

Revelation 22

Paradise Found

September began study of Revelation > Sermon on Ch. 1 > Great Drama of God
Theme of Revelation: God rules history and is bringing it to His appointed end in Christ, for the good of His Church, and the glory of His Name. Yours Truly

Ch 21 BRIDE of CHRIST > becomes CITY of GOD > NOW See GARDEN
 Ch 22 MOVE INSIDE the Walled City > Discover CITY is a GARDEN!

Discover > BEAUTIFUL GARDEN > EDEN was just FAINT REFLECTION

1. One Message from God 2. Oneness of God 3. One with God

1. One Message from God

a. Theme v. 18 the words of the prophecy of this book

For prophecy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. 2 Peter 1.21

Revel > Fully WORD of GOD > in Vivid Imagination and Descriptions of JOHN
 Holy Spirit > Carried Old Man John for Long Time > Boyhood in Fishing Village
 Teenager as Beloved Disciple of Jesus > 50 years as Apostle of Struggling Church
 NOW > Exiled for Faith and Testimony on Island of Patmos

RECEIVES Spirit > Inspired Vision > God and his Glorious Plan for Church
 For the *testimony of Jesus* is the spirit of prophecy. Revelation 19.10

Good TITLE for WHOLE BIBLE: The revelation of *Jesus Christ* (Singular!)
 Revelation 1.1

In Jesus the promise is confirmed, the covenant is renewed, the prophecies are fulfilled, the law is vindicated...the great priest over the household of God has taken his seat at God's right hand, the Prophet like Moses has been raised up, the Son of David reigns, the kingdom of God has been inaugurated, the Son of Man has received dominion from the Ancient of Days, the Servant of the Lord...has seen the light after the travail of his soul and is now exalted and extolled and made very high. F.F. Bruce

JESUS is Theme of REVELATION > AND the WHOLE BIBLE!
 What God BEGAN in Genesis > Christ-centered Fulfillment in Revelation

Genesis		Revelation	
Heaven and earth created	1.1	New heaven and new earth	21.1
Sun created	1.16	No need of the sun	21.23
Night established	1.5	No night there	22.5
Seas created	1.10	No more seas	21.1
Curse announced	3.14-17	Curse lifted	22.3
Tree of Life blocked	3.24	Tree of Life accessible	22.14
Sorrow and pain begin	3.17	No more tears or pain	21.4

There is no indication in the New Testament that the gospel preached all over the Roman world by the middle of the first century was in any way defective – that the Word and Witness already known to John before he went to Patmos had certain gaps in them which his Revelation was intended to fulfill. No, from that point of view the book of Revelation is quite superfluous. The sixty-five books from Genesis to Jude contain sufficient gospel to save the world. To what purpose then serves the sixty-sixth?... Jesus has given it to us as a *sacrament of the imagination*, to quicken the pulse and set the soul aflame over the gospel which we all too often take for granted.

Michael Wilcock

b. Trustworthy Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness Revelation 1.5

v. 6 The angel said to me, ‘*These words are trustworthy and true.* The Lord, the God of the spirits of the prophets...’

John > God's INSPIRED Commentator on Prophets > Explains their Fulfillment
OT or NT Prophets? YES! Same Prophetic Function is Carried Out
INTER-CONNECTEDNESS of Scripture > OT is Interpretive KEY to Revelation

UNITY of Message > Discredit John's Message > Entire HOUSE COLLAPSES
Jesus: 'the Scripture cannot be broken' John 10.35

Revelation OF Jesus AND Revelation FROM Jesus > AUTHORITY, INTEGRITY
v. 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."

DAVID > Israel's Greatest King > Glory of Old Covenant > David's Son & LORD STAR > Herald's Dawn of ETERNITY > First Fruit of God's Final Resurrection LORD of TIME and ETERNITY > ABSOLUTE TRUTH, ETERNAL TRUTH

Struggling Saints > from FIRST to FINAL Cent.> Build House on HIM the ROCK
Endure Storms of Life > Attacks of Dragon, Beasts > Temptations of Babylon

c. Threat > Dare NOT IGNORE this Message!

Blessing at Beginning of Book > ALL who Read, Hear, Keep what is Written

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.

Revelation 1.3

CURSING to all those DARE IGNORE this Blessing > No other Way to God:
vs. 18,19 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. 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.

