

Revelation 22:6-21 | Epilogue

Introduction

The closing verses of the Book of Revelation summarize the main themes of the book, make a final call for faithfulness and endurance, and issue a warning to those who would tamper with its message.

Verse-By-Verse Notes

Verses 6-7

- The angel restates the authenticity and trustworthiness of the prophecy John has been given. (See 21:5) The authenticity and trustworthiness of Revelation can likewise be applied to *all Scripture*.
- “What must soon take place” connected with “I am coming soon” in verses 7, 12, & 20 indicate the idea of imminency. The imminent return of Christ has been a subject of much misunderstanding – especially in our day of prophecy “experts” who insist that “this” or “that” must happen before Christ can return. Consider the following:
 - o The teaching of the New Testament (along with the expectation of New Testament believers) is that Christ’s return could be at any moment. This is why the Apostle Paul had to frequently correct those who believed Christ had already returned (see 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 5:1-11; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12; 2 Timothy 2:18)
 - o Philippians 4:5 says, “The Lord is *at hand*.”
 - o In 1 Thessalonians 4:15 & 17, the Apostle Paul used the first person plural pronoun “we,” indicating that he *expected to be alive* when the Lord returned. Also significant is that 1 Thessalonians was one of Paul’s *earliest* letters.
 - o The doctrine of imminence means that we do not concern ourselves with any sort of eschatological chronology (such as elaborate charts and timelines of prophetic events as are popular today), but maintain a constant state of readiness to meet the Lord.
 - o Acts 1:7 says, “It is not for you to know the times or seasons . . .” & Matthew 24:44 says “Therefore you also must be ready, for the Son of Man is coming at an hour you do not expect.” Matthew 25:13 says, “Watch therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.”
 - o Robert Mounce: “An infallible timetable would do away with that attitude of urgent expectation that has been the hallmark of the church down through the centuries.”

Verses 8-9

- Overcome by the prophetic vision and message he received from the angel, John fell down in worship, but the angel refused John’s worship and said, “Worship God.”

Angels are not to be worshipped for they are creatures like us. Only God the Creator is worthy of worship.

Verses 10-11

- Again, the idea of imminence is present: “the time is near.” The prophet Daniel was told to “shut up the words and seal the book until the time of the end” (Daniel 12:4), but John was explicitly told, “Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, for the time is near,” indicating that Daniel and John prophesied during completely different seasons of redemptive history, again, indicating that John’s prophecy represents the fullness of God’s plan for history.
- On the difficulty that two millennia have passed since John wrote the words, “the time is near,” Robert Mounce is helpful:
 - o “The end is always near in the sense that each successive Christian generation may be the last, or the return of Christ at the rapture makes the end always impending during the church age. One of the more helpful suggestions is that the Apocalypse has a twofold perspective: it is primarily concerned with the struggle between Christ and Antichrist that comes to a climax at the end of the age, but this struggle also existed between church and state in the first century and has surfaced in history whenever the state has made totalitarian demands. Thus the time has always been at hand. The tension of imminence is endemic to that span of redemptive history lying between the cross and Parousia.”
(*παρουσία* / *parousia* is a Greek word meaning “coming,” “presence,” or “appearing” and is used 24 times in the New Testament to refer to the return of Christ.)
- Verse 11, “Let the evildoer still do evil . . .” does not imply the cessation of the urgent call for the wicked to repent, but rather indicates that the return of Christ is so imminent that the world will virtually go unchanged until His appearing.

Verses 12-13

- Christ is the speaker here, and He affirms *again* that His return is *imminent* and He will be coming with judgment.
- Verse 13, “I am the Alpha and the Omega . . .” is a description God used of Himself in 1:8. By using this title of Himself, Jesus clearly claims equality with God (see also 1:17).

Verses 14-15

- This is the final of 7 blessings (beatitudes, see Matthew 5) in Revelation (see 1:3; 14:13; 16:15; 19:9; 20:6; 22:7; 22:14). To have one’s robe washed is to be cleansed by the blood of the Lamb that grants eternal life.
- “Dogs” refers to particularly despicable characters and depraved lifestyles. It is used to describe unfaithful shepherds (Isaiah 56:10) and homosexual prostitutes (Deuteronomy

23:18). The Apostle Paul also used it to refer to legalistic Judaizers (Philippians 3:2), and it was used of Jews in the NT to refer to Gentiles (Mark 7:27).

- The point of verse 15 is not that evildoers will continue to exist outside the holy city in a proximate sense, but that everything that is opposed to the holiness of God will be *excluded* from the new creation.

Verse 16

- Jesus again is the speaker here and He affirms Himself as the descended messianic seed of David, a message of particular importance to Jewish people.

Verse 17

- Perhaps the greatest invitation to trust in Christ that has ever been given. The Spirit is obviously the Holy Spirit who is the source of all calls to repentance – salvation is of the Lord. The church (the Bride) joins the call of the Spirit through evangelism.
- Robert Mounce: “It is the testimony of the church empowered by the Holy Spirit that constitutes the great evangelizing force of this age.”

Verses 18-19

- A brooding warning to not tamper with the message of Revelation in particular, and generally to all of God’s word. See also Galatians 1:9; Deuteronomy 4:2; 12:32; Proverbs 30:6.

Verses 20-21

- John concludes with Christ’s own words, “Surely, I am coming soon,” again, indicating the imminence of His return. The Greek word ***nai*** / ***vai*** can also be translated “Yes / *certainly* / *indeed*,” I am coming soon.
- John responds with, “*Come!* Lord Jesus.” The Greek word for “come” is in the *imperative* sense. It’s as if John’s plea for Christ to return is a *command* to Jesus Himself.
- Revelation concludes with a benediction, “The grace of the Lord Jesus be with you all,” (specifically the believers of the seven churches Revelation was originally written to, but also to anyone who reads or hears it.)

Concluding Thoughts from Robert Mounce:

With this the book of Revelation is complete. It has served to inform the readers of that day (and all subsequent time) that God is sovereign and that his eternal plan for the human race will in fact be carried through. During the interim there will be hostility and opposition, but what he has decreed must of necessity come to pass. People will be faced with the crucial decision of pledging their allegiance to the beast (and hence to Satan himself) or to the Lamb. Those who choose to wear the mark of the beast will ultimately share his fate. The great city

Babylon will fall. Those who choose to follow the Lamb, who bear the marks of redemptive sacrifice, will ultimately be brought into eternal fellowship with God in the New Jerusalem. The end of all things has been laid bare before the readers of Revelation. All uncertainty regarding the eschaton has been removed. Believers are encouraged to remain faithful to their trust and wait expectantly for the return of Christ, who will forever put away all evil and usher in the eternal state of blessedness. “Amen. Come Lord Jesus.”

I pray that you have not just enjoyed, but have learned and grown from this study of the Revelation of Jesus Christ, given by divine inspiration to the Apostle John in 95 AD. May you ever long for the “parousia” (see note on verse 10) of our Lord.

*- Pastor Brian
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