his will and then granting him the right of free choice and letting him decide his own destiny. God really loves mankind and when someone really loves somebody, they give them freewill to choose and see what their choices are. It is unfortunate but necessary that Christians live amongst the ungodly, for how else could their true feelings and desires be manifested.

God already knows without playing this drama out who will be saved and who will be lost. This has been made abundantly clear throughout scripture. But our God is a fair and just God. And nobody who suffers the damnation of Hell will ever be able to say they didn’t have their chance. This life on earth is something we must all do in order for God to be the true, righteous, just, faithful and Holy God that He is. We have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, therefore we have no recourse but to endure this life. Nothing we could ever possibly suffer on earth could be as bad as the torment of Hell which is everlasting and eternal.

Our purpose in life is to overcome evil through a life of faithful service. Working, striving, teaching, calling the lost, living by example, ever reaching for the goal, endeavoring to transform ourselves into the image of Christ, persevering and overcoming all opposition no matter what it is or where it comes from.

Our destinies are one of two possible. Jesus said it best:

John 5:28-29

“Marvel not at this: for the hour cometh, in which all that are in the tombs shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment.”

As we bring this study of Revelation to a close, we learn from this study that those who triumph over evil, overcome and endure to the end receive eternal life with God in Heaven and those who do not receive eternal loss and separation from God. The circumstances under which Christians live have no bearing on righteousness. God’s expectations are uniform and absolute. In the end, the good guys win and the bad

guys lose. The good guys are the ones who lived their lives in obedient service to God, faithful unto death, even if it cost them their lives. The bad guys either never came to the knowledge of God or did and then succumbed to temptation and lost it all.

Revelation was written to the Christians living under the Roman persecution and directly applies to them. However the application we take from their trials, triumphs and suffering are timeless. Christians today, just like the Christians of the Revelation must overcome. The rewards are worth whatever the cost.

Ecclesiastes 12:13-14

“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.”

Revelation 22 paraphrase

And the angel showed me a pure river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, flowing continuously from the throne of God and of Jesus Christ. In the middle of it and on either side of it was the tree of life, which bore twelve varieties of fruits, each tree yielding its fruit every month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing and restoration of the nations.

And the curse of sin from the beginning will be lifted. And the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in the midst of the city and His servants shall serve Him forever and ever. They shall be in His presence and see His face, and His name shall be seen on them forever. There shall be no more night there. They need no lamp nor light of the sun for the Lord God gives them light. And they shall reign with Him forever and ever.

Then the angel said to me, “These words are faithful and true.” And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show His servants the things which must shortly take place.

“Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book.

Now I, John, saw and heard these things. And when I heard and saw, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel who showed me these visions. Then he said to me, “See that you do not do that. For I am a fellow servant along with you and your brethren the prophets, and of those who keep and obey the words of this book. Worship only God.”

And then he said to me, “Do not withhold the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is at hand. He who insists on being unjust, let him continue to be unjust; he who insists on being filthy, let him continue to be filthy. And he who is righteous, let him continue to be righteous; he who is holy, let him continue to be holy.”

“And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last.” Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to eat of the tree of life, and may enter through the pearl gates into Heaven. For outside the walls are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and

murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices lies. I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star.”

The Spirit of God and the redeemed say, Come! And let him who is listening say, Come! And let everyone come who earnestly thirsts for righteousness. Any who will, let them drink freely of the water of life.

Now I solemnly proclaim to all who listen to the prophecy of this book, that they shall add anything to it, God will lay upon him the afflictions and calamities that are described in these visions. And if anyone diminishes or takes away from the statements in the visions of this prophecy, God will take away from him his right to the tree of life and from Heaven. And He Who gives this warning and affirms and testifies to these things says, “This is the truth”. Surely I am coming swiftly and suddenly.

Amen! Yes, come, Lord Jesus! May the grace, blessings and favor of the Lord Jesus Christ be with all of God’s people. Amen, so let it be!

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