Warning directed Primarily against False Teachers > Pervert Book's Message
Adding their own Fantasies > or Subtracting what they find Inconvenient

Perversors of Book's Message > Will Experience Horrible Power of its Truth

MOSES GAVE SIMILAR WARNING ABOUT WORDS OF PENTATEUCH
Hear now, O Israel, the decrees and laws I am about to teach you...*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. Deuteronomy 4.1-2

Verse's IMMEDIATE Application to Revelation > WIDER RELEVANCE – Bible Revelation belongs to the Canon of Holy Scripture > Part of GOD'S OWN WORD

JESUS > FINAL Prophet > Leads us to Fullness of God's Truth > HE IS IT!

Jesus: ‘I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.’ John 14.6

CANNOT Know God Apart from JESUS // Cannot Know Jesus apart from Bible
HE IS GOD'S LAST WORD // FINAL PROPHET // FULLNESS OF TRUTH

d. Transient > Scripture is TRAVELER'S BOOK

We Love GOD'S Word > Because it REVEALS GOD > LOVE LETTER to Bride
POINTS BEYOND itself to LORD HIMSELF > Whom we will SEE ONE DAY

Almost 500 yrs BEFORE Jesus Came > Daniel wrote to Exiled Saints in Babylon:
There will be a time of distress such as has not happened from the beginning of
nations until then. But at that time your people - everyone whose name is found
written in the book - will be delivered.... But you, Daniel, close up and seal the
words of the scroll until the time of the end. Daniel 12.1-4

Daniel > like John > VISION of the End > Destruction, DEATH, DELIVERANCE
But Daniel was SO FAR AWAY > Redemption not yet ACCOMPLISHED
Messiah not yet Crushed Serpent's Head > Blessing of Abe not yet to Nations

NOW in Christ > Redemption is Accomplished > Nothing to be Added to Salvation

When the time had fully come, God sent his Son Galatians 4.4

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

Ch 5 > Scroll of God's Eternal Plan > SEALED with SEVEN SEALS
LONG SAGA of its SOVEREIGN UNFOLDING by LION who is a LAMB

NOW Angel of God tells John > NOT THAT MUCH LONGER > End is Near!!

Soon move from PROPHECY to the very PERSON of GOD HIMSELF

JESUS WAS COMING SOON at the BEGINNING of this BOOK
The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show his servants *what
must soon take place.* Revelation 1.1

SAME MESSAGE APPEARS AT THE BOOK'S END

v. 6 God...sent his angel to show his servants the things that must *soon* take place

v. 12 Behold, I am coming soon! // v. 20 "Yes, I am coming soon."

SHORTNESS of TIME > From Standpoint of OT Prophecy Fulfilled in Christ
Coming Soon > Hour Undisclosed > Always Imminent > Live in Expectation

God is more concerned with the fulfillment of his redemptive purposes than he is with satisfying our ideas of appropriate timing...history will verge into eternity... The end and the beginning are but two perspectives on the same great adventure.

Robert H. Mounce

BIBLE = PHOTO of Beloved > Sitting on Nightstand > Passionate Anticipation
When – after LONG SEPARATION – Beloved finally ARRIVES > what happens?
Take PHOTO from Nightstand and Give it BIG HUG and a JOYFUL KISS??
Hopefully Not! PHOTO merely Points to Beloved > REAL THING is Now Here!

Final Paragraph of C.S. Lewis's Chronicles of Narnia – book The Last Battle:
The things that began to happen after that were so great and beautiful that I cannot write them. And for us this is the end of all the stories, and we can most truly say that they all lived happily ever after. But for them it was only the beginning of the real story. All their life in this world and all their adventures in Narnia had only been the cover and the title page: now at last they were beginning Chapter One of the Great Story which no one on earth has read: which goes on for ever: in which every chapter is better than the one before. C.S. Lewis

C.S. Lewis

ONLY Thing better than READING ABOUT > Holy City is LIVING THERE

2. Oneness of God

MARTIN LUTHER > Bible is like the CRADLE that held BABY JESUS
Come to Revel. Like GREEKS to Disciples > ‘Sir, we would like to see Jesus.’
John 12.21

a. Throne of God CENTER of the NEW WORLD is God and the Lamb

Word 'THRONE' occurs 41 times in Revelation > Authority of ALMIGHTY GOD

GOD'S RULE and CONTROL > Produces BEAUTY and BLESSING

v. 1 the river of the water of life, as clear as crystal, *flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb*

Lived in UGANDA > PROUD to Claim > SOURCE of the NILE RIVER

SOURCE of RIVER of GOD > ‘throne of God and of the Lamb’

CLEAR as CRYSTAL > Sterling Reflection of the Glory of God

v. 3 The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city

GOD RULES AND REIGNS WITHOUT RIVAL IN THIS GREAT CITY

b. Three in One > Marvelous and Mysterious Unity of Godhead

Throne of God and of the Lamb > Sovereign God who is Creator is also Redeemer
SHOCKING LANGUAGE > John sees ONE THRONE > of God AND of Lamb
v. 1 the throne of God and of the Lamb / v. 3 The throne of God and of the Lamb

Ch. 1 DESCRIBES GOD > "I am the Alpha and the Omega," says the Lord God, "who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty." Revelation 1.8

EXACT TITLE ASCRIBED TO FATHER > HERE EMBRACED BY THE SON
v. 13 I am the Alpha & the Omega, the First & the Last, the Beginning and the End

Jesus: I and the Father are one. John 10.30

Jehovah's Witness in our Apt few weeks Ago > Word TRINITY not in Bible
‘Yes, and the WORD ‘Bible’ is not in the Bible either.’

But the IDEA of Trinity is in the Bible > Invented to Explain God's Tri-Unity
ONE GOD > Reveals Himself as Father, Son, Spirit > Co-Equal, Co-Eternal

JW ‘I just cannot understand the idea of Trinity, so it must not be true!’
Me: “If God has to fit into what you can understand, I pity the Universe!”

Philip wanted to SEE THE FATHER > Jesus Answered:

Believe me when I say that *I am in the Father* and the *Father is in me*. John 14.11

The problem is the inadequacy of the finite mind and language of man to comprehend and describe the infinite being of the Triune God...We must be content with the mystery - and indeed grateful for it - for if there were no mystery and all were comprehensible to us we should not be talking about God, but about a mere projection of ourselves. Philip E. Hughes

Lamb > Incarnate Son > Mission Accomplished > now Exalted to Highest Glory
Eternal and Incarnate Son > Fullness of Divine Grace > Risen, Exalted, Lord

c. Total Allegiance to God > Even Apostle of God makes Mistakes > TWICE!

vs. 8,9 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. 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!'

John > Profoundly moved by Splendor of Scene > Awed by Dignity of Angel
Perhaps Well Intentioned > Improper > Second Time > Rebuke almost Identical

Worship must be offered to God Alone > NOW and Hereafter
Worship of Angels > Prohibited > Had Made inroads into Christian Community

Do not let anyone who delights in...the worship of angels disqualify you for the prize. Colossians 2.18

God Gives GOOD GIFTS > Bible, Church, Worship, Preachers, Ministries, Angels
ALL TOOLS of God > Worship RESERVED for Him Alone!
“Worship God!” > Succinct Form of the Theme of the Entire Book

The hallmark of the true bride, in contrast to the harlot, is that she worships no one but God and waits for no bridegroom but the Lamb. Dennis E. Johnson

3. One with God

a. Curse Lifted > Perfect Fellowship with God > SPOILED in Garden of Eden

God's JUDGMENT Fell on Guilty Pair > CURSE on Man and His World
GLAD ANNOUNCEMENT > v. 3 No longer will there be any curse.

Now at last, almost at the end of the great drama of the Bible, man may return and legitimately enjoy the blessing which he was banished for illegitimately desiring.

R.H. Preston and A.T. Hanson

The LORD will be king over all the earth; in that day the LORD will be the only one, and His name the only one...*and there will be no more curse*

Zechariah 14.9,11

River that flowed in Eden > RUNS THRU BIBLE > River of Water of Life
There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy place where the Most High dwells. Psalm 46.4

A fountain will flow out of the LORD's house Joel 3.18

John's Apocalyptic Interpretation of Ezekiel's Vision

river of the water of life...flowing from the throne of God
Revelation 22.1

On each side of the river stood the tree of life
Revelation 22.2

leaves will not wither, nor will their crops fruit fail. Every month they will bear every month Ezekiel 47.12

the tree of life, bearing twelve
of fruit, yielding its fruit
Revelation 22.2

And the leaves of the tree are for
healing of the nations.
Revelation 22.2

What the Apostle sees in this vision is Paradise regained: all that was lost in Adam is restored, and more than restored, in Christ. In Christ man is brought back to the paradise he had lost and forward to the destiny in glory for which he was created.

Philip E. Hughes

GOD had Forbidden Guilty COUPLE from TREE OF LIFE > Mercy
SIN tainted BODIES > Old, Sick, Decrepit > LIVE FOREVER in this Tent??

NEW HEAVEN / NEW EARTH > Fashioned with NEW BODIES
v. 2 On each side of the river stood the tree of life

NOT JUST ONE TREE > A Whole City Full of Trees > GARDEN OF GOD

For the Lamb at the center of the throne will be their shepherd; he will lead them to springs of living water. Revelation 7.17

CURSE LIFTED in Christ > God's LAST WORD to His People is GRACE
v. 21 The grace of the Lord Jesus be with God's people. Amen.

Highest Desire for Others > Grace of God be with Them > Grace of the Lord Jesus

b. Called to Serve v. 3 and his servants will serve him

SERVING GOD > Not for this Life ONLY > This Life AND THE NEXT
Live in Radical Obedience to God each Moment > Lord's Return Not Surprised
Our very lives should become winsome witnesses to the wholeness of life to be
found in God's New Jerusalem...to live each day in the prayer, "Come, Lord
Jesus." M. Robert Mulholland, Jr.

Servant Moses > Great Lawgiver of Old Covenant > Could Not See Face of God
GOD: ‘You cannot see my face, for no one may see me and live.’ Exodus 33.20

Ancient World > Criminals banished from Presence of King, not Look on his Face

King David said, ‘He must go to his own house; he must not see my face.’ So Absalom went to his own house and did not see the face of the king.

2 Samuel 14.24

Jesus: Blessed are the pure in heart, for *they will see God.* Matthew 5.8

v. 4 They will *see his face*, and his name will be on their foreheads.

MITRE of OT HIGH PRIEST > Inscribed ‘Holy to the Lord’ on FOREHEAD
NOW the Entire REDEEMED COMMUNITY offers Holy Service to God

Lord's Servants will see his Face > Deeper Reason why No More Night

For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. 2 Corinthians 4:6

God will be seen by the eyes of the heart, which can see realities that are immaterial. Augustine

See his Face > Height of all Blessedness > Perfect fellowship with Creator
 Stand in Redeeming Grace > with Unhesitating Confidence > in Total Love

I know that my Redeemer lives, and that in the end he will stand upon the earth.
 And after my skin has been destroyed, yet *in my flesh I will see God; I myself will see him with my own eyes* - I, and not another. How my heart yearns within me!

Job 19.25-27

c. Come While You Can

vs. 10,11 Then he told me, "Do not seal up the words of the prophecy of this book, because the time is near. 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."

Do not hinder the man who, in spite of all pleadings, admonitions, and exhortations has completely hardened himself in his wickedness; do not hinder him from continuing in his unrighteousness; neither hinder the filthy one from continuing in his filth. Similarly, do not hinder the righteous and holy person from continuing in the way of sanctification.

William Hendriksen's Paraphrase

TIME COMING > Change will be IMPOSSIBLE > No SECOND CHANCE
 Character determined by Lifetime Bad Habits

Quality of Person's Life > Ultimate Indication of what Person Really Believes

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

FINAL STATE > Directly Related to this PRESENT Life > Day of Judgment

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

OUTSIDE are Dogs > Not in BACKYARD of Heaven > FAR, FAR AWAY
 ...thrown outside, into the darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth

Matthew 8.12

Verse 17 > Four Invitations > 2 to Christ for his Return // 2 to the world to Come

v. 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.

"Come, Lord Jesus" > Earliest Confession of Church > Maranatha

Still age of Gospel > Still season for Lord's Ambassadors to appeal to World

Responsibility of Evangelization > to Church AND Every Single Member

v. 17 The bride say, "Come!" And let him who hears say, "Come!"

If HE has SATISFIED your THIRST > Let the Redeemed of the Lord SAY SO!

It is the testimony of the church empowered by the Holy Spirit that constitutes the great evangelizing force of this age. Leon Morris

Fervent Response of Bride, beloved Bridegroom > Amen! Come, Lord Jesus!

d. Comfort for the Saints Heaven is Both a DESTINATION & MOTIVATION

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

The answers to the problems of life do not lie in people's ability to create a better world but in the return of the One whose sovereign power controls the course of human affairs. Robert H. Mounce

v. 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.

Not Self-Purification > Redeemed wash Robes in the blood of the Lamb
Redeemed Society is Purged of All > EVILDOERS

Revelation is designed not only to assure us of God's final purposes, but also to increase our longing for him and realization of his purpose. The sureness of that final bliss comforts the saints during times of temptation and persecution. It purifies our desires by directing them to God and his glory. Vern S. Poythress

'The LORD bless you and keep you; the LORD make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you; the LORD turn his face toward you and give you peace.'

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Numbers 6.24-27

Revelation 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 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 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. ⁴ They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. 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.

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."

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

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. 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!"

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

¹² "Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done. ¹³ I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.

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

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."

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.

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from him his share in the tree of life and in the holy city, which are described in this book.

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

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

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